

MISSION STATEMENT
SCHOOL PROFILE
SCHOOL PROGRAMME

Bilingual Gymnasium
Phorms Munich



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Please note:

All terms that refer to people apply equally to all genders.

MISSION STATEMENT

We accompany and guide our students on their way to self-understanding founded on respect and responsibility. We encourage them to act accordingly, thereby engendering trust that will enable them to make important decisions for themselves and others. Equipped with wide-ranging knowledge and manifold competencies, our students are able to understand and shape the increasingly complex world.

Self-confidence, discipline and enthusiasm are prerequisite for successful learning. Our teachers embody this conviction.

Our mission statement was developed in cooperation with all groups involved in school life. In the following, you will find information about the characteristics that distinguish our school (School profile), as well as the focus of our work in the coming years (School programme).

SCHOOL PROFILE

Our international school community is formed by people from many different countries with very different cultures. This diversity is something we cherish, something we maintain and cultivate by treating one another with openness, tolerance and respect. We respect differing convictions and attach great importance to ensuring that everyone adheres to the principles of peaceful and constructive coexistence.

In our capacity as a school in Munich, we also feel a strong bond with our city and its surroundings. These local roots form the foundation on which our internationally oriented school continues to develop and flourish.

Our bilingual Gymnasium Phorms Munich is a state-approved upper-secondary school in Bavaria. English and German are equally recognised languages of instruction, employed respective to academic subject. The proportion of English-language teaching, provided as a rule by native speakers, is particularly high in the lower grades. Thereafter, it is gradually reduced with a view to preparing for the Abitur (general higher education qualification). Even outside the classroom, communication on our campus takes place quite naturally in both languages. This is an essential expression of the international orientation of our school culture and leads, among other things, to our graduates leaving the school with a thoroughly bilingual education. Our students can choose from two different academic concentrations: Languages, with the sequence English/Latin/Spanish or English/French/Spanish; or Economic and Social Sciences, with the language sequences English/Latin or English/French. We teach according to the curriculum of the Bavarian Gymnasium, supplemented by the Cambridge Curriculum in English

and the IB Diploma Curriculum (only for students especially enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme).

All of our students who pass the Abitur examination receive their general higher education entrance qualification. In addition, particularly capable and motivated students in grades 11 and 12 can also take part in the IB Diploma Programme to acquire the International Baccalaureate through successful final examination.

Our Gymnasium is an all-day school characterized by a family atmosphere. As such, it is not only a learning space, but also a living space for our students. It offers them an environment conducive to successful learning with innovative classroom equipment and carefully selected teaching methods designed to motivate learners and actively involve them in the learning process. We place particular emphasis on open forms of teaching, such as group and project work. The two-tiered structure and small class size also contribute to learning success. Our students are comfortable in their class communities and enjoy attending the school, free of fear and anxiety. The decisive factor in this regard is exceptionally healthy student-teacher relationships. Our students trust their teachers and communicate with them on equal footing. They feel supported and treated fairly by them. Small classes and relationships characterized by mutual trust allow for a highly individual approach to each student, whether to foster the development of special talents or to provide assistance where additional support is needed. Our teachers are highly committed and passionate educators. As such, they are greatly appreciated by parents and students. The cooperation between parents and teachers is close and



exceedingly trusting. The international composition of our teaching staff enables us to offer our students the best of different educational cultures. Rigorous professional and pedagogical education has prepared our teachers to instruct at the demanding academic level of the Bavarian Gymnasium. At the same time, it is extremely important to us that they have a thoroughly positive attitude towards their students. Our teachers believe in the development potential of the young people in their classrooms and encourage their creativity, among other things. Above all, our teachers want their students to succeed.

In addition to a fundamental curiosity and open-mindedness, as well as the intellectual aptitude for bilingual secondary education, we expect our students to possess the ability and desire to learn and to further their personal development. This applies not only to their intellectual-academic competencies, but to social and emotional learning, as well. In this endeavour,

they are supported individually, intensively and sustainably by our teachers.

An important aspect of the success of the school's work as a whole and of the individual students is the positive attitude of the parents towards the school. This positive attitude embraces constructive, critical dialogue and expresses itself in communication defined by mutual appreciation, candour and sincerity.

At the bilingual secondary school Phorms Munich, teachers, students and parents – together – assume responsibility for ensuring a strong school community with which each individual can identify. Openness, tolerance, trust and respect towards others play an essential role in developing such a community. With a culture of communication adhering to these principles and a desire for continuous improvement, we commit to the further development of our institution.



SCHOOL PROGRAMME

1. School community

In our school community, teachers, students and parents work closely together in a spirit of trust. Various official bodies and a variety of school events contribute to a vigorous and closely-knit community.

— 1.1. SMV (Students with Responsibility) and Liaison Teachers

The SMV consists of all students holding designated offices within the school community. The Class Speaker Assembly (KSV) consists of the class speakers and the three student representatives. The SMV attends to the questions and concerns of our students. Two liaison teachers, elected annually by the students of the Gymnasium, support the work of the SMV, as does the school leadership team.

— 1.2. Parent council

The Parent Council serves as an important link between parents and the school. The council consists of the elected parent spokespersons from each class and elects two members to serve as chairpersons. In regular meetings with school leadership team, the council discusses the wishes, suggestions and concerns of school parents and participates in school development. It cultivates the relationship of trust between parents and teachers and communicates with relevant school committees on important issues. Cooperation between parents and management is always characterised by respect, sincerity and appreciation.

— 1.3. School forum

The School Forum consists of three representatives each from among our teachers, students and parents, as well as the head of the Gymnasium. Meetings of the School Forum deal with issues important to all three groups of the school community, i.e. for our Gymnasium as a whole.

— 1.4. Assemblies

At the end of each trimester, we hold assemblies (grades 5 to 7 and 8 to 10) to strengthen our fellowship. The assemblies are designed by the students themselves to mark the end of each trimester and to motivate them for the trimester to come.

— 1.5. Common lunch

An essential element of community life at the secondary school is the common lunch. From 1.30 p.m. to 2.00 p.m., all students are served lunch, prepared fresh daily, in the Lunch Hall. They can choose between a vegetarian and a non-vegetarian option; a salad buffet is also available.

— 1.6. Buddy programme

The Buddy Programme is central to community life on our campus, across all schools types. The programme takes place between students of the primary and secondary schools. The aim of this programme is to facilitate the transition of primary school students to the upper classes by providing them initial insight into life at secondary school through personal contact. For their part, secondary students take responsibility, experience everyday school life, to a small degree, from the perspective of a teacher and pass on their skills and experiences to the primary students. The experience brings our school community even closer together.

— 1.7. School events

1.7.1. Christmas market

At the Christmas Market, each class, as well as the SMV, has its own stand where students sell homemade products for Christmas, or pre-Christmas delicacies. Half of the proceeds go to our support association Friends of Phorms and the other half to the social project 'Lichtblick Hasenberg!'. The proceeds from the SMV stand are used to augment the budget of the Class Speaker Assembly.

1.7.2. Museum day

On Museum Day, our teachers organise visits for different age groups to a number of museums in and around Munich. Students choose a museum they would like to visit from among the excursions on offer.

1.7.3. Summer festival

The Summer Festival is a celebration for the entire school community to mark the end of the school year. Gymnasium students present the results of their Project Days and, again, there are lots of lovely student-made items, superlative sweets and other culinary delights for sale. All proceeds go to the *Friends of Phorms*.

1.7.4. Sporting events

a. Bundesjugendspiele

The *Bundesjugendspiele* (Federal Youth Games) offer our students the opportunity to demonstrate their athletic ability. Our students give their best, cheer each other on and spend a day devoted to sports and community.

b. Tournament Day

While the Federal Youth Games focus on individual performance, Tournament Day is about fair competition between classes in various team sports. Of course, everyone wants to win, but fair play and the joy of sport in community are the focus. A particular highlight of Tournament Day is the final event – a football match between a student team and a team of selected teachers.



c. Benefit run

At this annual charity event, students and teachers run, sweat and collect donations for the social project 'Lichtblick Hasenberg!'.

1.7.5. Art exhibitions

Our art teachers encourage students to develop their creative talents. The results are often impressive works of art, which we present regularly in various exhibitions in the school building.

1.7.6. Concerts

Many of our students have musical talent, playing an instrument or singing superbly. Our Christmas and spring concerts, as well as the music event 'Let's Perphorm,' which takes place several times a year, give our young performers the opportunity to share their talents with a wider audience.

1.7.7. SMV school festivals

The SMV School Festivals have become very popular events, particularly the winter and spring balls, but the SMV also organises various smaller events, especially on holidays.

1.7.8. Open house day

Our annual Open House Day has two main objectives: On the one hand, we offer the parents of our current students the opportunity to attend lessons and experience the daily school life of their children. On the other, we give interested parents in search of an academic home for their children the opportunity

to experience our classrooms first-hand and to form a personal impression of our school.

— 1.8. School uniforms

At Phorms Munich, students wear school uniforms. At the Gymnasium, items from the collection of our supplier Dress for School that have been approved as school uniforms are divided into two groups, one for grades 5–9 and the other for grades 1–12.

— 1.9. Support association Friends of Phorms

Under the motto 'Parents helping parents,' the association Friends of Phorms supports students and their families who, without this financial assistance, would no longer be able to attend our school or would not be able to take part in class trips for financial reasons. Friends of Phorms is an entirely independent, non-profit association founded by families committed to the school and supported by parents of Phorms Munich. Friends of Phorms is recognised as a non-profit association by the Munich tax office. Donations are therefore fully tax-deductible.

2. Instruction

— 2.1. Subject-specific instruction

Stimulating and challenging lessons form the foundation for the holistic development of our students into self-determined and responsible individuals. Our teachers have a wide range of teaching methods at their disposal, which they employ flexibly and purposefully. The choice of teaching method depends on the skills to be acquired, instructional content, as well as the level of prior knowledge and needs of the students in the classroom. In future, the integration of new media into the learning process – what is referred to as the ‘digitalisation of teaching’ – will become an increasing focus of instruction. Such developments only make sense, however, if they prove conducive to students’ learning progress. We will review the efficacy of digitalisation measures regularly.

— 2.2. School-leaving certificates

The final qualification for all students of our *Gymnasium* is the Bavarian *Abitur*. In order to do justice to the international orientation of our school, we also offer high-performing students the special opportunity to acquire the renowned International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) as a school-leaving certificate in addition to their *Abitur*.

Our students in the 10–12 grades have excellent conditions in particularly small learning groups, characterized by a unique relationship between teachers and students.

— 2.3. Individual support and diversification

2.3.1. Study Times

As an all-day school, we offer our students the opportunity to do their homework within teacher-supervised study times.

2.3.2. Intensive lessons

The individual support of our students is very important to us. We thus offer intensive instruction in German, Latin, French, Spanish and Mathematics. These weekly lessons are designed by members of our specialist teaching staff, highly qualified in the respective subject, in close cooperation with the respective class teacher. As a rule, there is a maximum of 15 students in an intensive study group, enabling us to provide individualized support.

2.3.3. Special needs

In the subjects German, English and Mathematics, we offer special lessons in very small groups. These lessons are also taught by our specialist subject teachers and are designed to achieve the quickest possible integration of new students, especially in German and English, who still have considerable room for improvement in one of our two teaching languages.

2.3.4. German-language tutoring

In order to provide additional support to students whose native language is not German, we offer the German-Language Tutoring Programme. In cooperation with the LMU Munich,

LMU students serve as German-language tutors to our students. We provide the learning space for tutoring sessions after regular lessons. In justified exceptional cases, tutoring is also possible as individual lessons during Study Times.

2.3.5. Enrichment

The Enrichment Programme offers six different courses of specialisation for particularly gifted or interested students in grades 8–11. These courses are offered once a week by specialist teaching staff during regular school hours. Participants are nominated by class teachers, but students can also apply upon their own initiative. In the Enrichment Programme, students work on projects they develop themselves and have the opportunity to take part in external competitions.

Promoting our students’ strengths, however, is also an inherent aspect of our regular teaching and a central component of our overall pedagogical concept.

In promoting highly gifted students, we advise on psychological support and testing, as well as possible external opportunities for specialisation and support.

Our Enrichment Programme currently offers the following opportunities:

a. MUN: Model United Nations

Our students are thrilled to have the opportunity to act as UN delegates in the Model United Nations. These role-play conferences take place annually in a number of countries and cities (e.g. Munich, Berlin, New York).

During the four-day conference, our students learn how international agreements come about and gain deep insight into the complexity of current global issues. Moreover, by assuming the role of representatives of countries other than their own, they are challenged to understand new cultural and political aspects, questioning their own point of view and respecting the positions of other countries struggling for greater self-determination. Finally, the MUN offers our students not only the opportunity to acquire specific skills in international diplomacy, but also to further improve their English skills, especially speaking in front of an audience and formal writing; teamwork and leadership skills are also part of the MUN learning experience. Overall, our students gain knowledge and understanding that will prove invaluable for their futures.

b. Subject-specific offers

Enrichment courses are currently offered in the following subjects:

German, Geography, Mathematics, Nature and Technology, Physics, Philosophy.

— 2.4. Electives

Our students have the opportunity to choose from an interesting range of elective courses in addition to compulsory classes. Elective courses in foreign languages, art, music and sports are designed and offered by our teachers every year.

— 2.5. Cooperation with external partners

In addition to our subject-specific instruction, we attach great

importance to strengthening our students' personal and social skills. In addition to fostering their competencies in classroom lessons, we regularly carry out projects in cooperation with various external partners, such as 'Z'amm g'rauft,' 'Sauba blei'm' (both in cooperation with the police) or 'Talentschmiede' (with the Natural Talent Foundation).

3. Supplementary educational activities

— 3.1. Company internship

All of our 9th grade students take part in a one-week internship. This generally takes place in the week before the Easter holidays. The aim of the internship is to gain initial insight into the professional and working world. An essential part of the project is that the students look for their internships independently. These internships should enable students to participate in a regular working week (Monday through Friday, eight hours a day) and should be located in the greater Munich area (within the S-Bahn network), so that our teachers may feasibly offer support.

— 3.2. Student exchange programme

Our school takes part in a Student Exchange Programme with the *Colegio Humboldt* in San José, Costa Rica, and we are currently in the process of establishing a new exchange with the *Collège EIB Monceau Paris* in France. In addition, our students have the opportunity to participate in individual exchange programs available, for example, to Spain, France, the USA and Great Britain.

— 3.3. CTT: Class Teacher Time

All classes in grades 5–10 have their own lesson once a week in what we call 'Class Teacher Time'. This gives the class teacher and the students the opportunity, outside the regular classroom period, to discuss all issues that are important for the class. In CTT, class representatives also have the opportunity to report on the latest news from the SMV. CTT makes an important contribution to class community and is highly valued by students and teachers alike.

— 3.4. MSE

MSE is a UK-based format that stands for Mentoring and Social Education. The program offers our younger students in grade 5 the opportunity to work with the two class teachers one hour per week in small groups on topics selected by the teachers and students. The spectrum of content ranges from self-organised learning to the discussion of current topics.

— 3.5. Mentoring

In the Mentoring Programme, each student in the intermediate level (grades 8–10) chooses a member of our teaching staff as a mentor. Throughout the entire school year, the mentor serves

as a special contact and source of support, providing individual advice on academic and many other questions.

— 3.6. Project days

Three Project Days, each dedicated to a common theme, take place every year in the last week of the school year. Students can choose from a variety of projects designed and organised by members of our teaching staff. On the third day, the results of work in the various projects are presented to the entire school community as part of our Summer Festival.

— 3.7. Career and study orientation

As part of the P seminars, we attend at least one career and university fair with the students of Q11, which is specially designed for students. Here, renowned universities and academies provide information on various (partly dual) degree programmes and training opportunities. The range of topics at these fairs is so varied that all students are addressed and provided a good overview of possible career paths after the *Abitur*.

We offer students eager to gain some initial college experience, or to explore a specific academic discipline more closely, the opportunity to spend a day at the LMU Munich. Accompanied by an LMU student, they attend a lecture or seminar. Afterwards, they have the opportunity to eat in the canteen or take a tour of the university and get first-hand answers to their questions about university study.

— 3.8. Early studies and university day

In close cooperation with the Technical University of Munich and the LMU Munich, we offer particularly gifted students in grades 11 and 12 the opportunity to take part in early university studies. Selected students attend lectures, seminars and courses at one of these universities during their school time, which they can then credit toward their later regular studies. As a rule, students spend one day a week at the university for one semester

— 3.9. Reference school of the TUM School of Education

Our *Gymnasium* serves as a reference school for the Technical University of Munich. This mutually beneficial and contractual partnership encompasses regular continuing education opportunities for our teachers, as well as the work of our specialist subject teachers with TUM students in teacher training programmes in Mathematics, Chemistry and Sports as part of their internships at our school. In addition, the partnership provides access to special premises on the TUM campus and opens up opportunities for the talented scientists among our students within the scope of our Enrichment Programme. Overall, the partnership strengthens our offering in the natural sciences.

4. Excursion programme

— 4.1. Class trips, grades 5–7

The Excursion Programme for our students in grades 5–7 places emphasis on experiential education. Group experiences in nature support the personal development of each student and help to cultivate social skills. A variety of nature experiences ensure that the cohesion among students grows and that each individual, supported by the team, can test his or her willingness to take risks.

— 4.2. Ski camp, grades 7 and 8

For many years now, our school has been cooperating with *Outward Bound*, a provider of experiential group travel, which has a location in Baad in the beautiful Kleinwalsertal.

In keeping with the *Outward Bound* philosophy, the students themselves are responsible for the success of the group-dynamic processes, for decisions regarding navigation, catering and organisation. This means that the students organise their excursions and tours on their own, accompanied, however, by certified trainers who can intervene when difficulties arise.

In the 8th grade, for example, students take part in a two-day cross-country skiing tour to a remote cabin in the woods – without heating or electricity. It is real survival training that becomes an experience of a special kind in the face of common challenges, collective exertion and, ultimately, group success. Growing together as a unit, the experience of nature and the joy of skiing inspire our students again and again year for year.

— 4.3. Study excursions, grades 9–11

In grades 9–11, class trips, which until then focused primarily on social aspects, take on a new age-appropriate academic focus. In the 9th grade, these are trips in connection with the second or third foreign language, to France or Italy (Latin) or the Costa Rica exchange (Spanish). The focus of the 10th and 11th grade trips is curricular, combining interesting destinations with motivating activities for knowledge and skills acquisition.

5. Quality management

— 5.1. Instructor profiles

Our teachers are carefully selected in a complex, multistage process. They have passed either the 1st and 2nd state examinations for the teaching profession at *Gymnasium* or, as teachers who come to us from abroad and whose native language is English, have an unrestricted teaching permit from the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture. In addition to these formal requirements, candidates must be willing and able to face the special challenges of a bilingual and internationally oriented *Gymnasium* in Bavaria. We ensure this with a trial lesson in our school, without which we do not hire. Particularly in a very heterogeneous faculty with teachers from a number of, sometimes very different, countries, we place high demands for openness, tolerance and the ability to cooperate. These same demands also apply to the educational work with our students. We see the different pedagogical cultures represented in our teaching staff as an opportunity and a pronounced enrichment to our academic community. This is why our school is characterized by a very special pedagogy and unique student-teacher relationships.

— 5.2. Professional Development

We expect our teachers to take the initiative in furthering their education in a targeted and continuous manner. Wherever school management sees a need for further training, teachers are referred accordingly.

PD opportunities can be roughly divided into two categories, according to provider and location

5.2.1. Internal

External providers offer courses on general pedagogical topics relevant for all teachers onsite in our school for the entire teaching staff. These courses take place either during our Orientation Week (at the beginning of the school year in the last week of holidays) or on suitable days during the school year (e.g. the Bavarian holiday Buß- und Betttag).



5.2.2. External

For specific, above all subject-related topics, our teachers make use of the advanced training courses offered by the state and municipal authorities. These are, above all:

1. The Regionale LehrerFortBildung (RLFB) der staatlichen MB-Dienststelle;
2. The State Academy for Teacher Training and Personnel Management in Dillingen;
3. The Pedagogical Institute of the City of Munich.
4. IBO training courses throughout Europe

— 5.3. Evaluation

Our teachers are regularly observed in class by the leadership team and receive detailed feedback on these visits. Involvement in the quality assurance of instruction is an important aspect of the school management's leadership role.

Feedback on lessons from students and colleagues is also a valuable aid to our teachers.

5.3.1. Students – Teachers

Our teachers have developed a standard questionnaire, which has been adapted by our subject departments concerning subject-specific issues. This questionnaire provides students the opportunity to give feedback to the teachers about their lessons. The first survey is carried out and evaluated no later mid-term. Teachers and students then discuss the results of the survey and agree on goals to enhance the learning process. A second survey is carried out at the end of the school year and evaluated with regard to the successful achievement of these goals. All survey results are subject to strict confidentiality between students and teachers.

5.3.2. Teacher – Teacher

Peer observation (mutual visits among teaching staff) is a highly effective tool for quality assurance in the classroom. This has recently been reconfirmed by the Hattie study (see John Hattie. *Visible Learning*. 2009 and his updated research). For peer observations, our teachers use the EMU questionnaire (EMU stands for Evidence-based Methods of Teaching

Diagnostics and Development: an action-oriented programme developed at the University of Koblenz-Landau on behalf of the Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder*). This questionnaire is designed to enable the comparison of the instructor's self-assessment to the perceptions of the observer. If desired, this instrument can also be used to incorporate student assessments in the comparison. It is an excellent instrument for reflecting on one's own teaching. Here too, all results remain strictly confidential.

— 5.4. Respizienz

Respizienz is an important and valuable instrument of quality assurance and means the review of written performance records by our Heads of Department. This review assesses the performance records based on formal and content-related criteria, such as the level of standards, the reference to designated curricula and the quality of correction and assessment of student work.

— 5.5. Participation in external testing

5.5.1. Bayerische Jahrgangsstufentests

Every year, our students take part in the Bavarian Year Level Tests. The tests take place at the beginning of the school year in the following grades and subjects:

Grade 6: German and English

Grade 8: German and Mathematics

Grade 10: English and Mathematics

5.5.2. Bundesweite Vergleichsarbeiten VERA8

In the 8th grade, our students participate each year in the nationwide comparative test for grade 8 (VERA8), which takes place in the three subjects German, English and Mathematics.

— 5.6. Parent survey

Once a school year, generally in spring, we carry out a parents' survey to measure parent satisfaction based on a variety of thematic areas and criteria.



6. School organisation

School management ensures that all members of the school community are continuously in-formed about important processes in our Gymnasium. It is also the task of the members of the various school committees to provide adequate information about their work within the school community.

— 6.1. Teachers' committees

6.1.1. Meetings of the teachers' conference

All Gymnasium teachers belong to the Teachers' Conference, which meets at least twice per school year. The Teachers' Conference deals with all the main pedagogical issues of the school, in particular it is responsible for decisions on the student progress.

6.1.2. Regular teacher meetings

Once a month, all teachers meet to discuss current matters and important pedagogical issues. These monthly meetings ensure a continuous exchange among teachers and thus contribute significantly to the quality of their common pedagogical work.

6.1.3. Subject departments

In the subject departments, all staff members who teach the relevant subject work together closely and in a spirit of trust. As a rule, these councils meet four times per school year to exchange ideas on didactic and pedagogical matters specific to their subject. Specialist training may also take place during such meetings.

— 6.2. Discipline

Our Discipline Officer has the unique responsibility to steer the students' behaviour with a good deal of heart and sensitivity and the necessary clarity and consistency. The rules of behaviour at our institution are drawn up jointly and regularly adapted in consultation with the teaching staff. The Discipline Officer works individually with students, teachers and parents and is thus a guarantor for the particularly good atmosphere at our school.

— 6.3. Communication/Information

6.3.1. Newsletter

The newsletter is published four times: at the beginning of the school year, before the Christmas and Easter holidays and at the end of the school year. In addition to an open letter from the leadership team to parents and an overview of dates, the newsletter contains interesting information about various current projects.

6.3.2. Homepage

On our homepage, you will find all essential information about the school, its location, as well as current reports about activities and information about upcoming events.

— 6.4. Handbooks

6.4.1. Teacher's handbook

At the beginning of each school year, a copy of the current teacher's handbook is provided for all teachers, containing all relevant information for the schedule of events and specific processes during the school year. The teacher's handbook is available in both languages (German/English).

6.4.2. Parent's handbook

At the beginning of each school year, parents receive a copy of the current parents' handbook. Its content is part of the contract between the parents/legal guardians and the school authorities. It contains essential information about our Gymnasium, as well as information about the procedure for applications for leaves of absence for students, the availability and office hours of teachers and much more.