

■ **20.3.4** These types of verb have peculiarities in the formation or use of the past participle:

- The auxiliary verb **werden** see 25.1.2
- Modal verbs (**können, wollen**, etc.) see 26.2.2
- Compound verbs (**abfahren, empfehlen**, etc.) see 28.1–3

20.4 The past participle as an adjective

The past participle may be used as an adjective or an adjectival noun; it is then declined like an adjective (9.2).

- As an adjective:
Gekochten Schinken esse *I don't eat cooked ham.*
 ich nicht.
 Sie ist eine **gelehrte** Frau. *She is an educated woman.*
- As an adjectival noun:
 Der **Beklagte** bekannte *The accused pleaded guilty.*
 sich schuldig.
 Sie hat einen **Geliebten**. *She has a lover.*

21 The past tenses: the simple past

The simple past is also sometimes called the 'imperfect' or simply the 'past tense'.

21.1 Uses

The simple past is the preferred tense for past actions and narratives in formal written German (e.g. business correspondence, newspaper articles):

Letzes Jahr **gab** der Staat *Last year the state spent very*
 sehr wenig für Bildung **aus**. *little on education.*
 In unserem Brief vom *In our letter of 8/1 we wrote*
 8.1. **schrieben** wir Ihnen ... *to you ...*

It is also used in spoken as well as written German, in preference to the perfect tense, for

- all modal verbs (26):
 Er **konnte** nicht kommen. *He couldn't come.*
 Sie **musste** für die Prüfung *She had to study for her*
 lernen. *exam.*
- some of the most commonly used verbs, including **bleiben, gehen, haben, kommen, sein, stehen**:
 Ich **blieb** bis zum *I stayed until late in the evening.*
 späten Abend.
 Die Studenten **kamen** und *The students came and went*
gingen, wie sie Lust hatten. *as they pleased.*

21.2 Formation: weak verbs

The simple past of weak verbs is formed by adding the following endings to the verb stem:

Sing.	1. ich	diskutierte	I	} discussed
	2. du	disku iertest	you	
	3. er/sie/es	diskutierte	he/she/it	