

Housing Booklet

h_da

HOCHSCHULE DARMSTADT
UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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Note:

To increase the readability, the use of the male gender in this booklet applies to both males and females.

Disclaimer

The information contained herein was dutifully and thoroughly researched; still we cannot assume liability for the contents. The information provided is not necessarily complete, encompassing or up-to-date.

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Housing ABCs

Agents

The person who hires an estate agent has to pay the commission. Usually this is the property owner. Apartments registered by an agent are often expensive and there are long waiting lists.

Broadcasting fee (Rundfunkbeitrag)

Every household in Germany must pay the broadcasting fee of 17,50€ per month. If you live in a shared flat, you can usually share the fee. If you receive BAföG (German study loan), you can apply for an exemption from paying the broadcasting fee.

Darmstadt and the surrounding area

In larger cities like Darmstadt, Frankfurt or Mainz, it is very difficult to find affordable accommodation. The demand is enormous. It is often easier to find a flat in the outskirts or suburbs.

Deposit

Landlords normally require a deposit that equals 1 to 3 months' rent. By law, the maximum allowed deposit is 3 months.

Flat viewing

When you are lucky enough to be invited to a flat viewing, a confident appearance will increase your chances. The landlord might arrange an individual flat viewing with you, but it also might happen that you are invited together with many other interested future tenants. Be aware that there are usually many competitors for the same flat or room. Do not be too shy to ask questions to the landlord and show your interest. If you really like the flat and are ok with the conditions, let your landlord know that you are willing to accept the offer.

Sometimes the current tenants are in charge of finding a new tenant. They may want you to pay a discounted price for the furniture they would like to leave behind. This is actually illegal but often accepted by people who are desperately searching for a flat.

Fraud

Do not send any money to anybody before you see the apartment and sign a housing contract. If someone wants your money before you see the apartment, be very careful! Unfortunately, it often happens that

ominous landlords (who say that they are currently abroad) demand the deposit and the first months' rent before a tenant has seen the apartment. If you pay the money, it is lost and there is not an apartment either.

Liability insurance

As a tenant, you should at least have a liability insurance (it also may be required by the landlord). Provider: e.g. insurance broker Sailer („Liability insurance for students from abroad“ - Costs: approx. 40€ for 6 months).

Register your address: “Meldepflicht”

In Germany, you are obligated to register your address in the city office within 2 weeks after you have moved. For that, you need your valid passport and the “**Wohnungsgeberbestätigung**” (see below) that has to be signed by your landlord. When you move (even within the same town), you always have to inform the local city office (Bürgerbüro / Einwohnermeldeamt) about your new address.

Regular ventilation

Regular ventilation is very important for a healthy indoor climate and for avoiding mold. Especially when you dry your laundry in the apartment or cook a lot: make sure to open the window! Otherwise, self-inflicted mold growth may occur and its treatment and elimination can get very expensive for you.

Rent

Rooms in shared flats (WGs) are particularly attractive because they are relatively inexpensive. Additionally, they offer the possibility to connect with other students quickly. Every tenant has their own room whereas you share the kitchen and bathroom with flat-mates. The prices for a room in a shared flat range from ca. 300€ to 400€ per month. The prices for a single-room apartment range from ca. 400€ to 650€. Be aware of additional costs (“NK, Nebenkosten”) such as heating, water or internet that may not be included in your rent yet.

1. Net “cold” rent (Kaltmiete)

Factors such as town size, prosperity of the region and the demand influence the price. Be prepared to pay about 11€ net rent per square meter in Darmstadt and the surrounding areas. Generally, apartment

listings provide information about the net “cold” rent. The net rent is the part of the rent that you pay to your landlord each month and that contains **no additional costs**. It usually consists of the costs for the use of living space. The size of the apartment and the price per square meter (as noted in the regional rent table - [Mietpreisspiegel](#)) determine the prize.

2. Additional costs (Nebenkosten)

When you rent an apartment, there are costs in addition to the net rent. These additional costs are called “Nebenkosten”, often abbreviated as “**NK**”. Water and heating – the main component of the additional costs – are charged based on usage. You pay a monthly prepayment amount to your landlord and receive an accurate invoicing at the end of the year. In addition, other costs included in the NK are usually fees for disposal, insurance and property tax. There are often other costs included too, different from case to case. **In any case, the landlord must state all costs in your housing contract.**

3. Gross “warm” rent (Warmmiete)

Gross rent = net rent + additional costs.

(Warmmiete = Kaltmiete + Nebenkosten)

To calculate the gross “warm” rent, you have to add up the net “cold” rent and additional costs as noted in your housing contract. You have to pay the total amount to your landlord as monthly rent.

When you rent your own apartment, you have to pay electricity, internet, telephone and possibly a cable connection, too. You are responsible for making contracts with the respective providers.

Rent control

In Germany, consumer protection in tenancy law has a special importance. Special notice rules are an example: The landlord is entitled to terminate the tenant in special circumstances. However, the term of notice period in the housing contract must be considered so that the tenant has time to look for something new. Lessee protection is also understood as the tenant’s right of reduction. If there is a (not self-inflicted) problem in the home, e.g. moldy walls or if the heating does not work, the tenant can reduce the rent independently (in appropriate conditions), e.g. shorten the rent. Of course, the interests of the landlord must also be considered. The tenant must show the problem to the landlord and give him the opportunity to remedy the problem. If you are a tenant making a repair or e.g. take care of the mold removal by yourself, you

have no claim for compensation of the costs by the landlord.

If a legal dispute arises between you and your landlord regarding rent-related regulations, the civil court is responsible. The German “**Mieterbund**” (tenant bund) can give support in this matter.

Rent in shared flats

In a shared flat, one of your roommates is usually the so-called main tenant (Hauptmieter). He makes a sublease agreement (Untermietvertrag) with you. Normally, you pay your part of the rent directly to him and not to the landlord.

The main tenant consequently pays the gross “warm” rent for all roommates to the landlord.

Rest time / night rest

The night rest is from 10 p.m. (in the evening) to 7 a.m. (in the morning).

On Sundays and public holidays, the rest period is the whole day, e.g. from midnight to midnight. During this time, you should not make loud noises, play loud music or similar things, which could disturb your neighbours.

Signing housing contracts

Housing contracts are normally very detailed. If your landlord does not provide a contract, you can purchase a template in a stationery shop. Some contracts include clauses such as “male visitors are not allowed”. **This is illegal.** Read the contract **CAREFULLY** before you sign. Also, check the housing contract to find out who is responsible for renovating the flat when changing tenants.

Student associations

ATTENTION! 100€ for a shared room in a villa? You can often find offers like that on [wg-gesucht.de](#). Most likely, this is an offer published by a student association or fraternity. You need to become a member in order to get the room. In case you are thinking about joining a student association, please carefully seek information about this matter in advance.

Telephone and Internet

Provider are for example:

- 1&1
- QSC
- Telekom
- O2
- Unitymedia
- Vodafone

DSL 16.000: 9,99€ to 19,99€

DSL 100.000: 19,99€ to 34,99€

In some cases, a telephone flat rate is included.

Contract term: varies from 1 month (e.g. at 02) to 1 or 2 years. A contract with a monthly period of notice is more expensive.

Time and patience required

Finding accommodation can be time-consuming and frustrating. Many other international and German students are in the same position: searching at the same time, in the same area and with the same budget as you. Good and affordable offers are rare. Try to start your search as soon as possible! For the summer term, start in January or February and for the winter term in May, June or July.

Waste separation

Residual waste, which is non-recyclable waste, goes into the black residual waste bin. The yellow or green recycling bin is for plastic containers,

tinplate, aluminum, composite and Styrofoam. Paper, magazines and cardboard go in the blue paper bin.

The brown compost bin is for leftovers, coffee and tea filters, paper napkins, lawn cut and foliage.

Glass bottles and jars for drinks and foods are disposed of in different colored recycled glass containers on the street.

Be aware that costs arise for incorrect disposal.

Please check with your landlord on the waste separation rules for your city and accommodation.

Wohnungsgeberbestätigung

As a tenant, it is your responsibility to register and de-register within 2 weeks after moving into a new flat. The landlord is obligated to complete and sign the so-called "Wohnungsgeberbestätigung" for you. The occupancy of an apartment or a shared apartment under 2 weeks is officially not considered as a move-in and does not require a housing confirmation.

Find apartment listings

There are different ways to find a flat. You can also publish your own housing request.

Apartment databases

There are various apartment databases, which can help in your search for student flat shares or flats, e.g.:

- wg-gesucht.de
- studenten-wg.de
- immobilienscout.de

Further providers are listed under: „[Accommodation databases and housing providers](#)“.

Bulletin boards

Check the bulletin board in front of the café glass box in the h_da-skyscraper C10: sometimes there are housing ads from students there.

You can also ask the department (Fachschaft) in your course of studies or other studies. They usually also have a bulletin board.

Facebook

On Facebook, there are groups in which people publish housing offers and requests. Search e.g. for „**Wohnung /WG Darmstadt**“ or „**Wohnungsmarkt Darmstadt**“. You can respond to housing offers and post your own housing request.

Local daily newspapers

Once or twice a week - on Wednesdays and Saturdays - the local daily newspapers print housing announcements. Look in the "To rent" (Zu vermieten) section (or similar).

Place an ad

It is a good idea to advertise your own ad or application on the internet or in a local newspaper. This is e.g. possible on immobilienscout.de, wg-gesucht.de or in the newspapers Darmstädter Echo or Darmstädter Tagblatt. Describe yourself for example as a quiet, serious student, who does sports and loves nature. The way you present yourself is very important. You should also name the type of accommodation you are looking for, as well as the area and rent amount that you are willing to pay. Always give a German telephone or mobile number and a serious email address. Be aware that older landlords, who are also more likely to use newspapers to advertise their homes than the internet, prefer to contact potential tenants by telephone.

Private student residences

In Darmstadt, there are also a number of private residences, in addition to the university housing:

- The FIZZ
- SMARTments
- Stolze Haus
- Lincoln-Siedlung

Studierendenwerk Housing

There are several student residences in Darmstadt and Dieburg. Please contact the Studierendenwerk Darmstadt.

The first nights

If your flat hunting was not successful before or immediately after arrival, you will need accommodation for the first few nights. Youth hostels can be a solution as they are inexpensive. For an overnight stay in a youth hostel, you must be a member of an association of the International Youth Hostel Federation. You can join the hostel directly. Airbnb can also be a cheap option for the first nights.

Abbreviations in apartment listings

Abbreviation	Bedeutung	Meaning
a. A.	auf Anfrage	On demand
AB	Altbau	Old building
Abl.	Ablöse	Transfer fee
AK	Abstellkammer	Storage room
EBK	Einbauküche (gelegentlich auch: Ein Zimmer, Bad und Küche)	Fitted kitchen (occasionally also: one room, bathroom and kitchen)
m. F.	mit Fenster	With window
KM	Kaltmiete	Cold rent (rent without heating, water, energy, internet etc.)
NB	Neubau	New construction
TG	Tiefgaragenstellplatz	Underground car park
TB, TLB	Tageslichtbad	Daylight bath
VB	Verhandlungsbasis	Negotiation basis, basis for negotiation
WM	Warmmiete	Warm rent (rent including heating, water, electrical energy, internet etc.)
ZKB	Zimmer, Küche, Bad	Room with kitchen, bathroom
ZKBB	Zimmer mit Küche, Bad und Balkon	Room with kitchen, bathroom and balcony

You can find a detailed table in the annex.

How to apply for accommodation

Application Letter

With your letter of application, the landlord receives a first impression of who you are. It should be short and concise. Landlords generally receive lots of applications for just one apartment.

The letter of application should answer the following questions:

- For which flat/ad are you applying?
- How many people would move in and how old are they?
- What is your financial situation (e.g. parental support, formal obligation, salary / wage, BAföG)?
- Possibly: How much monthly rent are you willing and able to pay (if monthly rent is unknown)?

Do not forget to provide your contact details (address, telephone number, serious email address) in the cover letter, so that the landlord can contact you.

Income Statement

The proof of income is indispensable for a housing application. These can be:

- **The last 3 salary statements or pay statements**
- **Child benefit proof**
- **Proof of student loans**
- **Monthly support, e.g. of parents / formal obligation of a person living in Germany**

Submit a copy of your proof of income enclosed to the application letter. Pay attention to clean and well-readable prints.

Other required notices and documents

Sometimes the new landlord asks the “old” landlord for a certificate of your punctual payment. If you are a student who does not have a personal income, the landlord may require a written guarantee. This guarantee can e.g. be from your parents or another person living in Germany.

In rare cases, you have to fill out a pre-printed **self-evidence sheet** which contains

- Family and working conditions
- Income
- The personal reasons for the planned change of residence.

If you are unsure which documents and notices have to be submitted in addition to the application letter, the easiest way is to check with the landlord before submitting the application.

Hint: Information from the “SCHUFA” or the

application for a police certificate, if necessary, might take a long time. Therefore, it may be useful to obtain all these documents prior to the search for accommodation. The faster you provide all needed documents, the better chance you have of being selected.

The application letter for a new apartment is your personal business card. Therefore, be careful when compiling the documents.

- **Absolute cleanliness**
- **Good readability**
- **Correct spelling**

Accommodation databases and housing providers

Below a small number on databases and housing providers. Please note that most pages are only available in German. If you need assistance, please contact the h_da Housing Mentors.

Apartment on offer

- [immobilienscout24.de](https://www.immobilienscout24.de)
- [wohnungsboerse.net](https://www.wohnungsboerse.net)
- [ebay-kleinanzeigen.de/s-darmstadt/wg/k0l4888](https://www.ebay-kleinanzeigen.de/s-darmstadt/wg/k0l4888)
- [meinestadt.de/deutschland/immobilien](https://www.meinestadt.de/deutschland/immobilien)
- [immozentral.com](https://www.immozentral.com)
- [immonet.de](https://www.immonet.de)
- [immowelt.de](https://www.immowelt.de)
- [verivox.de/immobilien/mieten](https://www.verivox.de/immobilien/mieten)
- [lieblingsmieter.de](https://www.lieblingsmieter.de)
- [null-provision.de](https://www.null-provision.de)

Catholic Student Residence

Dormitory of the Catholic Student Community of Darmstadt:

- [khg-darmstadt.de](https://www.khg-darmstadt.de)

Local Newspapers

You will find accommodation in many newspapers and magazines in the area. Make sure to check them regularly. It would also be a possibility to put your own ad! Note, however, this usually costs money.

Here are the names of some local daily newspapers:

- Darmstädter Echo
- Darmstädter Tagblatt
- Frankfurter Rundschau
- SüWo Darmstadt

Private halls of residence

- [the-fizz.com](https://www.the-fizz.com)
- [smartments.de](https://www.smartments.de)
- [stolzehaus.de](https://www.stolzehaus.de)
- [lincoln-siedlung.de](https://www.lincoln-siedlung.de)

Professional service provider for apartment search

- [hc24.de/de/möblierter-wohnraum-in-darmstadt.htm](https://www.hc24.de/de/möblierter-wohnraum-in-darmstadt.htm)
- [city-home.de](https://www.city-home.de)

Protestant Student Residence

Dormitory of the Protestant Student Community of Darmstadt:

- [esg-darmstadt.de](https://www.esg-darmstadt.de)

Shared flats

- [wg-gesucht.de](https://www.wg-gesucht.de)
- [studenten-wg.de](https://www.studenten-wg.de)
- [studenten-weg.de](https://www.studenten-weg.de)
- [noknok24.de](https://www.noknok24.de)
- [wohngemeinschaft.de](https://www.wohngemeinschaft.de)
- [wg-welt.de](https://www.wg-welt.de)
- [easywg.de](https://www.easywg.de)
- [studentenwohnungsmarkt.de](https://www.studentenwohnungsmarkt.de)
- [studentenwohnheime.eu](https://www.studentenwohnheime.eu)
- [wg-suche.de](https://www.wg-suche.de)

Short term living in Darmstadt

- [airbnb.de](https://www.airbnb.de)
- [zwischenmiete.de](https://www.zwischenmiete.de)
- [9flats.com](https://www.9flats.com)
- [couchsurfing.com](https://www.couchsurfing.com)
- [jugendherberge.de](https://www.jugendherberge.de)

Studierendenwerk

The Studierendenwerk is responsible for students enrolled at Hochschule Darmstadt or TU Darmstadt. They provide cheap apartments but there are usually very long waiting times.

- [studierendenwerkdarmstadt.de/wohnservice](https://www.studierendenwerkdarmstadt.de/wohnservice)

Annex

Abbreviations in apartment listings

Abkürzung - Abbreviation	Bedeutung	Meaning
AB	Altbau	Old building
AAP	Auto-Abstell-Platz	Car parking space
AK, AR	Abstellkammer	Storage room
AWC	Außen-WC	Outdoor WC
B	Bad	Bathroom
BK	Betriebskosten (Hausmeister, Hausreinigung etc.); Balkon	Operating cost(Caretaker, house cleaning, etc.); balcony
BKVZ	Betriebskostenvorauszahlung	Prepaid operating expenses
BLK	Balkon	Balcony
Ct	Courtage	Comission
CP	Carport	Carport
D	Dusche	Shower
DB	Duschbad	Shower room
DG	Dachgeschoss	Top floor
DHH	Doppelhaushälfte	Semi-detached house
DT	Dachterrasse	Roof terrace
EA	Energieausweis	Proof of energy
EB	Erstbezug	First occupation
EBK	Einbauküche (gelegentlich auch: Ein Zimmer, Bad und Küche)	Fitted kitchen (occasionally also: one room, bathroom and kitchen)
EFH	Einfamilienhaus	Detached house
EG	Erdgeschoss	Ground floor
ELW	Einliegerwohnung	Ground floor apartment
E-Schr.	Einbauschränk	Fitted wardrobe
ETG	Etage	Floor
ETW	Eigentumswohnung	Property
FBH	Fußbodenheizung	Underfloor heating
FH / FHS / FMH	Familienhaus	Family house
FP	Fixpreis	Fixed price
FW	Fernwärme	District heating
GE	Geschäftseinheit	Business unit
GEH	Gasetagenheizung	Gas heating
gepf	gepflegt	Groomed, neat
Gge	Garage	Garage
GK	Glaskeramikherd	Glass ceramic stove
GS	Geschirrspüler	Dishwasher
GWC	Gäste-WC	Guest WC
HK	Heizkosten	Heating costs
HMS	Hausmeisterservice	Housekeeping service
HMV	Hauptmieter-Vertrag	Main tenant contract

HMZ	Hauptmietzins (österr. für Miete)	Main rent (Austrian for rent)
HP	Hochparterre	High-floor
HT	Haustier	Pet, domestic animal
HH, HTH	Hinterhaus	Back Home
HWR	Hauswirtschaftsraum	Laundry room
KDB	Küche, Diele, Bad	Kitchen, hallway, bathroom
KM	Kaltmiete	Cold rent (rent without heating, water, energy, internet etc.)
KN, KoNi	Kochnische	Kitchenette
KP	Kaufpreis	Purchase price
KR	Kellerraum	Cellar room
KT	Kaution	Deposit (up to 1,5 times the monthly rent)
L	Lift	Lift, elevator
Lam.	Laminat	Laminate
LFL	Linker Flügel	Left wing
MC	Maklercourtage	Brokercourtage
MD	Mieterdarlehen	Tenant loans
m. F.	mit Fenster	With window
MFH	Mehrfamilienhaus	Multi-family house
MKM	Monatskaltmiete	Monatskaltmiete
MM	Monatsmiete	Monthly cold rent (see cold rent)
MS	Mietsicherheit	Security for tenants
mtl.	monatlich	Monthly
NB	Neubau	New construction
NK	Nebenkosten	Additional costs
NKM	Nettokaltmiete	Net cold rent (see cold rent)
NM	Nachmieter	New/successor tenant
NR	Nichtraucher	Non-smoking
NSP	Nachtspeicherheizung	Night storage heater
O, OH	Ofenheizung	Oven heating
OG	Obergeschoss	First floor
P, PP	Parkplatz	Parking space
RH	Reihenhaus	Townhouse
REH	Reihenendhaus	Townhouse-end-unit
RMH	Reihenmittelhaus	Mid-terrace town house
RFL	Rechter Flügel	Right wing
SFL	Seitenflügel	Side Wing
SP	Stellplatz	Parking Space
SPK	Speisekammer	Larder, pantry
SW	Ausrichtung nach Südwesten	Facing southwest
SZ	Schlafzimmer	Bedroom
TB, TLB	Tageslichtbad	Daylight bath
TeBo	Teppichboden	Carpet flooring
TG	Tiefgarage	Underground car park
TGL	Tageslicht-	Daylight-...
VB	Verhandlungsbasis	Negotiation basis, basis for negotiation

VZ	Vorzimmer / Vorauszahlung	Anteroom / Prepayment
WB	Wannenbad	Bath tub
WBS	Wohnberechtigungsschein	Permit for subsidized housing
WE	Wohneinheit	Housing unit
WEP	Wochenendpendler	Weekend commute
Wfl	Wohnfläche	Living space/area
WG	Wohngemeinschaft; Wintergarten	Mostly: commune/people sharing an apartment secondly: Winter garden/ conservatory
Whg.	Wohnung	Flat / apartment
WM	Warmmiete	Warm rent (rent including heating, water, electrical energy, internet etc.)
WM-Anschl.	Waschmaschinenanschluss	Washing machine connection
WWB	Warmwasserbereitstellung	Hot water supply
ZH	Zentralheizung	Central heating
Zi	Zimmer	Room
ZKB	Zimmer, Küche und Bad	Room, kitchen and bathroom
ZKBB	1 Zimmer mit Küche, Bad und Balkon	1 room with kitchen, bathroom and balcony
ZKD	Zimmer, Küche und Dusche	Room, kitchen and shower

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