In English A **negation** expresses the absence of something actual, true, or real. Words and phrases used to negate sentences are *not, not a,* and *no,* depending on whether the element being negated is a noun, a verb, or an adjective.

> Holger lives on Copernicus Street.
> negation of a verb: Holger does not live on Copernicus Street.
>
> The cat is white.
> negation of an adjective: The cat is not white.
>
> I have time. / That is an apple.
> negation of a verb: I do not have time. / That is not an apple.
> negation of a noun: I have no time. / That is no apple!

What parts of speech are negated by *not* or *not a?* What part of speech is negated by *no?* Notice that when negating sentences containing a noun phrase, you have a choice between negating the noun phrase or negating the verb.

In German You have already been using **nicht** to make negative statements with verbs and adjectives.

> Der Holger wohnt **nicht** in der Kopernikusstraße.
> Die Katze ist **nicht** weiß.

Above, you learned that when negating English sentences containing noun phrases, you may either negate the noun phrase or the verb (*That's no excuse* vs. *That's not an excuse.*). In German, it is customary to negate the noun phrase, not the verb. The word used to negate the noun phrase (the equivalent of *no*) is **kein**.

Ich habe Zeit.	*I have time.*
Ich habe **keine** Zeit.	*I do not have time. (I have no time.)*
Das ist ein Apfel.	*That is an apple.*
Das ist **kein** Apfel.	*That is not an apple. (That is no apple.)*

Kein is an **ein**-word. It has the same endings as all the other **ein**-words (**ein, mein, dein**, etc.) and is a part of the noun phrase.