

470 ABS/Housing Referral Office Information

Abbreviations German-English:

80 m ²	80 square meters = 860,8 sqft (<i>m² x 10,76 = sqft</i>)
Balk. (=Balkon)	balcony
Bd. (=Bad)	bathroom
Court.(=Courtage)	agent's fee, commission
D. (=Diele)	hallway
DG (=Dachgeschoss)	attic
dt. (=deutsches) Ehepaar	German couple
Du. (=Dusche)	shower
E-Geräte (=Elektrogeräte)	electric appliances
EB-Küche (=Einbauküche)	furnished kitchen, kitchen unit
Einzelperson	single person
Erstbez. (=Erstbezug)	brand new, first tenancy
erstkl. (=erstklassig)	excellent, first class
Fußbodenheizung	floor heating
Garage	garage
Gartenben. (=Gartenbenutzung)	use of garden/lawn possible
Gashzg. (=Gasheizung)	gas heating
GW or Gäste-WC	½ bathroom or separate WC
Holzdecken	wooden ceilings
Hs. (=Haus)	house
Hs. freist. (=freistehendes Haus)	detached house
Hzg. (=Heizung)	heating
Immob. (=Immobilien)	real estate
Makler	real estate agent, broker
inkl. (=inklusive), einschließlich	inclusive, including
Kamin	fire place
Keller	cellar, basement
kinderloses Ehepaar	couple w/o children
kl. (=klein)	small
Kt. or Kaut. (=Kaution)	security deposit
Kue. or Küche	kitchen
Ko'ni. or Ko'nische (=Kochnische)	efficiency kitchen
Lift or Aufzug or Fahrstuhl	elevator
Loggia	covered balcony
Miete	rent
K.Miete (=Kaltmiete)	cold or basic rent
Mietvorauszahlung	advanced payment
MM (=Monatsmiete)	monthly rent
2MM Provision,Courtage	2 months rent commission
möbl. (=möbliert)	furnished
nach Vereinbarung	by appointment

NB or Neub. (=Neubau)	new building
Nh. (=Nähe)	close to
NK (=Nebenkosten)	utilities (additional or side costs)
nur an Deutsche	for Germans only
Ölhzg. (=Öl(zentral)heizung)	oil (central) heating
1. OG (=Obergeschoss)	2. floor
Erdgeschoss, Part. (=Parterre)	1. floor
PKW-Platz, Einstellplatz or Parkplatz	parking
renov. (=renoviert)	renovated, redecorated
ruh. L. (=ruhige Lage)	quiet location
sofort freiwerdend	vacant, available immediately
teilmöbl. (=teilmöbliert)	partially furnished
Tepp., T'boden (=Teppichboden)	wall to wall carpet
Terr. (=Terrasse)	terrace
U., Uml. (=Umlage)	utilities
Wärmepumpe	geothermal heating
Waldlg. (=Waldlage)	near forest
WC (=Toilette)	WC, toilet
Z. (=Zimmer)	room
ZH or Hzg. (=Zentralheizung/Heizung)	central heating (by wall radiators)

When looking to live in Germany you can also use the German advertisements. This can be confusing at times, you maybe expecting more than what you actually get. So use the above guide.

For example: German houses are advertised by the number of rooms and square meters they have. One of these rooms is always considered to be the living room. So if you read an advertisement with a "2 Zimmer Wohnung" (2 Room apartment), this is more than likely to have a kitchen, bathroom and two rooms, one being the living room, the other being the bedroom.

➤ What are "Nebenkosten" (utilities or additional costs)?

Nebenkosten are costs or utilities that can include the following:

- Water - sewage - rain or surface water fee - garbage – heating maintenance - chimney sweeping - property tax - insurances - street cleaning - cable TV (if applicable) - electricity for elevator (if applicable) - hallway and property maintenance (if living in a block with other families) - garden maintenance.

What is not included in the "Nebenkosten"?

- Electricity
 - Telephone / Internet
 - Heating (can be included in utilities, especially when renting apartments)

➤ The rent in Germany is paid by calendar month, and always in advance.

➤ If you were to move out on the 21st of the month for example, by German law you would still have to pay for the full month and no refund would be given. But we expect flexibility on the landlord's side, so you should give at least 30 days written termination notice and pay for the days you stay in the house.

➤ It is the landlord's responsibility to invest the deposit you made when you moved in, this will be done on a special German savings account (Sparbuch). When the time comes to hand the property back at the end of your stay in Germany, and all is in perfect condition, as outlined in your lease contract, you will receive your deposit back plus interest. In the case of any damages or other defects caused by you, the deposit money will be used to cover the cost of repair.

➤ Things you should not do without your landlord's permission:

- Drill through tiled surfaces (e.g. if you wish to put up any shelves/cabinets in the bathroom or kitchen),
- drill in to window frames or wooden panels,
- paint over any wooden fixtures or panels,
- make any structural changes to the house,
- drill through carpets or laminate flooring,
- install any dog/cat flaps,
- cut down any trees or hedges.

➤ If you have any pets, be sure to inform your landlord before you sign the contract, as not all of them will accept them. This also applies if you wish to get a pet during your stay in Germany.

➤ You are allowed to paint every room the way you want to, but remember, it all has to be painted white before you leave. The general rule is, do what your contract says. If you moved into a place that had been renovated before you moved in, then normally you will have to renovate before you leave. If the place wasn't renovated, then you probably won't have to renovate before you leave. Always check with your landlord prior to doing any decorating.

➤ What is expected of the tenant?

The tenant has to:

- Report any damage immediately to the landlord,
- take care of the property and make sure that it is sufficiently aired and heated (for example: when you do your washing make sure no condensation and moisture stays in the house),
- clear entrance path for the property from snow and ice,
- pay the rent and utilities monthly in advance, no later than the third working day of the month to the landlords preferred bank account,
- inform landlord about periods of absence (vacation, TDY).

SHOPPING

Depending on where you live in Germany you will see that shops have various opening times. If you live in the countryside you can expect that most shops will be open between 0930 – 1800 hrs during the week, 0930 – 1400 hrs on Saturdays and closed all day on Sundays. Grocery Shops open earlier than regular shops usually by 0800 hrs. If you live in more built up areas then shops may be open until 2000 hrs on weekdays and until 1800 hrs on Saturdays, sometimes until 2000 hrs. Some shops will also advertise in advance if they will be open on a Sunday, although this is not very common.

REAL, EXTRA & REWE

REAL is one of the larger stores and can be compared to either Wal-Mart or Target for groceries and availability to buy other household items. These stores are big and white with REAL signed in blue and red and offer excellent parking facilities. CREDIT CARDS are accepted in most of the big REAL Stores. EXTRA & REWE are similar to REAL but slightly smaller and a little more expensive although they do have a slightly fancier layout.

ALDI, LIDL & PLUS

ALDI, LIDL & PLUS are mainly grocery stores (discounts) that offer good prices on all foods. They are a lot smaller than REAL. One of their additional specials are the NON-Food items that they sell and change once a week.

TCHIBO

Tchibo nothing's impossible! Coffee, fashion, and technology - the world of Tchibo products is varied, innovative and always new. Tchibo has been offering its Customers a unique retailing trio of roasted coffee sales, consumer goods and coffee bars since the early 1970s. If you like German coffee, you will LOVE Tchibo.

HORNBACH & OBI

This is the German branch of HOME DEPOT; in fact it is the same company. You will find it located in Holland near the Woonbulevard, Heerlen and in Moenchengladbach on the A61. HORNBACH, OBI, PRAKTIKER, BAUHAUS and TOOM Baumarkt, are all DIY stores that are very popular in Germany and offer many varieties of products for the home and garden.

FRESSNAPF

is a super market dedicated for your pets, if you need cat litter, dog biscuits, rabbit food or a new fish tank, this is the place to go.

TOOM / DURSTY

In Germany you will notice that most of the time when you buy any drink in a bottle from a super market or on the highway, you will pay for “pfand”. “Pfand” means “deposit”, and you will be reimbursed that “pfand” once you have finished with the bottle and return it to a store that will buy it back. This is done to help promote recycling, a practise commonly associated with the Germans. Most of the supermarkets that sell these types of bottles will often be the ones that buy them back from you, for example, if you buy a drink from a highway gas station, you will be able to return it to REAL. Discount grocery stores like ALDI, will only sell and buy back their own bottles.