

Table of Contents

Everyday Life	2
Broadcasting fees - GEZ	2
Mobility	2
Bicycle	2
Public transport - bus, tram & train	4
Car - driving licence & registration	5
Taxi	6
Drinking water	7
Waste & waste separation	7
When are shops open?	9
Cheap places to shop	9
Cheap food & social department stores'	9
Second-hand shops & flea markets	10
Free clothing - Clothes closets & Clothes closets in Mannheim	12
Lost and Found: Lost or found something?	13
Internet / WIFI	13
Emergency numbers / SOS	14
Civil protection	15
Taxes, fees & contracts	17
Taxes	17
Contracts - important information	18
Mobile phone contract	18
Danger warning / behavioural information	19

Everyday Life

Broadcasting fees - GEZ

Broadcasting fees

Germany has independent radio, television and online services from ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio. They report in a way that is free from economic and political influences. For this, all people pay money together. This is called “broadcasting fees”.

A broadcasting fee must be paid for every home in Germany. However, only one person per flat has to pay the broadcasting fee. This costs €18.36 (as of March 2023) per month and must be paid to the contribution service of ARD, ZDF and Deutschlandradio.

Further information can be found in the following [information sheet \(here\)](#) also in English, French, Arabic, Spanish, Chinese and Russian) and on the [website](#).

Do I have to pay as well?

Some people can be exempted from paying. For example, if you receive benefits under the Asylum Seekers Benefits Act or other social benefits. An application must be submitted for exemption from the broadcasting fee.

You can find the application for exemption [here](#)!

Mobility

Bicycle

What do you need to consider when cycling?

You can get anywhere in Mannheim **quickly** and **cheaply** by bike. There are special **cycle paths** in Germany and also in the city of Mannheim.

Cyclists must also observe the **traffic rules**.

Some important traffic rules for cyclists:

- Always ride on the **right-hand side of the road**.
- **Do not ride next to each other**, but **behind each other**.
- If there is a **cycle path**, you must use it (always on the right-hand side in the direction of travel).
- Only children up to the **age of 11** may use the footpaths on bicycles.

- You may only wear headphones while cycling if you can still hear everything.
- You are **not** allowed to **make phone calls**(without hands-free equipment).

Buying a bike

When buying a bike, make sure that it is **roadworthy**. Otherwise you will have to pay a fine if you are stopped by the police.

The bike must be equipped with

- a bell
- two independent brakes
- a lamp at the front
- a white reflector at the front
- a red reflector
- one red reflector at the rear
- four yellow spoke reflectors or reflective white stripes on the tyres or spokes
- non-slip pedals, each with two pedal reflectors



If you would like to buy a **used bike**, you can find favourable offers here:

- in bike shops
- at bicycle auctions
- in a bicycle repair shop in your community
- at flea markets
- in the classifieds section of daily and weekly newspapers
- on the information boards in shops
- in social media
- in apps for second-hand goods
- on websites for second-hand goods

Repairing your bike

Bike shops can repair your bike. You have to pay for this. Sometimes there are events and campaigns organised by **volunteer bike repair shops** in Mannheim. This is usually cheaper and even free for small repairs. You can also get information on how to maintain your bike here.

Find out locally what offers and support options are available.

Public transport - bus, tram & train

You can easily reach all places in Mannheim and the surrounding area by **bus** and **tram** (RNV, Rhein-Neckar-Verkehr) or **train** (DB, Deutsche Bahn). It is very important that you always have a **valid** ticket. If you travel without a ticket, you will have to pay a fine of at least €60. (as of March 2023)

Ticket

Check exactly which ticket you need and which ticket is the cheapest for you. There are a **large number of different tickets**.

For example, there are

- Single tickets
- day tickets
- Weekly tickets or monthly tickets

There are also specific tickets, for example

- for children
- for pupils (including trainees)
- for students
- for families
- for groups

For 58 euros per month, **the Deutschlandticket** is a personal, non-transferable subscription that can be cancelled monthly and entitles the holder to unlimited travel on local transport in 2nd class throughout Germany, cancellable monthly.

The Deutschlandticket is also available from rnv. All information on this and what annual pass customers should bear in mind can be found at:

<https://www.rnv-online.de/tickets/deutschlandtick...>

Information on travel connections and tickets

- at the station travel centres (Please note that there is not a travel centre at every station. Please also check the opening hours of the ticket counters).
- at the ticket machines at the station or stop
- via the [Deutsche Bahn app](#) or [the Deutsche Bahn website](#)
- via the [RNV APP](#) or [the RNV website](#)

- on the bus: here you can buy the ticket directly from the bus driver

Bicycle transport (local transport)

Bicycles can be taken on local trains **free of charge at certain times**:

Mondays to Fridays before 6 a.m. and from 9 a.m. until 3 a.m. the following day.

For the time between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m. you need an extra bicycle ticket.

On Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, transport is free all day.

Please note: In principle, you **are not entitled to take your bike with you**. There must be enough space available. You can also use a folding bike. This can be taken along free of charge.

You can find more information about taking bicycles with you [here](#).

Car - driving licence & registration

Car driving licence

If you drive a car in Germany, you must have a **valid driving licence** and always have it with you.

In Germany, you can drive a car **from the age of 18 with a valid driving licence**.

It is also possible to obtain a **driving licence at the age of 17**. This is called "**accompanied driving from 17**". However, you are then only allowed to drive with certain accompanying persons. These people give you confidence when driving and are available to answer questions. The accompanying persons must fulfil certain requirements.

You can obtain further information on accompanied driving from the Citizens' Services of the City of Mannheim:

 [Accompanied driving from the age of 17 | Mannheim.de](#)

Would you like to get a driving licence?

If you want to get your driving licence, choose a driving school. The driving school will explain to you what documents you need and what the procedure is. **Getting your driving licence costs money**. Find out about the costs beforehand.

To obtain a German driving licence, you must pass the **theory test** and the **practical test**. In addition to German, you can take the theory test in the following languages: English, French, Greek, High Arabic, Italian, Croatian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish and Turkish. Please speak to your driving instructor about this.

You must also take part in a **first aid course**. There you will learn how to provide help in an emergency situation, for example in the event of an accident, burns or poisoning.

You can find more information at the driving licence department of the city of Mannheim:

 [Driving licence system | Mannheim.de](#)

Do you already have a foreign driving licence?

Do you have a foreign driving licence and live in Germany?

In this case, your **foreign driving licence** is valid **for 6 months after you move to Germany**.

After these 6 months, you must **convert** your driving licence **into a German driving licence**. You will also have to take a **theory and practical test**.

Documents required for the transfer:

- Biometric photo
- registration certificate
- Official eye test certificate
- for lorry classes or class C/D: instead of the eye test certificate, an ophthalmological certificate and a medical certificate are required
- Proof of participation in a first aid course (9 teaching units)
- Copy of driving licence and translation of driving licence
- Copy of identity document
- Name of the driving school



Persons from **EU/EEA countries** with a **valid driving licence do not need to transfer** their foreign driving licence.

You can obtain further information and applications for the transfer of your driving licence [here](#).

Please note: There are **many rules** to ensure that road traffic is safe for you and others. You must observe these when driving. These rules are set out in the **Road Traffic Regulations (StVO)**. If you break these rules, you will be **fined**. Penalties can be [A fine, a driving ban](#) or so-called [points in Flensburg](#).

Car registration

Do you want to buy a motor vehicle (e.g. car, lorry, motorbike, scooter) and drive it? Then you need to register this vehicle. To do this, you need to go to the registration office (Zulassungsstelle).

You can find more information on [the website of the City of Mannheim](#).

Please make [an appointment online](#) beforehand. Find out which documents you need before your appointment [here](#).

Taxi

You can also go by **taxi**. However, this option is **usually more expensive** than other means of transport, such as bus and train.

Find out in advance what your approximate costs will be. You can calculate your approximate taxi costs with the taxi [calculator](#).

You can use the search function of the [telephone directory "Das Örtliche"](#) to find a nearby taxi company.

Drinking water

In Germany, you can drink **water straight** from the **tap**. The quality of drinking water is strictly controlled.

It is generally **recommended** to only use **cold water** for **drinking** and **preparing food** and drinks.

If the water has been in the tap for more than 4 hours, you should let it run for a short time - until it becomes significantly cooler. Then it is fresh and good for drinking.

Information from the Mannheim water supplier MVV on drinking water quality in several languages can be found here:

https://www.mvv.de/fileadmin/user_upload_pk_gewk/...

Waste & waste separation

Waste and rubbish

In Germany, waste is disposed of separately. **The residual waste bin, the recycling bin and the paper bin** are compulsory for every household. The company also offers a free organic waste bin for kitchen and garden waste.

Residual waste in the black bin

- The residual waste bin is emptied once a week or once a fortnight, depending on the emptying area.
- A monthly fee is charged for the residual waste bin.

Waste that cannot be recycled is placed in the **black bin** :

- Nappies, sanitary towels and tampons
- Cosmetic tissues and paper towels
- Plastic bin liners
- Hoover bags
- Coated paper
- Wallpaper, carpet residue
- rubbish, ash, small animal litter, cigarette butts

Recycling bin:

- The recycling bin is compulsory and free of charge. They are available in two sizes: 240-litre or 1100-litre. Depending on your needs, you can order one or more recycling bins.
- The recycling bin is emptied every 4 weeks.
- All packaging and items such as plastic buckets, laundry baskets, toys, pots, pans and other hardware belong in the recycling bin.

Paper in the blue bin

- The paper bin is compulsory and free of charge. Depending on your needs, you can order one or more paper bins, only if you have a residual waste bin.
- The paper bin is for paper, cardboard, cardboard packaging and paper packaging.
- The paper bin is emptied once a fortnight in a full or partial service. A surcharge of €1.30 (120 litre bin) and €1.50 (240 litre bin) per month (as of January 2023) is charged for the full service in a partial service area. 4-wheeled bins (770 and 1100 litres) are only emptied as a full service.

The **blue bin** is for paper waste. It must be clean and uncoated:

- Magazines
- Cardboard boxes (please fold or shred)
- exercise books
- books
- Printer paper
- letters
- Paper packaging
- Cigarette packets (without aluminium and without foil)
- Chocolate boxes (without plastic)

Organic waste in the brown bin

Use the free organic waste bin!

The organic waste bin protects the climate and the environment. You also make a valuable contribution to the energy transition. We produce nutrient-rich compost from organic waste, suitable for balconies and gardens.

The organic waste bin is emptied as part of a partial service. A full service is also possible for a small surcharge and on request.

From March to October, the organic waste bin is emptied once a week and from November to February once a fortnight with a partial service. This means that you have to take the organic waste bin to the kerbside yourself by 6.30 am.

Compostable waste goes in the **brown bin**:

- Fruit and vegetable waste
- Potato and egg peelings
- Coffee filter bags, tea bags
- Bouquets of flowers
- potted plants

- Garden waste

💡 Information on waste management and waste disposal:

🌐 <https://www.mannheim.de/de/service-bieten/umwelt/...>

Information on the Mannheim waste calendar:

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/service-bieten/umwelt/...>

When are shops open?

In Germany, shops are usually open **from Monday to Saturday**. They are closed on Sundays and public holidays. When exactly a shop opens or closes can vary. You can check on the internet or on the door of the shop, where it is often written.

But: restaurants, cafés, swimming pools, museums and cinemas are also open on Sundays and public holidays. So you can still do something!

Cheap places to shop

Cheap food & social department stores'

Grocery shopping

Tafel Mannheim

If you have little or no money, you can get free food and toiletries from the Tafel Mannheim.

To do this, you need a Tafel card.

To get the card, you must show proof of your need (for example with a notification from the job centre or pension notification)

You can obtain the Tafel card **directly from the Tafel shops**.

Please bring with you:

- Proof of your income (e.g. job centre notice, payslip, pension notice or housing benefit notice)
- Your identity card
- Two passport photos

You will receive the card if you fulfil the **requirements**.

The Tafel helps people who do not have much money. Tafel shops sell **cheap food and hygiene articles** that are no longer sold in the shops. These are for example

- Food that is about to expire
- Baked goods from the previous day
- Packaging that is broken or dented
- Fruit and vegetables with minor blemishes

Further information about the food banks can be found on the homepage of the German Red Cross

<https://www.drk-mannheim.de/angebote/tafel-und-se...>

Opening hours and addresses of the Tafel shops in Mannheim:

- [Alphornstraße 8, 68169 Mannheim-Neckarstadt](#)
📅 Monday to Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
☎ [0172 2485350](tel:01722485350)
- [Plankstadter Straße 28 68219 Mannheim-Rheinau](#)
📅 Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 12:30 to 16:30
☎ [0162 2821050](tel:01622821050)
- [Rastenburger Straße 43 68307 Mannheim-Schönau](#)
📅 Monday, Wednesday & Friday: 10 am to 3 pm
☎ [0173 7059411](tel:01737059411)

Social department stores' Rhein - Neckar - Kreis

The social department stores' Rhein - Neckar - Kreis offers new goods from brand manufacturers at very favourable prices. The range offers a variety of items such as

- Cleaning products
- hygiene articles
- baby articles
- household goods
- Toys

The prices are up to 95% cheaper than the normal shop price.

The social department stores' is similar to the food bank. This means that only needy customers are allowed to shop there. After presenting a certificate of need, you will receive a customer card.

The following certificates can be presented:

Social welfare, unemployment benefit II, housing benefit, basic security and asylum seeker - status.

SKH social department stores' R-N-K gGmbH

📍 [Wachenburg Str. 145 68219 Mannheim](#)

https://sozialkaufhaus-ggmbh.business.site/?utm_s...

Monday & Wednesday: 10.00-14.00

Please do not forget your customer card or your grant certificate.

Second-hand shops & flea markets

Second-hand shops

In second-hand shops you can buy **second-hand clothes, furniture, books, electrical goods** and so on at very **favourable prices**. Here you will find a selection of shops in Mannheim where you can buy cheap, tested goods:

Fairkauf Mannheim

Caritas' Fairkauf Mannheim has two sales outlets. You will find the large department stores' in Mannheim-Waldhof. There is also a boutique for shoes, clothes and accessories in Mannheim city centre.

Fairkauf department stores'

Range: furniture and kitchens, clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, games & toys

 [Carl-Reuther-Str. 2 68305 Mannheim](#)

 Monday - Friday 10 am - 6 pm

Fairkauf Boutique

Offering: Clothing, shoes, accessories

 [B2, 10; 68159 Mannheim](#)

 Monday - Friday 10 am - 6 pm

Oxfam Secondhand Mannheim

Offer: Clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, games & toys

 [N2, 9; 68161 Mannheim](#)

 Monday - Friday: 10:00 - 19:00

Saturday: 10:00 - 15:00

Market House Mannheim

Markthaus Mannheim has three sales outlets. You will find the large main store in Mannheim-Neckarau. There are also second-hand boutiques in Mannheim city centre and in Neckarstadt West.

Mannheim Neckarau market centre

Offering: furniture, clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, games & toys

 [Floßwörthstr. 3-9 68199 Mannheim](#)

 Monday - Friday: 11.00 - 19.00 hrs

Saturday: 9.30 am - 5.00 pm

Market House Mannheim City

Offer: Clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, games & toys

 [Ifflandstr. 1 68161 Mannheim \(right](#) next to the Mannheim Job Centre)

 Monday - Friday: 9:30 - 13:00 & 13:30 - 18:00

Mannheim Neckarstadt market centre

Offer: Clothing, shoes, accessories, household goods, games & toys

 [Mittelstr. 32 68169 Mannheim](#)

 Monday - Friday: 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. & 3:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Flea market

You can buy **second-hand goods** at flea markets. This can be clothes, jewellery, crockery and much more. There are often themed flea markets. For example, only children's things are sold at a children's flea market (children's clothes, toys, etc.).

You can also **sell** goods at the flea market. You will have to pay stall fees for this. Enquire at the office that organises the flea market. You can search for flea markets in your neighbourhood here:

 <https://meine-flohmarkt-terme.de/>

One of the largest flea markets in Mannheim is the Mannheimer Krempelmarkt on the new Meßplatz.

 <https://www.mannheimer-krempelmarkt.de/>

Other opportunities to buy or sell second-hand items

- the information boards in shops
- the classified ad section in daily and weekly newspapers
- social media
- Apps for second-hand goods

Free clothing - Clothes closets & Clothes closets in Mannheim

Throughout Germany, many clothing stores and clothing shops provide people with clothing and shoes in good condition. There are also offers to get **free clothing** in the city of Mannheim.

Offers of the Caritasverband Mannhei e.V. Association

Clothes Closet in the Day Centre for the Homeless

 [D 6, 7, 68159 Mannheim](#)

 [0621 1783742](tel:06211783742)

Distribution to homeless people:

Tues. and Thurs. 9 - 10.30 a.m. (registration at 8.30 a.m.)

Issued to needy people with housing:

twice a month as posted (proof of need required)

Clothing store in Kind & Kegel

 [Heilsberger Str. 11, 68307 Mannheim](#)

 [0621 77560](tel:062177560)

Pick-up points: Mon. 10 - 12 h

The clothing distribution is free of charge and is exclusively for clients of Kind & Kegel and Caritas Social Counselling.

Clothes Closet of the Caritas Conference St. Antonius

Parish Hall St. Antonius

📍 [Rheinauer Ring 262, 68219 Mannheim](#)

Pick-up points: Wed. 3 - 5 p.m. for adults, Tues. 3 - 4 p.m. for children

Children's Clothes Closet of the Caritas Conference St. Elisabeth

📍 Elisabethstube

[Waldfrieden 78, 68305 Mannheim](#)

Pick-up points: Wed. 2 - 4 pm (not during holidays)

(Entitlement certificate required)

Clothing store for refugees

📍 [Hallesche Str. 1, 68309 Mannheim](#)

Opening hours:

Mon., Wed. and Fri. 4 - 7 p.m

Clothes for adults and children

Only for refugees under the Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act (proof required), i.e

all persons in the asylum procedure with a residence permit,
all persons with a rejected asylum procedure with a toleration,
Refugees from Ukraine (proof through Ukrainian passport)

Lost and Found: Lost or found something?

Lost items (for example keys or wallets) are often handed in at the **lost property office** and kept there for some time. If you have lost something, you can ask the lost property office if it has been handed in.

If you find an item yourself, please also hand it in at the **lost property office** .

Opening hours Monday: 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 08:00 - 12:00

Thursday: 08:00 - 18:00 **Address lost property office** 📍 [K 7, 68159 Mannheim](#) @

fundbuero@mannheim.de ☎️ [0621 2933275](tel:06212933275) 🌐

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/fundbuero/fundbuero>

Internet / WIFI

If you do not have a private Internet or WLAN connection, you can use the public WLAN.

MA-WLAN is the official WLAN of the city of Mannheim, which is available in many public places. Anyone with a smartphone, tablet or laptop can surf the internet for free without time or volume

restrictions.

Link

<https://ma-wlan.de/>

Locations

<https://mannheim.opendatasoft.com/explore/dataset/standorte-wlan-mit-geocode/map/?flg=de&location=1>

Emergency numbers / SOS

If you personally or someone else is in an emergency situation (accident, illness, fire or similar), you can contact the police, fire brigade or rescue services by telephone.

You can reach the emergency call centre from all fixed and mobile networks using the emergency telephone number (without prefix):

Police: 📞 **110**

Fire brigade, ambulance service, emergency doctor: 📞 **112**

MVV emergency Gas smell, power failure, water, district heating
[2901000](tel:2901000)

[0800](tel:0800)

The emergency numbers of the mobile phones always work, even with a prepaid card without credit/money!

Important information for an emergency call:

- **Who** is calling (your name)?
- **Where** did the incident occur (address)?
- **What** happened?
- **How many** people are hurt or sick? Are they children or adults?
- **What kind of** diseases or injuries are present?

Stay calm. Speak slowly and clearly so that you can be understood better. Do not end the conversation. The emergency call centre / the police will end the call when all important information has been transmitted.

Have the following documents ready:

- **Health insurance card** (if you are already registered with a health insurance company)
- **ID**
Information for asylum seekers: You must show your ID in the hospital in order to prove that you are an asylum seeker and the costs are covered by the Social Welfare Office (Sozialamt)

Emergency medical practice: 📞 **116 117**

The emergency service of the Mannheim panel doctors

University Hospital Mannheim

House 2 (next to the emergency room)

📍 [Theodor-Kutzer-Ufer 1-3](#)

68167 Mannheim

Civil protection

Danger warning / behavioural information

Warning in the event of a crisis - by the Mannheim sirens.

Listen to the siren signals:

o rising and falling sound = warning

à Go to a safe place and inform yourself on mannheim.de

o steady = all-clear

- by the WarnAPP [NINA](#)

à Install the NINA warning app on your smartphone free of charge.

Recommendations for action:

Emergency situations such as severe storms, flooding, long power outages could also occur in Mannheim.

- Before the emergency situation:

Stock up on supplies for emergencies:

o Food and drinks for a few days

o Medicine cabinet with important medication

o First aid kit

o Torches

o Candles and matches and/or lighters

o Charged rechargeable batteries, batteries and power bank if necessary

o Radio without power connection

o Have important documents ready

- During the emergency situation:

1. keep calm
2. stay in a safe place
3. help people in emergency situations, but do not put yourself in danger in the process
4. follow the instructions of the authorities and emergency services

You can obtain up-to-date information: Citizens' telephone - Tel.115, Homepage - mannheim.de,

Public radio (radio)

5. do not block the emergency numbers of the police (110) and fire brigade (112)!

Additional information on floods, storms and severe weather:

During a storm, objects can be thrown into the air and injure other people. Therefore, close all windows and shutters in the house.

If you still have time, move movable objects (e.g. bicycles) to a safe place.

Trees can fall down during a storm with a strong wind. Flooding may also occur or roofs may be damaged. It is best to stay in the centre of your home. Do not go into the cellar or underground car park in the event of flooding!

Do not stay outside during thunderstorms and storms.

Further information on emergency situations and disaster control can be found here:

- Mannheim.de -disaster protection page

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/stadt-gestalten/verwal...>

- BBK page

<https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/warnu...>

- Warning app NINA <https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Warn-...>

Taxes, fees & contracts

Taxes

What are taxes (Steuern)?

A tax is an amount of money. This is levied by government agencies on all taxable persons for the purpose of generating income, e.g. income tax. Almost all people in Germany pay taxes. A company also has to pay taxes.

The state gets the taxes because the state finances different things with it. In principle, the tax is there to finance the expenditure of public bodies (cities, federal states, federal government). All citizens of this country use public facilities such as roads or schools. They also benefit from the work of state employees, such as police officers or teachers. The state also helps people when they are out of work, for example, by paying unemployment benefit from the Job Centre. People seeking protection (refugees) also receive support in the form of cash benefits, accommodation and counselling. All this costs money and is financed by tax money. This also means that citizens in Germany are not solely responsible for themselves, but support each other. This is also called the solidarity principle. All this costs money and is financed by tax money.

Income tax return (Einkommensteuererklärung)

The income tax return shows the tax office (Finanzamt) your income situation. On the basis of this information, the tax office can determine the amount of income tax due each month. You can find out whether you have to file a tax return by contacting the relevant tax office.

Not all people pay the same amount of income tax. If someone earns a lot, they have to pay more tax. If someone earns little, they pay less.

The tax office calculates how much everyone has to pay. It can happen that taxpayers have paid too much tax in one year. With the help of the tax return, you can state your expenses to reduce your tax burden. In the ideal case, you get a part of the money back.

Of course, it can also happen that too little tax was levied. This then applies mostly to the self-employed. In order to be able to find out, several details must be reported to the tax office.

Further information on tax can be obtained from the [Federal Tax Office](#). Multilingual information on the German tax system can be found [here](#).

Deadlines

Tax returns cannot simply be submitted at some point. There is a deadline which should be met without fail.

An income tax return must always be submitted to the tax office by 31 May of the following year.

Help and support

Do you have any questions about taxes? Do you need help with your tax return?

Here you will find multilingual information: <https://handbookgermany.de>

Wage tax associations

Die Lohnsteuerhilfe für Arbeitnehmer e. V., Lohnsteuerhilfeverein“ is one of the largest wage tax aid associations in Germany. They become active for employees and Rentner... In now around 300 advice centres you can get individual answers from tax specialists in your region.

You can find further information [here!](#)

Contracts - important information

In Germany, there are contracts for many things. For example:

- Renting an apartment (rental contract)
- New job (employment contract)
- New mobile phone (mobile phone contract)
- Registering at the gym (membership contract)
- And many more

If the **contract** is signed by **two parties**, it is **legally binding**. Everything that has been concluded in the contract must be observed by the buyer and also by the seller.

For example, if you have a contract with the gym for 2 years, then you will also have to pay the fees for 2 years. Therefore, you should consider whether you can pay for everything for this period.

Often, contracts also contain "**small print**". This is usually written in small letters at the bottom of the contract. It is essential that you **always read** this and **agree to** it before signing.

Do not let yourself be pressured into signing a contract. You always have the right to **read and check everything**. Ask if you can take the contract home with you if necessary. Then you can read the contract in peace or have it translated.

You may also seek **legal counsel** or **advice** in the event of disagreement with the other party.

Termination

You must give **written notice** (usually 3 months before the end of the contract). If you do not comply with the termination deadline, the contract term will often extend automatically.

Mobile phone contract

There are two different **mobile phone contracts** in Germany.

Prepaid contract (Prepaidvertrag)

The prepaid contract does not have a fixed contract term, but you have to top up your phone's credit (money).

Fixed-term contract (Laufzeitvertrag)

The fixed-term contract has a minimum contract period. Ask how long the contract lasts and check whether you can pay it for that long. This contract is **automatically renewed** if you do not cancel. If you do not want the contract to renew automatically, you must **cancel in writing**. Please ensure to note the **deadline**.

10 important questions for the conclusion of a contract for a mobile phone

What is the basic fee? Does the fee increase after a certain period?

Is there a minimum monthly fee?

How long is the contract period (e.g. 12 or 24 months)?

If I don't terminate the contract, will it be renewed automatically?

When do I have to cancel if I do not want to extend the contract?

How much are the fees for setting up, changing or deactivating?

How much does a minute cost (different/own network)?

What are the costs for buying a mobile phone with and without a contract?

How much does Internet access cost?

How much does it cost to call abroad?

Danger warning / behavioural information

Warning in the event of a crisis by the Mannheim sirens.

Listen to the siren signals:

- A sound that gets louder and quieter = warning
- Go to a safe place and check mannheim.de for information.
- A constant tone = all-clear

You can install the NINA warning app on your smartphone free of charge.

Recommendations for action:

Emergency situations such as severe storms, flooding, long power outages could also occur in Mannheim.

- Before the emergency situation:

Stock up on supplies for emergencies:

- Food and drinks for a few days
- Medicine cabinet with important medication
- First aid kit

- torches
- Candles and matches and/or lighters
- Charged rechargeable batteries, batteries and power bank if necessary
- Radio without power connection
- Have important documents ready

During the emergency situation:

- 1 Remain calm.
2. stay in a safe place.
3. help people in need, but do not put yourself in danger.
4. listen to the instructions of the authorities and emergency services.

Up-to-date information is available:

- Citizens' hotline: Tel. 115
- Homepage: mannheim.de
- Radio

5. only call the emergency numbers 110 (police) and 112 (fire brigade) in an emergency.

You can get the latest information: Citizens' telephone - Tel.115, Homepage - mannheim.de, public broadcasting (radio)

Additional information on floods, storms and severe weather:

During a storm, objects can be thrown into the air and injure other people. Therefore, close all windows and shutters in the house.

If you still have time, move movable objects (e.g. bicycles) to a safe place.

Trees can fall down during a storm with a strong wind. Flooding may also occur or roofs may be damaged. It is best to stay in the centre of your home. Do not go into the cellar or underground car park in the event of flooding!

Do not stay outside during thunderstorms and storms.

Further information on emergency situations and disaster control can be found here:

- Mannheim.de -disaster protection page

<https://www.mannheim.de/de/stadt-gestalten/verwal...>

- BBK page

<https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/warnu...>

- Warning app NINA <https://www.bbk.bund.de/DE/Warnung-Vorsorge/Warn-...>