

Pforzheim University Fact Sheet

Germany 101



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Welcome to Germany! To help you prepare for your time here, we've put together a list of practical facts and cultural tips so you know what to expect when you arrive.

Daily Life and Opening Hours

- Shops are closed on Sundays: Almost all stores, supermarkets, and malls are closed on Sundays. Only some restaurants, cafes, and bakeries may open for few hours.
- Early Closing Times: Most shops close around 8:00 PM, and smaller ones might close even earlier, around 6:00 PM.
- 24/7 Convenience Stores don't exist: Plan your grocery shopping in advance.
 Gas stations, train station kiosk or the so called "Späti" kiosk are your only late-night/last-minute options.



Public Transport



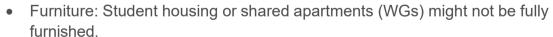
- Punctuality and Reliability: Germans are known for their punctuality their trains and buses, however, not always. While public transport generally runs on time, delays do happen, so it's always a good idea to check the schedule using the DB Navigator or local apps like VPE (Verkehrsverbund Pforzheim).
- Tickets required: Always have a valid ticket before boarding.
 Fines for riding without a ticket are high (60 Euro or more).
- Monthly Semesterticket: Considering getting a student public transport ticket if it is not included in our semester fees. (D-Ticket JugendBW)

Money and Payments

- Cash is King: Many places like restaurants, bakeries and cafés don't take cards, especially EC cards from abroad. Always carry some cash (Bargeld).
- Banking: Opening a German bank account (e.g., online banks like N26 or traditional ones like Sparkasse) can be helpful for rent, phone bills, etc.



Living and Housing:





- TV/Radio Tax (GEZ): Every household in Germany must pay a broadcasting license fee, even if you don't own a TV.
 This is not a scam - it's mandatory.
- Waste separation: Recycling is serious here. Learn to sort your trash into paper, plastic, biodegradable waste, glass, and general waste.
 Otherwise, you can be fined.



Administrative Culture:

- City Registration (Anmeldung): You must register your address with the local city office within 2 weeks of arrival.
- Most administrative procedures require an appointment. Some can be booked online, other may require a phone call/email.
- Health Insurance required: You'll need valid health insurance, German or equivalent, before enrollment.
- Residence Permit: Non-EU students need a visa unless they're from countries exempt from this requirement (<u>Exemptions for entry into the</u> <u>Federal Republic of Germany</u>) and for stay for longer than 90 days, they must apply for a residence permit shortly after arrival.



Cultural Norms



- Punctuality Matters: Germans are very punctual. Always be on time for classes, appointments, and meetings.
- Quiet Hours: "Ruhezeiten" (quiet hours) are taken seriously. Typically, after 10 PM and all-day Sunday. Avoid loud music.
- Direct Communication: Germans tend to be straightforward don't mistake it for rudeness. It's just part of the culture.

Technology and Communication

- WhatsApp is the most common messaging app.
- SIM Cards: Prepaid SIMs are available in stores like Aldi, Lidl, or Telekom. You'll need ID and proof of residence for activation.
- Wi-Fi: Most student housing includes Wi-Fi, getting your own router is preferred. Public Wi-Fi is not as common as in some countries.
- Language: Many Germans speak English, especially younger people and students but basic German will help a lot in everyday situations.



Before You Pack



- Bring EU Power Adapters: Germany uses Type F plugs (230V).
 Check if you need an adapter for your devices.
- Weather can vary: Pack for all seasons. Winters can be cold and wet bring a warm coat, gloves, and waterproof shoes

We're excited to welcome you to Hochschule Pforzheim!

Enjoy your time in Germany, make new friends, explore new cultures, and don't hesitate to reach out to us if you need any support.

Your adventure starts here. Willkommen!



German phrases for everyday situations

English German
Hello! Hallo!

Good morning Guten Morgen
Good day / Hello Guten Tag
Good evening Guten Abend

Bye! Tschüss!

Goodbye Auf Wiedersehen

Have a nice day! Einen schönen Tag noch! How are you? Wie geht's dir?

l'm fine, thank you. Mir geht's gut, danke.
Thank you (very much) Danke (schön/sehr)

Please / You're welcome Bitte

Excuse me / Sorry Entschuldigung

My name is ... Ich heiße ... Ich komme aus ...

I don't speak German. Ich spreche kein Deutsch.
Can you repeat that? Können Sie das wiederholen?

It's nice to meet you.

Es freut mich, dich kennenzulernen.

Do you speak English?

Sprichst du Englisch? (informal)

Sprechen Sie Englisch? (formal)

Where is ...? Wo ist ...?

How much is this? Wie viel kostet das? I'm hungry / thirsty. Ich habe Hunger / Durst.

I don't understand. Ich verstehe nicht.

Can you help me?

Kannst du mir helfen? (informal)

Können Sie mir helfen? (formal)

No problem! Kein Problem!

All right! / Got it! Alles klar!

Have fun! Viel Spaß!
Good luck! Viel Glück!
Bless you! Gesundheit!