

# “Nur” or “erst”?

In German, “**nur**” and “**erst**” both express limitations, but they have different nuances. Here’s the key difference:

## “Nur”

It means “only” and refers to a limitation in quantity, extent, or amount. It focuses on something being restricted or small in comparison to a larger possibility, but it doesn’t convey any temporal aspect.

Example:

- “Ich habe **nur** drei Euro.”  
 (“I only have three euros.”)



→ The emphasis is on the **limited** amount of money and that I can’t spend more



## “Erst”

It means “only” or “just” but is used to refer to a limitation in time or when something is still at an early stage. It suggests that more could happen or change as time progresses.

Example:

- “Es ist **erst** 8 Uhr.”  
 (“It’s only 8 o’clock.”)



→ The emphasis is on the time being early and that there is still time left.

- “Ich habe **erst** drei Euro”  
 (“I only have three euros.”)



→ The emphasis is on the limited amount of money and that I am trying to get more.