

Flat Hunting for International Students

Student Housing in Germany

In Germany, universities do not own or manage student dormitories. Student housing is provided by the Studierendenwerk (student services) and by private housing companies. In Bavaria the dormitories provide rooms for roughly 9% of all students; the other 91% either find accommodation on the general housing market or live at home.

Dormitories run by the state-funded Studierendenwerk are usually available only for Bachelor students whereas private dormitories often also accept Master's and PhD students.

Click here for general information and an overview of student housing options in Germany <https://www.study-in-germany.com/en/plan-your-studies/preparation/accomodation/>

The Housing Situation in Erlangen and Nuremberg

With around 40,000 students, FAU is one of the largest universities in Germany. Since Erlangen is a very attractive city to live, study, and work in, there is a high demand for housing, which leads to limited availability and relatively high rental prices.

Based on our experience, rooms in shared flats usually start at around 450 EUR per month and small apartments usually start at around 550 EUR per month.

Finding accommodation can be a challenge, but this helps: start your search early, invest time and effort and above all be flexible regarding the location.

Private housing offers usually appear two to three months before the semester starts. There is no guarantee that you will find accommodation close to your institute in Erlangen or Nuremberg. Fortunately, the public transportation system is very reliable, making it easy to commute from nearby towns such as Fürth, Cadolzburg, or Forchheim.

Useful Websites for Flat Hunting

Below is a list of commonly used and reliable platforms for housing searches in and around Erlangen-Nürnberg:

<https://www.wg-gesucht.de/en>
<https://www.bedandbreakfast.de/>
<https://www.airbnb.com>
<https://housinganywhere.com/>
<https://www.brucklyn.de/en/home/>
<https://www.immowelt.de/>
<https://www.immobilienscout24.de/>
<https://www.studenten-wohnung.de/>
<https://www.wg-suche.de/>
https://www.facebook.com/marketplace/?locale=de_DE

<https://www.meinestadt.de/immobilien/>
<https://immo.infranken.de/>
<https://immo.nordbayern.de/>
<https://www.hc24.de/>
<https://www.mitwohnzentrale-franken.de/de/home.aspx>
<https://www.wohnref-erlangen.de/>
<https://www.staytoo.de/>
<https://www.private-immobilienangebote.de/>

How to Write a Successful Inquiry

Inquiry for a Single Apartment

Due to the high demand for housing, landlords and real estate agents often receive many applications. Providing complete and clear information in your first message can significantly improve your chances.

Essential information to include

- Full name
- Age
- Field of study
- Expected duration of stay
If possible, avoid emphasizing a very short rental period, as many landlords prefer long-term tenants.
- Contact details
- Financial situation
Explain how you will finance your stay (e.g. scholarship, personal funds).
Be prepared to provide documents upon request.

Inquiry for a Shared Flat (WG)

On platforms like WG-Gesucht, current tenants often receive hundreds of applications and may reject candidates based solely on their written inquiry. A well-written, personalized message can greatly increase your chances.

Start with the basic information (see the list above) and then also:

Introduce yourself: make yourself memorable by sharing a bit about your personality and interests (hobbies, what you enjoy doing in your free time)

Show what you can contribute: Mention anything you could bring to the shared flat, e.g. household items or board games and definitely a positive attitude and reliability

Many WGs prefer applicants who already have experience living with others, if this is true for you, absolutely mention previously shared flats and your ability to follow cleaning schedules and state your respectful and communicative behavior.

Read the advertisement carefully:

- Do the current tenants like to spend time together?
- Do you share common interests? Mention any overlap or ideas for shared activities.

Note: do not send the same generic message to every WG. Always adapt your inquiry to the specific advertisement and refer to what the current tenants have written.

Advice against rental fraud

Unfortunately, with the tense situation on the housing market also the number of fraudulent housing advertisements has increased. We would like to provide some information that might help to identify fake advertisements.

Indications of fake real estate advertisements:

- lack of basic information on the property and personal contact information
- poor German grammar and spelling (ask a native speaker)
- contact person sending messages/e-mails from outside of Germany
- mail addresses with suspicious domain names
 - long senseless letter and number combinations
 - topic unrelated (kontakt@ein-Fussballspiel-dauert-90-minten.de)
- conspicuously cheap offers that are “too good to be true”
- contact person suggests to send you to keys for an upfront payment
- fraud scammers copy existing real estate advertisements
 - look for other advertisements of the same property
 - check the address of the property on Google Maps (Street view) and compare building with surroundings, also compare the contact person of the two different advertisements

Do not pay any money

- for viewing an apartment (illegal in Germany) or if a contact person offers to send the keys beforehand (a very common scam method)
- before the rental contract is signed by you and the landlord
- to a non-German money transfer institution (common scam method)

Notes:

- It is standard practice to pay a security deposit before moving in. Landlords are legally allowed to request a deposit of two- or three-months' basic rent.
- If you rent a subleased accommodation, make sure that the person subletting the accommodation has the permission of their landlord to do so. If the permission is not granted, you will not get a rental confirmation and will not be able to register your address at the town hall. For third country nationals this will have negative effects on the residence permit.