

Open Your Heart

Germany for beginners

Finding housing

People in Germany usually rent apartments and it isn't usual for young people to buy a home. Apartments in big German cities are also very expensive and hard to get. There aren't always affordable options available.

There are many different ways that people live in Germany. Whether renting or owning apartments or a house, how and where people live usually depends on how much they earn and what city they live in. Places to live in big cities have become very expensive, regardless if renting or buying property.

Always ask for the entire price when renting

When looking for a place to live, it is important to pay attention to the price per square meter. This is known as "Kaltmiete" or the price without utilities. Together with utilities you have the "Warmmiete", which usually represents the entire cost. Prices for utilities like gas and electricity are rather high and they have a big effect on the entire cost of rent. You should always pay attention to how much the extra costs are when renting a supposedly affordable property.

Most landlords require a deposit that is usually the amount of one to three months rent. The deposit is a guarantee for the landlord. The landlord is required to put this deposit in an account and the renter gets the money back when moving out.

Searching for a place to live

Rental listings in cities can usually be found on rental websites or in the real estate section of the local newspaper. Many organizations for refugees also provide services that can help with finding accommodation. For people with less money there is the possibility to apply for a so-called "Wohnberechtigungsschein" to apply for low-income housing.

One of the most affordable and flexible ways to live is a shared apartment or house called a WG or "Wohngemeinschaft". People in a WG usually each have their own room and share the kitchen and bathroom along with all of the living costs. Friends and even people who don't know each other live in WGs and many young people and students in Germany live in WGs before they can afford their own place.

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Meeting the new neighbors

After you have found an apartment you will need to pay attention the rules of the building. These say when quiet times are and how the building is to be cleaned. People in Germany usually pay close attention if quiet hours are being observed. Quiet hours usually begin at 10 p.m. and on weekends at midnight. A lot of people will call the police without prior notice if they are disturbed.

It is helpful to ask your neighbors to let you know if something is disturbing them. It is a good idea to introduce yourself to your neighbors shortly after you have moved in. If you approach them with friendliness then you will usually receive friendliness in return. Many communities have started initiatives that help refugees find places to live. You should find out if there is a service like this in your city.

Suggested links:

[Information for finding housing \(English\)](#)