

## Aktuelles

**Du oder Sie?**

Both *du* and *Sie* mean "you." However, *du* is considered the informal mode of address. Family members always say *du* to refer to one another. Children are always addressed with *du* until mid-adolescence. The *du* form is also used in prayers and church services. Finally, *du* is used to address animals.

For Germans, there is nothing formal about *Sie*. For instance, people may work in the same office for years and still call each other *Sie*, yet the atmosphere can be very friendly and pleasant. Who else uses *du*? Primarily blue-collar workers, students as well as military personnel or police officers of equal rank use *du* to refer to each other.

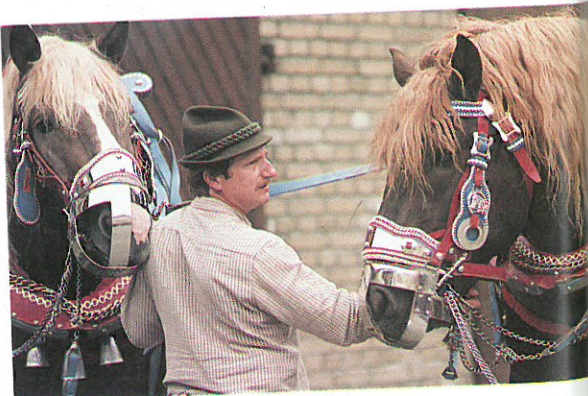
Sagen sie *Sie*?

People you know well socially—called *Bekannte* (acquaintances)—are addressed with *Sie*, while close personal friends—called *Freunde*—are addressed with *du*. Young people, too, quickly tend to use the *du* form for one other.

14 **Du oder Sie?**

Indicate which form you, as a student in Germany, would use if you were to talk to these people or animals.

1. a fifteen-year-old exchange student
2. your doctor
3. a police officer
4. your friend
5. your father or mother
6. a teacher
7. a six-year-old child
8. your cat
9. your aunt
10. your friend's uncle

Sagt er *du* oder *Sie*?

## SPRACHE

**The Familiar Form: *du* and *ihr***

The familiar forms *du* and *ihr*, both meaning "you," are used when speaking to relatives, close friends, children and animals.

(Mrs. Schmidt is speaking to a child)

*Wo wohnst du?*

Where do you live?

(Andreas is talking to his new classmates)

*Woher kommt ihr?*

Where do you come from?

Note that *du* is used to address one person and *ihr* is used for two or more people.

(Kerstin asks Andreas and Petra)

*Wohnt ihr hier?*

Do you live here?

**The Formal Form: *Sie***

The formal form *Sie*, meaning "you," is used when speaking to adults and to those not addressed by their first name.

(Thomas is talking to his teacher)

*Wo wohnen Sie, Herr Schulz?*

Where do you live, Mr. Schulz?

(Mrs. Müller is talking to her new neighbors)

*Kennen Sie die Hoffmanns,  
Herr und Frau Meier?*

Do you know the Hoffmanns,  
Mr. and Mrs. Meier?

The formal form *Sie*, in both singular and plural, is always capitalized.

15 **Du, ihr, Sie?**

Which of these forms would you use in the following situations? You are talking to your...

- |            |                      |
|------------|----------------------|
| 1. cousin  | 6. brother           |
| 2. parents | 7. girlfriend        |
| 3. coach   | 8. pet rabbits       |
| 4. dog     | 9. relatives         |
| 5. dentist | 10. school principal |