



Herzlich Willkommen!

A brief guide to get you started on your new journey

Pre departure stuff

1. Student Visa

You should apply for a student visa. Please look into the website of respective consulates for application procedure.

2. Accommodation

Start your search for accommodation as early as you can.

Ask whether the room is furnished or unfurnished.

Ask about the bedding and towels.

If possible do not arrive at weekend or late night. If you have no other choice, inform your studentenwerk/place of accommodation in advance so that they can arrange for you to receive the keys.

Do take a good look at the condition of the apartment; you will be expected to return it in the same condition in which it was handed over to you.

Make sure you completely understand the contract before you sign it with the landlord, Do ask what is covered in the rent and what is not covered.

Student accommodation

Student accommodation is the cheapest form of housing for the students. The studentenwerk offer different type of housing within student accommodation. Besides furnished rooms, they have unfurnished rooms as well. Furnished rooms are generally equipped with a writing desk, a bed, a wardrobe and shelving. Pillow, blanket, bedding and towel are not provided. In some studentenwerk, these can be bought or even rented.

More information is available on this link:

http://www.internationale-studierende.de/en/prepare_your_studies/accomodation/student_accomodation/

Each city has their own studentenwerk website; please check out the website of your respective cities.

For Hannover: <http://www.studentenwerk-hannover.de/>

For Berlin: <http://www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/>

For Munich: <http://www.studentenwerk-muenchen.de/en/>

For Stuttgart: <http://www.studentenwerk-stuttgart.de/en/the-sws>

You can have a look at the studentenwerk website of your city.

Shared flat and private apartment

Private shared flats (called Wohngemeinschaften in German or just WG) are another option for you. Students live in a shared flat; each has their own room, with a shared kitchen and bathroom. The occupants also share the rent/electricity/heating/internet.

Links for shared flat:

<http://in.easyroommate.com/>, <http://www.wohngemeinschaft.de/>, <http://www.studenten-wg.de/>,
<http://www.zwischenmiete.de/>, <http://www.wg-gesucht.de/>

Links for private apartment:

<http://www.studenten-wohnung.de/>, <http://www.studentenwohnungsmarkt.de/>

Internet

The student housing comes with Internet included in the room rent. There is a person in charge of the Internet in the dorms. You need to contact him/her for activating the internet on your computer. You can ask your Hausmeister (Warden/caretaker of the hostel) to give you the details of the person. All of them have specific office hours. So make sure you meet them during their office hours.

“DOWNLOADING IS ILLEGAL IN GERMANY”. There are people who have been fined heavily due to downloading/uploading. So if you do, it is at your own risk!

There is also a limit to the internet usage (~4-6 GB per week) in the students' dorms. If you exceed the limit you will be disconnected for a certain period. Please find out about the usage limits when you get the connection.

Private flats: Sometimes it is provided with the flat. But if you don't have one, then you can go to the telephone providers like Telekom, Alice (O2) etc. from where you get the modem, the LAN/WLAN etc. But this process generally takes time (~1 month).

There is also a possibility of Internet Surf-sticks. One can contact the local providers in Germany for further information.

3. Packing your bags

Documents

Passport, Academic certificates, Health insurance papers, Bank documents, International student identity card (ISIC). Please carry all original certificates together with extra copies of each document and some photographs.

Keep all documents and money in your hand baggage.



ISIC POINTS OF SALE IN INDIA:

http://www.isic.org/student-card/apply-for-a-card.html/?fx=disCountry&countryName=India#!/student-card/apply-for-a-card.html/?locationGeold=1269750&posLetter=* &geoType=COUNTRY&locationName=India

This can also act as an ID card (with photo) in the future.

Money

Keep some cash with you for the first 2-3 weeks, you will have to spend money on lodging and boarding, transport, advance rent caution deposit and health insurance etc.

You cannot withdraw more than 649 EURO in one month from your **blocked account (different from a Jungeskonto)**, so please carry enough cash with you because first month is going to be very expensive.

A general estimate of expenditure:

- Caution deposit for accommodation (for student housing only): 200-300 € (in the first month)
- Room rent (for student housing only): 180-250 €/month
- Blanket, bedding and pillow: 50-70 € (1st month)
- Immatrikulation fee: 280-325 € (every semester)
- Visa extension fee: 60-100 €
- Tuition fee (depends on your university).
- Monthly food: 60-100€
- Phone: 25-30€

These are just some major expenses, so please calculate accordingly, how much money will be needed during your initial days in Germany.

Make sure you have some coins (~10€) just in case you have to make a call etc.

Clothes

It gets really cold in Germany, so make sure you have enough warm clothes to start with. Do carry some light clothes as well for summers. It would be nice if you have a set or two of formal wear for formal occasions and traditional Indian dress for festival celebrations.

Keep one jacket, gloves and an umbrella in your hand baggage as you may need them immediately after landing.

Medicine

Do carry some basic medicines with you. In case you have any special medical requirement, make sure that you have all the supplies at least for the initial days together with the prescription.

As a precaution, have a physician's prescriptions for all the drugs you are carrying.

Spectacles: Carry at least two extra specs with you. Or make sure your health insurance covers it.

Bedding

Bed-linen, blanket and pillow, you can buy them here. Generally if you are in a student hostel (from Studentenwerk) then the room is given with the bedding and Internet facility. You generally get the bedding (Blanket and pillow) at an extra cost (40-50€).

Food

You can bring some spices with you according to your taste; do carry some ready to eat stuff for the initial days.

You need not carry a lot of food items such as rice and lentils etc, you can buy them here at almost same price.

You can get some utensils with you like plate, spoon, bowl and a cup for the first few days till you get to know the place better. Some students prefer buying the utensils including pots and pans in Germany due to Baggage restrictions. One can get everything here (eg. Kaufland) at a slightly higher price.

Other items

Laptop, charger, mobile phones and any other gadget.

As far as we have seen, we do not get hair oil here. So please carry hair oil if you are used to it.

Adaptors: You must carry a suitable adapter with you. Germany has round two pin sockets, so carry suitable adapters with you.

Extension cord: Bring one extension cord (round 2-pin) with you.



German electrical socket and plug

Your first steps in Germany:

City registration (Einwohnermeldeamt) - local resident

This should be done within 10 days of your arrival.

Required documents:

- Passport
- Uni Invitation /admission Letter
- Proof of local address (House Contract)

You receive: **Meldebestätigung** - a document that is a proof that you are a registered local resident.



University Registration

Semester fees

You get a University Student ID (with Semester Ticket which allows free public transport in and around the University town) with your details and Matriculation number (Immatrikulationsnummer) - **Immatrikulationsbescheinigung**. This proves that you are a student in xxx University in Germany.

Bank Account

Opening a bank account for students (Jungeskonto) is FREE in Germany.

Online banking is provided as well with an Online Pin.

Required documents:

- Passport
- Immatrikulationsbescheinigung or any letter that proves your student status (admission letter)
- Anmeldungsbescheinigung (Cty registration - proof of local residency)

You get a **Debit Card** - can be used to swipe as well for Shopping etc.

Since student accounts are free, one has to renew his/her student status. It should be checked with the bank. Mostly it is every 2 years but it is recommended to get more information from the bank.

Credit Cards

Students also have the possibility to get a Credit Card with a monthly limit of 500 euros. But they charge an annual fee e.g. 30€ for Deutsche Bank; 10€p.a with a monthly limit of 1000€ for Sparkasse.

Some organizations - DKB, Postbank - Prepaid Credit card.

Health Insurance

Companies: AOK / TK etc.

Private / Public

Cost: different offers (25-70€) depending on one's needs

Requirements:

- Passport
- Immatrikulationsbescheinigung (Student ID)
- Bank details

To visit a doctor you need to fix an appointment via telephone. One generally has to pay a basic fee of 10€ that is valid for any number of visits to the doctor in the next 3 months. You need to produce your health insurance card/document to the doctor. Some doctors charge you directly and you need to send the prescription and the bill to the insurance agency for your refund that gets credited to your bank account while some doctors get it done directly from the insurance agency.

Visa Extension (Visumverlängerung - Ausländischerbehörde)

Should be done within 90 days of your arrival

Required documents:

- Passport
- Admission Letter
- Student ID (Immatrikulationsbescheinigung)
- Meldebescheinigung
- Health Insurance
- Passport size photo (Biometric)
- Fee (30-80€)

Electronic visa (**Elektronisches Aufenthaltstitel**) - permits you to travel in the Schengen countries of the European Union.

Phone Connection

Required documents:

- Passport
- Student ID
- Bank details (for postpaid)

Providers: O2, Vodafone, Eplus etc.

National / International offers

Postpaid/prepaid

International Calling

Skype

voip / Mobilevoip - (~1 cent per minute)

Note: In spite of the document list being mentioned here, it is advisable to ask the responsible office while fixing an appointment to confirm the documents required.

University Related



Pre departure:

Keep in touch with concerned person in International office/ course coordinator/ Indian student organization of your university. Find out if they assign someone to help you out during your arrival and for the first few days.

After arrival:

Get immatriculated (registered) at the university. For this you have to pay your semester fees (online transfer/deposit at bank).

Immatriculation card/Semester ticket will be sent in a week or two. Find out if the university provides any temporary transport ticket or buy one from your city's transport company.

Immatriculation card/Semester ticket –

- Document of registration at the University. Free transport in the city/state (depends on the university)
- Free university Wifi (get it activated after getting the Immatriculation card)
- Serves as your student identity card
- Other services for students (like free bike repair, etc.)-Varies depending on the university
- Needs to be renewed before the end of each semester for the next semester

Studentenwerk –

Student services

Every university/university city has one.

Responsible for maintaining Uni Dormitories, canteens (Mensa), etc

This is where you have to contact if you want a university dorm (usually the cheapest accommodation option but also hard to get one)

Local Studentenwerk websites provide important information for the students

International office - Important for foreign students

Many international offices of the universities help students to find a room or help with administrative works like city registration, opening bank account, etc.

It conducts orientation programs, events and excursions for students at reduced price.

Contact your international office for more information.

Funding

Some universities have funding available for students from specific nationalities or for specific courses. Sometimes scholarships are provided to cover the tuition/semester fees. Short term scholarships (for 1 semester/1 year) also given out by different foundations / organisations. Check university, international office, student association and studentenwerk websites for offers

HiWi jobs (Wissenschaftliche Hilfskraft)

It means a voluntary assistant job at the university.

It can be research assistant/teaching assistant or an assistant in a department at the University.

You get paid up to 400€ a month.

Some of these jobs demand German language proficiency.

Part time jobs

Working outside the university

Jobs can be general or specific to your education (like part time job at companies which employ students with specific subject knowledge)

As per new guidelines, students can work 120 full days or 240 half days per year.

Earnings of more than 400€ a month is subjected to taxes

Semester - A semester is divided into lecture period and non lecture period. As the name itself suggests the lectures are held during the lecture period. The duration generally is around 4 months. The non lecture period is for conducting practical courses and exams.

Examinations - Are held after the lecture period ends. Check the examination regulations of your university to understand how it works (no. of attempts, mode of examination, etc.)

Professor-Student interaction - Need to take/fix an appointment before meeting.

It's VERY important to be punctual. Punctuality is absolutely necessary not just with meeting professors but also if you plan to meet someone (appointment at bank, appointment at Ausländerbehörde, etc).

Work culture - Work is taken very seriously here. Working hours at the university are 8h00 to 17h00 generally. People are punctual and like to leave by 17h00 in the evening to enjoy the evening so if you have some work to be done with a university official, make sure you get it done before 17h00 or even earlier in some cases. The work environment is calm and friendly. Colleagues are often seen having lunch together in the Mensa albeit a brief one compared to India. If you do get to work at the university remember that you can always ask your colleagues for help. They will not directly approach you and offer help but instead you will need to take the initiative. They are willing to help students always provided you are well prepared and show interest in the subject. It is imperative to fix an appointment via email or visit during their visiting hours. Everyone uses email as the primary channel of communication and it is preferred to even a phone call.

Dormitory and Apartment etiquettes

Since staying in a university dormitory with students from various nationalities is something new, it requires some time to figure out the Do's and Don'ts of staying in dorm rooms. Click [here](#) to download an illustrated dictionary of dorm life prepared by DAAD and Studentenwerk Bielefeld.

Tax - Steuer / Steueridentifikationsnummer

One can work part time (Nebentätigkeit) and earn upto 400€ which is tax-free. If you cross the 400 euro tax free limit, then the percentage of tax depends on how much you earn. Please contact your employer for further details. Once you get the details of tax class etc. you have to register at the Finance Office and get a Tax card which has your Tax identification number (Steuer ID).

Food, Transport and Holidays

Indian food

Food is not as big a problem as you think. As expected there is plenty of meat on offer but vegetarians need not worry. There is always something for vegetarians at restaurants.



For those of you looking to cook Indian food you really do not need to carry spices, rice and wheat. Most Indian spices and condiments are available at Indian shops. Even if there aren't any where you stay, you will find the basics at an Asian shop of which there are many. Rice cookers can also be bought here (~20€)

Mensa

The university mess/canteen is called the mensa. Hot meals are provided in the afternoon for everybody. Meals are subsidized for students. There is plenty of variety and there is always a vegetarian dish available. Meals start at about 1.80€ which is considerably cheaper than restaurants. A meal in the mensa would cost you approx. 3-4€ (Uni Hannover).

German cuisine and international delicacies are generally served. A typical german meal would consist of meat, potatoes/rice, and soup/salad. Pasta and pizza are present in abundance. Do try the cake in Germany. It's delicious.

A meal at a good restaurant will be at least 8€. Cheaper options like McDonalds, Burger King, etc are available.

Airport transfers

A typical german city has a "city centre" which consists of the Hauptbahnhof (Main railway station) and the surrounding blocks. The airports (Flughafen) are usually on the outskirts of the city (about 30 minutes from the Hauptbahnhof). Quite a few of you will be landing in major cities and then heading to your respective universities and to do this you will either be taking a flight or a train. To take a train to a different city once you land you will need to go to the Hauptbahnhof of

that city and then catch another train to your destination. Transfers from the airport are frequent and easily available. Just follow the signs in the airport and take the train/bus that is heading to the Hauptbahnhof. Do not hesitate to ask the information centres for help. They all speak English. To check for trains you can use the website: <http://www.bahn.de/i/view/DEU/en/index.shtml> there is an english version. Choose "local transport only" for cheaper regional trains.

There are fast trains (ICE and IC) and regional trains (RE, ME etc.). The regional trains are cheaper but take longer. You can use either of these to get from the bahnhof to any other city.

Transport within your city of residence is taken care of by a local organization. For people who do not have a semester card, you can get monthly passes. The cost of the monthly pass depends on which zone of the city you live in and where you would expect to travel to for that month. Bicycles are a good option for summer and spring.



Travel/Holidays

Deutsche Bahn - Student offers.

Always ask if there are student offers when booking tickets. There are offers also available for travelers under the age of 25. Other offers include special weekend tickets (Schönes Wochenende ticket), state specific tickets (Länder ticket), etc. Book early if you want to get cheap tickets for fast trains.

Car pooling (Mitfahr)

Another fun way to travel is by car. People driving between cities offer to take people along for a price. You can register for it on these websites:

<http://www.mitfahrzentrale.de/index.php?landnr=D&lang=GB>

<http://www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de/>

It is safe as far as we know and it usually is a nice way to travel and take advantage of the autobahns (highways). It is usually cheaper than taking a train (5-7€/100 km).

Holiday booking

- Deutsche bahn offers
- Low cost airlines - Ryan air, Air berlin etc.
- Airbnb
- hrs
- Youth hostels (Jugendherberge)

Low cost airlines have strict baggage limitations. Read the rules and regulations very carefully before booking. Carry your passport while travelling.

Extras

A few important Shops:

- Food/Grocery: Rewe, Lidl, Aldi, Penny, Edeka, Kaufland.
- Cosmetics, Hair products, Household stuff etc.: Rossmann, DM, Douglas, Galeria Kaufhof
- Clothes: H&M, C&A, Galeria Kaufhof, Zara, New Yorker, and a lot more.
- Medicines: With a doctor's prescription at the Apotheke.
- Indian spices: Indian/Asian shops
- Shoes: Deichmann, Schuh Center, Sidestep etc.
- Stationery: McPaper, Galeria Kaufhof, Rossmann

It is advisable to have a copy of your passport in your wallet at all times during your stay in Germany.

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**All the best!**

Information compiled by Devesh, Jaspreet, Pragyan, Vinay and distributed by Indian Academic Society Hannover (IASH).

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