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## Relocation

 [Video about the move](#)

### Signing the rental agreement


If you receive money from the social welfare office or job centre and have their **written** approval for the rental offer (Mietangebot), you can sign the rental agreement (Mietvertrag).

#### **Important:**

Before you sign the tenancy agreement, you must understand it well!

Take a close look at it:

- Your personal details,
- the move-in date (when you can move in),
- the amount of the rental deposit or security deposit (money you pay as security),
- the amount of rent and any rent increases (graduated rent)
- who is responsible for minor repairs
- whether the contract is for a fixed term (whether it is only valid for a short time)
- the house rules (rules in the house),
- whether pets are allowed and
- the notice period (how long you have to give notice before you move out).

You can find more information about rules and rights as a tenant at  [here](#).

### Getting help

If you have any questions about the tenancy agreement or your rights and obligations, you can contact the following organisations, for example, for a fee:

 [Consumer advice centre Schleswig-Holstein](#)

 [German Tenants' Association](#)

- Lawyer for tenancy law
- Legal advice centre

### Paying the rent

You must always pay the rent (Miete) for your flat on time.

This is usually by the 3rd working day of the month. This is specified in your tenancy agreement.

If you do not pay rent for two months, the flat can be cancelled immediately (this is stated in the law, § 543 Para. 2 No. 3 BGB).

### Deposit / security deposit

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The deposit is also called a rental guarantee. This is money that you give to the landlord when you sign the tenancy agreement. It is usually as much as 3 months' rent.

The deposit protects the landlord if you:


- fail to pay the rent,
- do not pay the service charges
- or cause damage to the flat.

If you move out of the flat and everything is in order, you will get the deposit back.

## Paying the deposit with help from the office

If you receive money from the job centre or social welfare office, you can apply in writing for the deposit to be paid as a loan. A loan means that you are lent the money and have to pay it back. The office usually pays the deposit directly to the landlord or landlady. The repayment of the loan to the office is automatically deducted from the monthly standard benefits (normally a maximum of ten per cent) and retained.

- For the social welfare office, please contact your social welfare office directly.

For the job centre there are  [forms](#):

- Loan application for deposit (Darlehensantrag für Kautiön)
- Assignment of security deposit (Abtretung Kautiön)


## Initial equipment for your first home

If you are renting a flat for the first time and receive money from the social welfare office or job centre, you can apply for money for initial equipment.

Erstausstattung This means: furniture, curtains, mattresses, cooking utensils, crockery and, if necessary, a cooker, sink, fridge and washing machine.

How much money you receive depends on how many people live in your home, how big it is and what you need.

**Important:** You must apply for initial equipment **before you buy** the items. Otherwise you will not receive any money.

- **For the social welfare office:**  
Contact your local social welfare office.  
In most cases, you can simply submit the application informally in writing.
- **For the job centre:**  
 You can find the form for the application for initial equipment [here](#).

## Electricity, gas, water, insurance

### 1. register electricity, gas and water

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When you move into your own home, you must register electricity, gas and water in your name. This applies unless otherwise stated in the tenancy agreement.

For **water**, speak to the water supplier in your town. The name of your water supplier should be on your water meter. Otherwise, your landlord can give you the contact details.

There is a large selection of **gas and electricity suppliers** that you can find and compare on the Internet, for example.

## 2. important insurances for tenants

### 2.1 Private liability insurance

Personal liability insurance (private Haftpflichtversicherung) is very important for tenants. It protects you against costs if you cause damage in the flat.

For example: scratches in the floor or damage to the kitchen or bathroom. Damage caused by your pets is also covered.

- Personal liability insurance costs around 40 to 70 euros per year for one person.
- For families, it costs around 50 to 100 euros per year.

### 2.2 Household contents insurance

Household contents insurance (Hausratversicherung) protects your belongings in your home. For example, in the event of fire, water, storm, burglary or vandalism. The landlord only pays for damage to the house, not for your belongings (furniture, appliances, etc.).

The insurance costs money. How much depends on various things:

- How big is your flat?
- How much money are your belongings worth?
- Where do you live? In the city or in the country?
- What should the insurance cover? For example, against theft or fire.

That's how much it usually costs:

- For small flats: around 50 to 150 euros per year.
- For families or large flats: around 100 to 300 euros per year.

## 3. compare prices and performance

You can use comparison portals on the Internet to compare the prices and services of **electricity, gas and insurance** providers.

For example here:

 [Check24.de](https://www.check24.de)

 [Verivox.de](https://www.verivox.de)

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 [Tarifcheck.de](https://www.Tarifcheck.de)

 [Preisvergleich.de](https://www.Preisvergleich.de)

 [Energieverbraucherportal.de](https://www.Energieverbraucherportal.de)

## Internet, TV and licence fee

### Internet and TV

Several providers offer contracts. There are different prices. And different services. You are free to choose your provider. There is often a minimum contract term of 24 months. This means that you must honour and pay for the contract for 24 months. You can only cancel beforehand in individual cases. Pay attention to minimum terms, cancellation periods and additional costs.

So think carefully about which contract you take out.

### Compare prices and services

You can use comparison portals on the Internet to compare prices and services for Internet, TV and mobile phone providers.

For example here:

 [Check24.de](https://www.Check24.de)

 [Verivox.de](https://www.Verivox.de)


 [internetanbieter.com](https://www.internetanbieter.com)


 [kabelfernsehen.info](https://www.kabelfernsehen.info) especially for cable television

### Broadcasting licence fee (GEZ) - compulsory

In Germany, every home has to pay a licence fee. This money is used to pay for television channels such as ARD and ZDF. You have to pay this fee even if you do not watch these channels.

Some people can be exempt from this obligation. For example, if you receive social benefits. Or can show other reasons for exemption. This **Antrag auf Befreiung von der Rundfunksbeitragspflicht** is usually available at the reception desk of your town hall.

You can find more information in various languages at  [here](#).

You can also fill in and print out the application online [here](#) . You must attach a document confirming exemption from the licence fee, for example from the social welfare office or job centre. Then send the application and the certificate by post to:

ARD ZDF Deutschlandradio  
Contribution service  
50656 Cologne

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💡 Are you **not** exempt from licence fees? Then you should always pay the licence fee. Otherwise there are consequences!

## **Moving & flat handover**

Organise moving boxes, helpers and transport for your move.  
Tools for dismantling and assembling furniture are also a good idea.

## **At the flat handover appointment**

Take a close look at every corner of the flat. Check the windows. Take photos of any broken areas (Mängel).  
Ask the landlord to repair these broken areas before you move in.

## **Handover report**

A handover report (Übergabeprotokoll) is an important document.  
It is made when you move in or out of a new flat.

The protocol states

- what the flat looks like,
- whether there are any broken items,
- what furniture or appliances are in the flat.

You and the landlord sign the record.

The report helps later:

- if there is a dispute about damage,
- if you want to get your deposit back.

It is therefore important to write everything down correctly and to understand it.

## **Register and re-register your place of residence**

You must register your new address [online](#) at the residents' registration office or 🗺️ within 2 weeks of your move.

To do this, make an appointment in good time, preferably BEFORE you move, at the residents' registration office in your new place of residence.

## **Please bring the following with you to your appointment**

- Your tenancy agreement (Mietvertrag),
- A 🗺️ [landlord's confirmation of residence](#) (Wohnungsgeberbestätigung) for you and your family,
- your identity card and the identity cards of your family members and
- some money for the registration.

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If you previously lived in municipal emergency accommodation, **inform** those responsible for your accommodation **before** you move in. Hand over the **key to** the accommodation to the person responsible. It is best to get a signature for this. This is because you pay the accommodation fees as long as you have the key to your accommodation.

## Who do I inform about the new address?

### Important:

- Write your surname on the **letterbox** of the house and on your doorbell.
- When informing people of your new address, always write down your full name and your new address. You can also send or hand in a copy of your registration certificate. Also state your customer number (Kundennummer) or reference number (Aktenzeichen) if you have one. This way, the authorities will know who you are.

### You should inform the following organisations:

- The list may not be complete or not everything may apply to you. -

- BAMF (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees) @ [service@bamf.bund.de](mailto:service@bamf.bund.de)
- Immigration office in Elmshorn @ [abh@kreis-pinneberg.de](mailto:abh@kreis-pinneberg.de)
- Job centre, social welfare office and employment agency
- Language school
- Bank
- Health insurance (If you are with DAK, you can write an email here: @ [service@dak.de](mailto:service@dak.de) )
- Electricity provider
- Gas supplier
- Water supplier
- Telephone and internet provider
- Cable television provider
- Contribution service for radio and television licence fees
- Your employer
- school
- Kindergarten
- Family benefits office
- Parental allowance office
- Maintenance advance office
- Youth welfare office
- Other insurances (e.g. liability insurance)
- and you may have to inform other institutions about the new address.

### Extract

Please **give notice** in writing in **good time** , as stated in the tenancy agreement. This is usually 3 months before you move out.

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Read the tenancy agreement to see how you must **hand** over the **flat** to the landlord. For example, whether it must be renovated or freshly painted.

On the day you move out, make a **handover report** together with your landlord (Übergabeprotokoll). This will allow you to get your deposit back if there are no damages or rental debts. Both of you should sign the handover report.

Register with the residents' registration office at your new place of residence. Also inform all important contacts of your new address.

 [Register and re-register your place of residence](#)