



Handbook



for
International
Students & Guests
2013/2014



BERLIN
SCHOOL OF
MIND AND
BRAIN

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DEAR STUDENTS

WELCOME TO THE BERLIN SCHOOL OF MIND AND BRAIN!

We have created this handbook to help you tackle the practical challenges associated with moving to another city and to guide you through your first days in Berlin. Our handbook is intended to assist you with the organizational and bureaucratic steps you need to take before getting your doctorate at the Berlin School of Mind & Brain (M & B) started. For a detailed introduction to the doctoral program please see our “Guide to the structured doctoral program of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain”, which is available in print and online ► www.mind-and-brain.de/doctoral-program.

Nota bene: Although great effort was put into this handbook, please note that some of the information listed below could be out of date. Please check websites or call to confirm information, opening hours, etc. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information or assistance.

We hope you will have a good start and a successful time in Berlin!

Best wishes,
Your M & B team

Our thanks to the international department of Humboldt-Universität (HU), the Orbis Humboldtianus, the Berlin Graduate School of Social Sciences (BGSS), the International Graduate Program Medical Neurosciences, and Humboldt Graduate School (HGS) for providing information included in this handbook.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● THE BERLIN SCHOOL OF MIND AND BRAIN

Location

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
Berlin School of Mind and Brain
Luisenstraße 56, Haus 1
10117 Berlin

Offices

North Wing, Rooms 301–319 (2nd Floor) and 422 (3rd Floor)
Tel.: +49 30 2093-1707
Fax: +49 30 2093-1802
► mb-info@hu-berlin.de
► www.mind-and-brain.de/contact

See also map inside back cover.

Public transport

The closest stations are ‘Hauptbahnhof’ (national & local trains, TXL bus from airport Tegel, *S-Bahn*), ‘Oranienburger Tor’ (*U-Bahn*), and ‘Friedrichstraße’ (*S-Bahn* and *U-Bahn*). Bus No 147 stops at ‘Luisenstraße/Charité’ near our building. To find out about public transport connections in Berlin, see ► www.fahrinfo-berlin.de/Fahrinfo/bin/query.bin/en

M & B team

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INA DIECKMANN

(Financial assistant)

Tel.: +49 30 2093-2091

► mb-finance@hu-berlin.de

Humboldt Graduate School staff

The Berlin School of Mind and Brain is a member of Humboldt Graduate School (HGS). HGS is an umbrella organization for structured doctoral programs at Humboldt-Universität. It offers services and assistance to its member programs. The following topics are covered in cooperation with the HGS:

HGS website

► <http://humboldt-graduate-school.de>

IT help desk

NILS RÜCKERT

Room 114

Tel.: +49 30 2093-4581

► hgsit@hu-berlin.de

Service hours: Please see download on ► www.mind-and-brain.de/contact

Key competencies

ALEKSANDRA SKORIC

Room 214

Tel.: +49 30 2093-1705

► hgstrain@hu-berlin.de

Mentoring program

Dr. REGINA VON SCHMELING

Room 214

Tel.: +49 30 2093-1702

► regina.v.schmeling@hu-berlin.de



Information desk/assistance for international students

PASCALE SCHNEIDER

Room 110

Tel.: +49 30 2093-1799

► hgs-info@hu-berlin.de

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● BEFORE YOU LEAVE FOR GERMANY

German visa regulations

Applicants from the following countries do not require an entry visa for Germany: European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Andorra, Australia, Brazil, Canada, El Salvador, Honduras, Israel, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, South Korea, USA.

Non-EU and non-EEA (European Economic Area) nationals require a visa (d-type = national visa) to enter Germany. Please contact your local German Embassy as early as possible and apply for an initial, temporary single entry visa.

Students who intend to stay in Germany for a period of more than 90 days but who want to travel back to their home country within that time may obtain a so-called national “hybrid visa” (multiple entry visa). Do *not* apply for a tourist visa, as this is not sufficient and would require that you return to your home country after 90 days.

Please contact the German Embassy in your home country for documents needed for the application. Please take into account that it might take some weeks before you get your visa.

More information about entry visa for Germany:

► www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/EinreiseUndAufenthalt/Visabestimmungen_node.html

Travel insurance including medical care

Before leaving for Berlin, please check with your health insurance if you have sufficient medical coverage. If you are not covered you should take out travel insurance from any standard insurance company in your home country to cover your medical care during your journey and the first days in Berlin (proof of sufficient medical coverage may also be necessary to obtain a visa).

Documents you need

Here is a list of documents you need to be able to provide when you arrive in Berlin:

CHECKLIST

- Valid passport (with entry visa for non-German and non-EU citizens)
- Birth certificate
- Original degree certificates and transcripts (should they not be in English or German: certified translations)
- Vaccination card
- In addition to your passport, you should bring a second identification document such as a national identity card, driver's license, or similar
- Biometric photographs
- Acceptance letter from Berlin School of Mind and Brain

Where to stay during the first days or weeks

Humboldt-Universität and Charité Medical School each run their own guesthouses, providing temporary accommodation for students. Temporary accommodation is also offered at the “House of Nations” and the “Studentendorf Schlachtensee”. These short-term accommodations might give you enough time to look for a permanent place to live. However, these guesthouses are very popular, so we strongly recommend that you make your reservation as soon as possible. Furthermore, there are many student hotels and backpackers’ hostels that offer reasonably priced accommodation, often in shared rooms.

LIST OF GUESTHOUSES AND STUDENT HOTELS

Guesthouse of Humboldt-Universität

(► www.ta.hu-berlin.de/index.php4?fd=502)

House of Nations (► house-of-nations.de/cms/home.html)

Studentendorf Schlachtensee (► www.studentendorf-berlin.com)

Studentenwerk Berlin – Wohnraumbörse

(► www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/wohnen/woanders_wohnen/wohnraumboerse_berlin/index.html)

Studentenhotel Studentenwerk (► www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/wohnen/studenten-hotel/index.html)

For more information on how to find an apartment, see ‘Housing’ ► page 36.

● ● ● ● ● ● ● GETTING SETTLED

First steps to take

Once you have arrived in Berlin, you will need to visit several offices to take care of all your paperwork. Due to varying office hours, it will take you about a week to accomplish all of these tasks:

CHECKLIST

- Get a registration certificate
- Apply for a freedom of movement certificate (EU and EEA citizens only) *or*
- Apply for a residence permit (non-German and non-EU citizens only)
- Sign up for health insurance
- Open a bank account
- Apply for an income tax card and a social security card (if you have a regular employment contract, not a stipend)
- Matriculate at university
- Find an apartment or a place to stay
- Sign up for personal liability insurance (strongly recommended; inexpensive)

Humboldt Graduate School information desk

The HGS runs an information desk that offers assistance regarding all of the above-mentioned tasks.

PASCALE SCHNEIDER

HGS Information Desk

Luisenstraße 56, Haus 1, Room 110

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 2093-1799

Fax +49 30 2093-1718

▶ hgs-info@hu-berlin.de

▶ www.humboldt-graduate-school.de

Office hours Mon–Thu 9.00–16.00

Fri 9.00–15.00

Registration of residence

The most important thing to do upon arrival in Germany is to legalize your status by applying for a registration certificate (*Anmeldebestätigung*) at the citizen center (*Bürgeramt*). This certificate is required for any other administrative procedure, i.e. when you open a bank account or apply for a residence permit. You must register within 14 days of moving into a residential unit. As finding an apartment may take several weeks, you may register with the address of a friend or the student residence you are staying at. However, their written consent is required. Every time you move, even within Berlin, you have to get registered under your new address. This must be done in person. Be prepared that it may take 1 to 2 hours.

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Completed registration form (*Anmeldeformular*, see ► www.berlin.de/buergeramt/formulare)
- Rental agreement (or letter of agreement, see above)
- Passport
- Cost: none

The office closest to Humboldt-Universität is:

Bürgeramt

Rathaus Mitte

Karl-Marx-Allee 31 (*U-Bahn* station ‘Schillingstraße’)

10178 Berlin

Office hours

Mon	8.00–15.00
Tue, Thu	11.00–18.00
Wed, Fri	8.00–13.00

You will find relevant forms and more information at:

► www.berlin.de/verwaltungsfuehrer/buergerberatung

For information on how to find an apartment, see ‘Housing’

► page 36.

Freedom of movement certificate (EU and EEA citizens only)

EU and EEA citizens do not need a residence permit or visa. Instead they need a freedom of movement certificate (*Freizügigkeitsbescheinigung*). The document will be provided by the same office where you apply for your registration certificate (citizen center/*Bürgeramt*).

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Completed freedom of movement form (*Freizügigkeitsbescheinigung*, ► www.berlin.de/lab0/formulare/formularserver.php?path=/zuwanderung_und_aufenthalt_auslaenderbehoerde)
- Registration certificate
- Passport
- Cost: none

Residence permit (non-EU and non-EEA citizens only)

If you are neither a German citizen nor a citizen of the EU or the EEA, you must apply for a residence permit (*Aufenthaltserlaubnis*) or an extended visa. You need to get the residence permit within 90 days after your arrival in Germany. It can take up to six weeks to receive the permit. Therefore, make sure to apply as soon as possible.

A residence permit always has a time limit, 2 years maximum. However, you can apply for an extension of the permit after 2 years. The maximum extension will then be limited to one more year.

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Completed visa application form
- 2 biometric passport photos
- Your valid passport plus a copy of your passport
- Scholarship contract or contract of employment
- Copy of your registration certificate (*Anmeldebestätigung*) (see ‘registration of residence’ ► page 18)
- Copy of your health insurance
- Cost: Free of charge if you hold a scholarship, otherwise approx. €60.

To get your residence permit, please go to the foreign nationals department (*Ausländerbehörde*). Please make an appointment and bring all necessary documents along.

Landesamt für Bürger- und Ordnungsangelegenheiten

Ausländerbehörde (ABH)

Friedrich-Krause-Ufer 24

13353 Berlin

► www.berlin.de/lab0/auslaender/dienstleistungen

We strongly recommend that you bring a second identification document (national ID card, driver’s license, or similar), as it can take up to 6 weeks before you get your residence permit and your passport will be held by the authorities during that time. Since you will have to be able to identify yourself at any time, you should take a photocopy of your passport and also obtain a written confirmation from the *Ausländerbehörde* that your original passport is held by them.

Health insurance

Health insurance is mandatory. There are two types of health insurance companies in Germany: (1) those belonging to the public healthcare system, which cover students and most employees and (2) private health insurance companies for self-employed individuals and persons with incomes beyond a certain threshold.

- (1) The public healthcare system does not ask for your medical history. When you enroll, you are legally bound to the health insurance company for at least 18 months.
- (2) Private health insurances quite often have very restrictive rules, e.g., they may require a health check-up, and they cover medical treatment procedures selectively. Therefore, it is advisable to carefully check their policies before you sign up.
Nota bene: Once you are privately insured you won't be able to switch to the public option.

Doctoral candidates with a regular working contract have to enroll in the public healthcare system. They are not considered students and will not be granted reduced insurance premiums. The public health insurance companies will charge about 16% of gross income (or stipend if you are a stipend holder; see below). Stipend holders working on their doctorate do not qualify for employee status and can therefore get insurance from either public or private health insurance companies. Please note that if you choose private health coverage you cannot switch to the public healthcare system later!

If the prospective student has private health insurance coverage in his/her home country, it must be approved by an authorized health insurance provider in Germany, in which case an exemption from mandatory health insurance in Germany will be granted. It should, however, be considered

carefully that once such an arrangement has been made, subsequent admission to any mandatory health insurance provider in Germany is impossible. Students should make sure that their private insurance provides them equal coverage to that of German public health insurance.

If the country of origin has a mutual agreement with the Federal Republic of Germany (EU and EEA countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland, Tunisia, Turkey), the student's national health insurance provider should be queried about suitable insurance coverage. Meanwhile, a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) will guarantee appropriate care in the event of medical emergencies or if urgent medical treatment is required abroad. Holders of the EHIC card are exempt from German mandatory health insurance. Sometimes, taking out additional insurance coverage for transferring a patient back home for medical reasons is advisable. Advice on this and related issues should be sought in the student's home country.

Overview of public health insurance companies:

► www.gkv-spitzenverband.de/ITSGKrankenkassenListe.gkvnet

Comparison of the public health insurance companies:

► www.gesetzliche-krankenversicherung-info.de/GKV/Krankenkassenvergleich.html

The Techniker Krankenkasse (TK; public healthcare provider) offers an information service for students:

TK Berlin

LUTZ MATUSCHKE – adviser to students

Tel.: +49 30 40044-8660

► lutz.matuschke@tk-online.de

► www.tk-online.de

SOME USEFUL INFORMATION ABOUT THE GERMAN HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

- If a doctor is consulted, the health card (chip or smart card) must be presented.
- A quarterly fee of €10 (*Praxisgebühr*) is to be paid when a dentist or a general practitioner is consulted. General practitioners and specialists may transfer patients to other specialists or physicians. In this case, no additional fee occurs if subsequent treatment takes place in the same quarter of the year.
- If a doctor prescribes medication, at least €5 and up to €10 has to be paid by the patient (usually 1 per cent of the price of the drug), but never more than the actual price of the drug or medication.
- Every insured person is expected to pay a certain amount for medication and healthcare services, up to 2 per cent of gross annual income:
 - the standard fee of €10 (see above)
 - additional payment for medication
 - additional payment for hospital care.
- If it exceeds 2 per cent of annual gross income, the patient may apply for an exemption from additional payments with his health insurer. For further information, the individual's health insurance company should be contacted.

Bank account

In order to receive money and make regular payments (stipend, rent, etc.), you need to open a bank account. If you have a Humboldt-Universität or Charité Medical School matriculation certificate and the registration certificate of the local Citizen's Office (*Bürgeramt*), most banks will readily open a student account for you. Bank services and fees may vary. Note that in Germany it is more common to use an EC (debit) card rather than a credit card for non-cash payments.

For assistance with opening a bank account please contact Pascale Schneider (IGS Information Desk).

A selection of banks near Humboldt-Universität:

Berliner Bank

Friedrichstraße 185–190 (near Lafayette department store, entrance in Mohrenstraße)

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 31 09 90 90

► www.berliner-bank.de

Berliner Sparkasse

Friedrichstraße 193

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 869 869 69 (Hotline)

► www.berliner-sparkasse.de

Deutsche Bank

Unter den Linden 13–15 (opposite the National Library, *Staatsbibliothek*)

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 34 07 42 83

► www.deutsche-bank.de

Postbank Finanzcenter
Friedrichstraße 69
10117 Berlin
▶ www.postbank.de

Sparda-Bank
Georgenstraße 23 (near Friedrichstraße station)
10117 Berlin
Tel.: +49 30 420 80 420
▶ www.sparda.de

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Passport
- Copy of your *Anmeldebestätigung* (see ‘Registration of residence’ ▶ page 18)
- Cost: varies, please check with the bank

*Income tax card and social security card
(employment contract holders only)*

Stipends are tax free. However, if you have an employment contract (not a stipend), you must pay income tax and you therefore need a tax card (*Lohnsteuerkarte*) as well as a social security card. Both will be required by your employer’s paymaster’s department. The tax card is provided by the citizen center (*Bürgeramt*, see ‘registration of residence’ ▶ page 18). The social security card is provided by the German Social Security Administration.

Matriculation at Humboldt-Universität

Steps to take

For matriculation at Humboldt-Universität, you need the forms and documents listed below. If you need help with filling out these forms or if you have any questions, please contact the M & B management or Pascale Schneider (HGS Information Desk).

CHECKLIST

- Completed matriculation form (go to: ► studium.hu-berlin.de/bewerbung/formulare/standardseite#einschreib, then click on *Antrag auf Immatrikulation zur Promotion*)
- Photograph (1 sample)
- Acceptance letter of your doctoral program
- Original university certificate including transcripts of university qualification (i.e. diploma, magister, bachelor's or master's degree). If they are not in German or English: Please provide certified translations into either language
- Proof of equivalency for non-German degrees (this usually will be taken care of by the M & B management during the admissions process. If in doubt, please contact the M & B management)
- Passport
- Residence permit/visa (foreign doctoral students) *or*
- Registration certificate from the *Bürgeramt* (German and EU citizens)
- Proof of health insurance
- Proof of paid semester fees for the winter semester (see 'Semester fee and banking details' ► page 28)
- Admission to a doctorate *or* pre-matriculation letter issued by M & B (see details below)

Admission to a doctorate: For proper matriculation as a doctoral student you need to be admitted as a doctoral student (*Zulassung zur Promotion*) by the respective faculty board (*Fakultätsrat*); which faculty is responsible for your degree depends on your previous degree and/or your main supervisor's affiliation. As a member of Humboldt Graduate School, you can get a pre-matriculation without being officially admitted to a doctorate. This allows you to receive a student ID card at an early stage. You will have enough time during the semester to apply for the admission to a doctorate. Please contact the M & B management or Pascale Schneider at Humboldt Graduate School for the pre-matriculation letter.

Semester fee and banking details, Humboldt-Universität

The semester fee is ~€278 or, for international students with a German stipend, ~€228 (please bring a copy of your stipend contract). Included in this fee is the semester ticket, which gives you unlimited access to public transport for the entire semester (ABC zones), including your bicycle. Doctoral students are not obliged to buy the semester ticket. Since a season ticket costs about €70 a month (without a bicycle ticket), the semester ticket is highly recommendable. However, if you don't want it, you may be exempted from paying. In this case, please e-mail the matriculation office (► immatrikulationsbuero@uv.hu-berlin.de) and subtract the respective amount from your semester fees (see box on the facing page). Please note: For doctoral students it is also possible to matriculate at mid-term. The fees for the semester ticket will be reduced accordingly. You will find the exact amounts at the end of the matriculation form.

The passages below provide details of the fees and dues that students need to pay each semester. The amounts may vary slightly from semester to semester.

- Matriculation fee (~€50). This fee must be paid once each semester.
- ⊕ Semester dues for the *Studierendenschaft* (~€7). All Humboldt students are automatically enrolled in the student body (*Studierendenschaft*); semester dues are compulsory. In return, students have the right to elect the Student Parliament in January of each year and to use the student counseling services offered by StuPa/RefRat.
- ⊕ Semester dues for the *Studentenwerk* (~€42). All Berlin students are required to pay semester dues for the Studentenwerk, a student welfare organization that operates student dining facilities (*Mensa*) as well as the residential halls (*Wohnheim*).
- ⊕ Semester ticket (~€179). The semester ticket is a student season ticket for public transport in Berlin. Every student at a Berlin university (except doctoral candidates) is required to purchase the ticket each semester, which provides unlimited access to public transport for the whole semester.
- ⊖ **Total amount: ~€278.**

If you hold a German stipend: subtract ~€50

If you do not want the semester ticket: subtract ~€179

For the current fees, please check the matriculation form.

The amount is payable to the following Humboldt-Universität account:

Recipient (*Empfänger*): Humboldt Universität zu Berlin

Bank: Berliner Bank

Account No (*Konto-Nr.*): 512 620 604

Bank's sorting code (*Bankleitzahl*, short: BLZ): 100 708 48

BIC/SWIFT: DEUTDEB110

IBAN: DE14 1007 0848 0512 6206 04

Reason for payment (*Verwendungszweck*): Immatrikulation

ws 12/13 (this would be for the winter semester 2012/13)



After your first semester, the following bank account applies to your payments

Empfänger: Humboldt Universität zu Berlin
Postbank Berlin

Konto-Nr.: 0651 823 104

BLZ: 100 100 10

BIC/SWIFT: PBNKDEFF

IBAN: DE64 1001 0010 0651 8231 04

Got all your documents? Have you paid the semester fee? Then go and visit the matriculation office (*Immatrikulationsbüro*).

Matriculation for students with a German degree

Immatrikulationsbüro

Unter den Linden 6
Studierenden-Service-Center
Lichthof West

Office hours Mon 9.00–11.00 and 13.00–15.00

Tue 9.00–11.00

Wed 9.00–11.00 and 13.00–16.00

Fri 9.00–11.00

Matriculation for students with an international degree

Zulassungsbüro für ausländische Studierende und Promovierende

ELKE NÜRCK

Unter den Linden 6

Room 1051

Tel.: +49 30 2093-2627

Office hours Mon 13.00–15.00

Tue 13.00–16.00

Fri 9.00–11.00

Matriculation at the Charité Medical School

As a novice student at Charité, you are either assigned to the Freie Universität (FU) or the Humboldt-Universität (HU). While this assignment is merely a formality and does almost not affect you at all, the semester fees of both universities vary by a few Euro cents. Please contact Susanne Bednareck for the actual amount of the Charité semester fees and related banking information. Sorry, money transfers from abroad will not be accepted.

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

- Passport or national identity card
- Admission to a doctorate or confirmation from admissions committee (*Bestätigung des Promotionsausschusses*) – please see ► <http://promotion.charite.de>
- Proof of primary university qualification (e.g. *Abitur* or high school degree and university certificates)
- Certificate(s) of removal from student register (*Exmatrikulationsbescheinigung*), if one or more German universities have been previously attended (with documentary evidence of all semesters spent at German universities)

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED (CONTINUED)

- For international doctoral students: Residence permit (non-EU citizens) or freedom of movement certificate (EU citizens).

All documents must be certified and handed in for matriculation. Copies of the original documents may be handed in, with originals presented for comparison. Non-German records in English do not require a translation, documents in any other language must be accompanied by a translated version.

There is no deadline for doctoral candidate matriculation, but it can only be processed if the candidate appears in person during office hours at the “Referat für Studienangelegenheiten”.

Contact person for matriculation as a doctoral candidate

SUSANNE BEDNARECK

Charité – Universitätsmedizin Berlin

Referat für Studienangelegenheiten

Room 028

Campus Charité Mitte

Charitéplatz 1, 10117 Berlin

Address on Campus: Virchowweg 24, Friedrich-Busch-Haus (entry via Robert-Koch-Platz/Hannoversche Straße)

Tel.: +49 30 450 576 152

Fax: +49 30 450 576 953

► susanne.bednareck@charite.de

Office hours Tue 9.30–12.30 and 13.30–16.00

Thu 9.30–12.30

Fri 9.30–12.30

Matriculation at other universities

If you intend to conduct your doctorate at the Freie Universität, Potsdam University or elsewhere, you have to follow a slightly different procedure that is usually supported by your program management. For details please check the relevant university websites or contact the M & B management.

Telephone services

Telephone companies

The Deutsche Telekom is still the most well-known and dominant telephone service provider in Germany. However, there are other companies and it is well worth comparing prices, especially for long-distance or international calls. More detailed information can be found on the internet at ► www.telefontarife.de or at ► www.billiger-telefonieren.de. Also, check the internet for information about a number of callback service providers, which are certainly convenient for international calls because they use the more economical us telephone billing system.

Mobile phone without contract

Many prepaid offerings do not include a cell phone. Contract purchasers subsidize the cell phone via their monthly basic fee; it is being paid off bit by bit, so to speak. Prepaid plans do not come with a basic monthly fee and there is no contract with the customer, thus such arrangements do not always include a cell phone. If a prepaid plan is chosen complete with a cell phone, the customer pays full price for the phone, which may be expensive. For that reason, most customers purchase only a prepaid entry package plan with a SIM card and buy a cell phone elsewhere.

Some providers like Vodafone, E-Plus, T-Mobile, and O2 offer entry package plans that include a prepaid card with a credit and a cell phone. Naturally, these entry package plans are more expensive than just buying a SIM card.

Anyone intent upon buying a prepaid cell phone should make sure it has no SIM lock. If it does, it can only be operated with a specific SIM card or with a SIM card from a specific mobile phone service provider. Cheap prepaid cell phones are available from eBay or Amazon, among others. For buying a prepaid mobile phone, you will have to present your ID and state your address.

Mobile phone with contract

Many providers offer cell phones with a contract. There is a wide range of contracts with a multitude of flat rates. Choosing the right provider/contract depends on one's own phone habits, namely if you primarily use your cell phone for making local or national call, for sending text messages, for accessing the internet, or for making international calls. In the last case, especially, read the fine print carefully because every provider/contract offers different options for international calls. An agreement can be established online or in a mobile phone shop, with or without purchase of a cell phone. You will be required to present your ID, state your address (home and office), and perhaps answer other questions as well. Overviews of agreements and rates (in German) can be found at: ► www.getmobile.de/vertraege.html and ► www.teltarif.de.

Insurance

Personal liability insurance (strongly recommended)

A personal liability insurance (*Haftpflichtversicherung*) covers expenses which arise as a result of an accidental damage to a third party (other than automobile accidents) and accidental damage you cause in households other than your own (for the latter, you require household insurance / *Hausratversicherung*). The personal liability insurance provides coverage against financial ruin in case of claims for compensation by third parties and it is recommended to get such insurance in Germany. Compare insurance policies from various companies for premiums.

Accident insurance (voluntary)

A private accident insurance (*Private Unfallversicherung*) covers costs which arise as a result of an accident (e.g. if you are disabled following an accident, you will be paid a certain monthly income). This kind of insurance is offered by most insurance companies, but varies in premiums and services. Please compare carefully if you intend to get one. Accidents at the institute where you work may be covered by the institute's insurance policy. Please check.

Household insurance (voluntary)

You can get household insurance (*Hausratversicherung*) to cover the furnishings of your apartment or house in case of theft or accidental damage. Many large German insurance companies offer household insurance. There is no obligation to have such insurance, though.

Driver's license

Foreign citizens may drive a vehicle in Germany with their national permit for up to 6 months after entering the country. After 6 months, however, *all* non-German citizens must apply for a German driver's license (*Führerschein*). For details check: ► www.berlin.de/labo/fuehrerschein/dienstleistungen/fuehrerscheinumtauschland.html (in German) or contact the HGS Information Desk for assistance.

Housing

Living in Berlin is fairly inexpensive compared to other European capitals. There is a wide range of apartments for rent and the very popular flat share (*Wohngemeinschaft* or *WG*). In addition, there are student dorms (usually offering single rooms).

Renting accommodation on the housing market

In Germany, apartments advertised include a bathroom and a kitchen that is usually fitted with an electric stove and a sink. The living room counts as an extra room, so if you wish to rent an apartment with a living room and a bedroom, you have to look for a two-room apartment (*Zweizimmerwohnung*). The size of the apartment is specified as the total ground space in square meters. Usually, apartments are unfurnished. If there is furniture, this will be described in the advertisement as *(teil-)möbliert*.

In Germany, it is very common for young people to share apartments (*Wohngemeinschaft* or *WG*). In shared apartments, several people live together, each has his/her own room, and the bathroom and kitchen are used jointly. Living in a *WG* is usually the least expensive option of accommodation.

The monthly rent payment is due at the beginning of each month and is to be paid via bank transfer. It consists of two parts, the rent (*Kaltmiete*) and running costs (*Nebenkosten*). *Nebenkosten* usually include water, heating, garbage collection.

There are additional payments for electricity (*Strom*) and you must therefore register with an electric power supplier (compare electricity costs!). If your apartment is supplied with propane gas, you have to register with a propane supplier.

When you rent an apartment, you might have to pay a refundable security deposit in advance (up to the amount of three months' rent) as collateral for damage or unpaid rent (*Kaution*). The deposit will be paid back once you move out and if the apartment is damage-free.

Many apartments are advertised by real estate agents and they may charge a commission (*Provision*).

SOME FREQUENT TERMS USED IN THE PROPERTY MARKET

Netto-Kaltmiete – basic rent

Heizkosten – cost for heating

Betriebskosten – tenant's contribution to the running costs of the building, garbage collection, etc.

Miete inkl. Nebenkosten – rent including the cost for heating und running costs

Kaution – refundable security deposit

Provision – commission paid to the real estate agent

Where to find a room/apartment

LINKS TO ROOMS OR (SHARED) APARTMENTS

- ▶ www.immobilienscout24.de (German)
- ▶ www.immonet.de (German)
- ▶ www.studenten-wg.de (German)
- ▶ www.wg-gesucht.de/en
- ▶ www.wg-zimmer.de (German)
- ▶ www.exberlinerflatrentals.com
- ▶ www.rooms-in-berlin.com
- ▶ www.berlin.homecompany.de
- ▶ www.city-wohnen.de/eng/berlin/flat-search
- ▶ www.wggruendung.de (German)
- ▶ www.berlin.en.craigslist.com
- ▶ www.zwischenmiete.de

REAL ESTATE SECTIONS IN BERLIN NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Tagesspiegel (Saturdays)

Berliner Zeitung (Saturdays)

Berliner Morgenpost (Saturdays)

Zweite Hand (Tuesdays and Fridays)

Zitty (every other week)

Tip (every other week)

Student residences

A fairly cheap, but not too popular housing option is to rent a place in a student residence (*Wohnheim*, €130 to €270 per month). The quality varies, but you can find quite nice places in various parts of the city. You need to be matriculated as a student to apply for a student residence. Please note that sometimes undergraduate students have priority over doctoral candidates. Some student residences may not accept doctoral candidates at all. To find a student residence, please visit the website of the Studentenwerk (► www.studentenwerk-berlin.de)

In addition, a brochure entitled “Budenzauber”, issued by the Studentenwerk, has information on private rooms, flats and apartments for students in Berlin. You will find the brochure online if you google “studentenwerk berlin budenzauber 2010”.

The German TV and radio license fee (GEZ)

Any public broadcast receiver equipment – such as a radio or television set – is subject to mandatory registration and payment of a license fee (~€18/month). The regulation covers all types of radio and television sets, also PCs with internet access.

GEZ (Gebühreneinzugszentrale der öffentlich-rechtlichen Rundfunkanstalten)

50656 Köln

► www.gez.de (German)

Semesters

The academic year in Germany is divided into two semesters: the winter semester from 1 October to 31 March (lecture period for bachelor and master's students from mid-October to mid-February) and the summer semester from 1 April to 30 September (lecture period for bachelor and master's students from mid-April to mid-July). Details of the precise semester dates, official (national) holiday arrangements, etc. can be obtained from the current course catalog (*Vorlesungsverzeichnis*) ► <https://agnes.hu-berlin.de>

Workspaces and computers

Doctoral supervisors are responsible for a doctoral student's workspace including the computer. This issue should be settled by you and your supervisors prior to the commencement of the doctorate. The School is able to provide a limited number of workspaces with or without computers for limited periods of time. Please contact the School early if you are interested.

Humboldt-Universität user account

Please set up a Humboldt-Universität user account as soon as possible, as this will allow you to access computers and other services all over campus. It further provides you with



a Humboldt-Universität e-mail account. All students of M & B are eligible for such an account, even if they are not enrolled at HU. You can either fill out a form or open your account online with your HU matriculation number, both at: ► <https://www.cms.hu-berlin.de/dl/beratung/antrag>

WLAN at Humboldt-Universität

The university provides a campus-wide wireless LAN network. To use it, you need to log in via a virtual private network (VPN) connection using your Humboldt-Universität user account. A tutorial on how to set up your computer is available at: ► www.cms.hu-berlin.de/dl/netze/wlan/intro (in German).

IT support

In case of problems while registering your user account, configuring your e-mail or setting up the wireless network, consult the HGS IT team, headed by Nils Rückert (► hgsit@hu-berlin.de, or 2093-4581).

University PC pools

Humboldt-Universität's Computer und Medienservice (CMS) maintains a number of PC-pools spread over the university's campuses: ► www.cms.hu-berlin.de/dl/oecap/pcpools/

Internet access at Charité

If you don't have access to the internet from your home, you may use the internet rooms of the Charité for free. You will find them in all of the three campuses (CCM, CVK, CBF) in different places. All you need is your student card: just show it to the attendant at the internet room. ► cipom.de/index.php

Location

Charité Campus Mitte: 2nd Floor in the main building of the Charité (use the stairs)

Campus Virchow Klinikum: Forum 3 (near the library to the left)

Campus Benjamin Franklin: Institute of Medical Informatics (near the west entrance)

Opening hours Mon–Fri 9.00–18.00 (for CCM and CVK)
Mon–Fri 10.00–16.00 (for CBF)

Moodle – The online learning platform

Some HU courses maintain their own website on the online learning platform Moodle. You can also use it for your journal clubs or working groups. Among other things, Moodle offers the possibility to share documents, i.e. to upload teaching materials, presentations, information, etc., communicate and discuss online. You can find information on how to sign up and use Moodle at ► moodle.hu-berlin.de.

Libraries

Owing to the large number of universities in Berlin, you will find various more or less specific scientific as well as public libraries all over Berlin. All libraries of Humboldt-Universität, most importantly the main library “Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum”, may be used free of charge. As doctoral students of M & B, you are eligible to an employee pass (*Mitarbeiterausweis*). Please point this out to the attendant at the counter at your first visit. Please note that there are various options to order books that are not available in your local library. Please ask the library staff for further assistance and look out for the regular introductory sessions to the library conducted by the library staff.

LIBRARIES IN BERLIN

University Library Humboldt-Universität (*Jacob-und-Wilhelm-Grimm-Zentrum*): ► www.ub.hu-berlin.de

University Library of Natural Sciences (*Zentralbibliothek Naturwissenschaften*): ► www.ub.hu-berlin.de/standorte/erwin-schroedinger-zentrum

National Library (*Staatsbibliothek*):
► www.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de

University Library Technische Universität (TU):
► www.ub.tu-berlin.de

University Library Freie Universität (FU):
► www.ub.fu-berlin.de

America Memorial Library (*Amerika-Gedenkbibliothek*):
► www.zlb.de/ueber_uns

Berlin City Library (*Haus Berliner Stadtbibliothek*):
► www.voebb.de

Language courses

Why learn *Deutsch*?

Berlin is an international city, the doctoral program at M & B is conducted exclusively in English and all staff and students speak English as well as other foreign languages. So you may ask yourself: why bother to learn German? Strictly speaking, you don't need to. You will be able to go about your work, talk to supervisors and fellow students, communicate with the staff at M & B and get by in day-to-day interaction, get your foreign newspapers and watch movies in the original version. However, while it is possible to get along without speaking German, the School strongly recommends that doctoral candidates learn *Deutsch*, both for practical reasons and to maximize the cultural impact of the city. There may be situations where at least basic German skills will be helpful, e.g., when directing a proposal to the *Ethikkommission* of the Charité or when making appointments for using the fMRI scanners.

Where to learn *Deutsch*?

The Language Center of Humboldt-Universität offers a multitude of opportunities to international students enrolled at the university to improve their knowledge of German either during the semester or in intensive language courses in the semester breaks.

Language Center

ZE Sprachenzentrum
August-Boeckh-Haus
Dorotheenstraße 65
10117 Berlin

Courses offered at the Language Center, registration deadlines and conditions can be found at ► www.sprachenzentrum.hu-berlin.de. Registering in advance is compulsory for all courses. Registration is online only! An assessment test (C Test) will have to be taken prior to the beginning of a course to ensure the correct placement of applicants in accordance with their linguistic skills. The Language Center also operates a multimedia library (*Mediothek*) with a comprehensive collection of video and audio materials, PC-based language programs as well as print media. Moreover, the *Volkshochschule* (adult education center, ► www.berlin.de/vhs) and the *Sprach- und Kulturbörse* (► www2.tu-berlin.de/faki/skb) of Technische Universität are usually fairly priced options. Another option is the Goethe-Institut (► www.goethe.de) or other language schools in Berlin. Please note that courses offered at the Language Center – especially those for beginners – are extremely popular. Therefore, it is advisable to meet the beginning of the course registration period (*Buchungsbeginn*) literally by the minute!

If you want to start learning at home, this website will be a good starting point: ► www.bbc.co.uk/languages/german

Financial support by M & B

The Berlin School of Mind and Brain financially supports students of German. Reimbursement for taking part in German-language classes is 100% of the course fee at Humboldt-Universität, and 50% for external classes (please provide documentation of successful completion for reimbursement). Please note: Before booking an external language class, please contact managing director Annette Winkelmann.

Cafeterias/dining halls

The following cafeterias and dining halls (*Mensa*) are closest to the Berlin School of Mind and Brain, Humboldt-Universität and the Charité (Campus North). The Studentenwerk maintains additional dining halls all over the city. A complete list is available online at: ► www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/en/mensen (in English).

DINING HALLS AND CAFETERIAS

Mensa Nord

Hannoversche Straße 7, 10115 Berlin

Mensa Süd

Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin (HU main building)

Coffeebar HU Säulenmensa

Unter den Linden 6, 10117 Berlin (HU main building)

Mensa HU Spandauer Straße

Spandauer Straße 1, 10187 Berlin

Mensa FU Lankwitz

Malteser Straße 74, 12249 Berlin

Cashless payment with MensaCard

You can pay cash-free in all our dining halls (*Mensa*) and cafeterias with your MensaCard. In establishments where uploading terminals for the MensaCard have been installed, you can only pay with the MensaCard. This is a loadable chip card, on which merely the remaining amount and the card number are stored. You will find uploading terminals in the Mensa foyers. Use them to load banknotes up to a



value of €50 onto your MensaCard or to check your balance. You will receive the MensaCard at the Mensa cash tills. You will get back the deposit of €1.55 when you return the card. When buying the card at a cash till you must present your student or employee identity card in order to receive the discounted price for students or higher education employees. However, the data from these documents is not recorded, neither in the computer system nor on the MensaCard. More information are available at ► www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/en/mensen/produkte_preise/mensacard.

Family and children

Family assistance

The Berlin School of Mind and Brain offers its students assistance with children, e.g., how to organize daycare, how to combine family life and a doctorate, etc. For appointments with the equal opportunity officer, Anne Löchte, please contact Annette Winkelmann (► mb-manager@hu-berlin.de).

The School offers financial assistance to M & B scholarship holders with children: €400/month for the first child, €100/month for each additional child, and a possible scholarship extension of up to 12 months. Alternatively, a money-for-time option is available. In this case, basic pay provided for the scholarship extension can be used as a research subsidy, e.g., for hiring student assistants or to cover the cost of childcare. A combination of the scholarship extension option and the money-for-time option is possible.

For detailed information on these regulations, please contact Annette Winkelmann (► mb-manager@hu-berlin.de).



Family room

In September 2010, a family room was opened in Humboldt Graduate School for use by doctoral candidates, conference visitors, and staff with children. It has a playzone for children and their overseers, with a cot, a sofa, toys, etc., and is equipped with two tables, one with a PC (internet and w-LAN access is available by request).

Location

Humboldt Graduate School
Luisenstraße 56, Haus 1
North Wing, 1st Floor, Room 219

To book the family room and internet/w-LAN access, please contact the Humboldt Graduate School Management Office, +49 30 2093-1720, ► hgs@hu-berlin.de.

Student counseling and assistance

To a large extent, success as a student depends on the conditions of life one faces. The Studentenwerk's counseling and assistance office is there to help students deal with their specific problems:

- Counseling and practical assistance – also in English – to help all students overcome personal problems in times of crisis and during exams
- Special counseling, assistance and practical help for disabled and chronically ill students
- Counseling and assistance for students with social problems
- Counseling for student parents
- Student parent assistance by providing daycare for their children at our nurseries

Every student at one of Berlin's public academic institutions can turn to the Studentenwerk's counselors and assistance officers for help. Anything a student reveals to them is privileged information. Since they work closely with the individual universities, schools and institutes in Berlin, they are very familiar with the actual conditions students are confronted with.

Contact: +49 30 93939-8401

▶ beratung@studentenwerk-berlin.de

▶ www.studentenwerk-berlin.de/en/bub/index.html

Information services for doctoral students at the HU

The doctoral student's webpage provides information on access to doctoral studies, supervision & counseling, funding, international aspects, supplementary education, promoting women and family support and networks:

► www.hu-berlin.de/promovierende-en/standardseite-en
(English)

Leaving Berlin

If you plan to move on after graduation, you need complete the following steps:

CHECKLIST

- Removal from the student register at the university's *Studienabteilung*
- De-registration at the citizen center (*Meldestelle*)
- The respective forms and a listing of citizen centers (*Bürgeramt*) is available at:
► www.berlin.de/buergeramt/formulare/index.php?detail=52074
- Cancellation of your rental agreement, electricity and telephone service etc.
- Return of keys and keycards to M & B management

● ● ● ● ● ● ● GETTING AROUND AND ABOUT IN BERLIN

Public transportation and semester ticket

Berlin has an extensive public transport system of subways (*U-Bahn*), trains (*S-Bahn*), buses, and streetcars (*Tram* or *Straßenbahn*), allowing you to conveniently reach almost every location in town day and night. The urban public transport systems are mainly operated by two companies: the Berliner Verkehrsbetriebe (BVG) and the *S-Bahn* Berlin. You can use the trains and buses of both companies inside the Berlin fare zone with a ticket from either one of them. This also includes regional rail transport and ferries. Berlin has three fare zones: Zone A is within the *S-Bahn* ring and encompasses the city center, zone B ends at the city limits, zone C includes Berlin's immediate surroundings (e.g. Airport Berlin-Schönefeld, Potsdam, Oranienburg). For more information and timetables please visit:

► www.bvg.de

► www.s-bahn-berlin.de

Together with your matriculation fee you can pay for a semester ticket that gives you (and your bicycle) unlimited access to public transportation for the entire semester (ABC zones). For details, see 'matriculation' ► page 27.

Railroad & car sharing

Germany has a well-developed national railroad system. The regular prices are quite high, but you can either buy a so-called *Bahncard* and get a 25% or 50% discount on all train journeys or, alternatively, book in advance to get a *Sparpreis-Ticket*, which can save you even more. ► www.bahn.de

Car sharing has become quite popular in Germany. For a small fee you can ride along with total strangers on their car trips. This can be fun and is often very interesting, too, as you meet people from all walks of life:

► www.mitfahrgelegenheit.de

Automobile rental

There are numerous rental car companies to choose from (Hertz or Sixt, for example).

Robben & Wientjes is probably the company with the lowest rates for renting light trucks or vans of any size. You can rent their vehicles by the hour, which is quite useful when moving to a new apartment.

► www.robben-wientjes.de

Sports

Biking

If you don't want to buy a new bike, you can buy one used. There are advertisements for second-hand bicycles in the fortnightly advertising magazine *Zweite Hand*. The German Railroad (*Deutsche Bahn*) auctions bicycles regularly (dates and times are posted in local daily newspapers), or find them at: ► www.fahrradmarkt-berlin.de/termine_gebrauchtes_fahrrad_berlin.html.

Bicycles for rent: “Fahrradstation” for instance runs six places with bikes for rent in Berlin. For instance:

Fahrradstation am Bahnhof

Friedrichstraße 95 (entrance: Dorotheenstraße 30)

10117 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 2838 4848

► www.fahrradstation.de

For all questions on bikes and biking you can contact the Allgemeine Deutsche Fahrrad-Club (National Cycling Association – ADFC): ► www.adfc.de

BBBike is an online route planner for bikers in Berlin. Of the 11,000 streets in Berlin, more than 10,000 are included there, also 420 streets in Potsdam. If a certain street is not listed, the nearest intersection will show up automatically.

► www.bbbike.de/cgi-bin/bbbike.en.cgi (English)

University sports

The Humboldt-Universität Sports Center (*Zentraleinrichtung Hochschulsport*) offers a great variety of opportunities for sports ranging from leisure sport courses, team or individual competitive sports courses all the way to holiday sports activities (a skiing holiday, horseback riding courses). All courses require registration and the payment of fees.

All types of sports offered, addresses and dates are listed under the University Sports Center’s homepage (► www.zeh.hu-berlin.de/angebot.html – website only in German). Registration is online. It is advisable to register early for a maximum of two courses because courses are booked out quickly. Personal registration at the University Sports Center (address underneath) is possible after the start of courses.

zE Hochschulsport

Invalidenstraße 110, 4th floor

10115 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 2093-4869/-4876

Office hours Tue 14.00–16.00

Thu 11.00–13.00

Humboldt students may equally use the sports facilities and courses run by the other universities in Berlin. Information on courses and registration regulations can be found on the websites of these universities:

FU Berlin: ► www.hs-sport.fu-berlin.de

TU Berlin: ► www.tu-sport.de

Swimming

Berliners have access to 37 indoor pools and 26 open-air pools. Some are state-of-the-art competition pools with 50 m lap pools while others are more recreational in nature. Open-air pools are usually open from May till September. At the same time, most indoor pools restrict their opening hours during the summer season. For exact business hours, please check out the websites of specific pools.

► www.berlinerbaederbetriebe.de (website in German)

Please note: Most open-air pools offer locker space but guests should bring their own padlocks. The indoor pool lockers usually require a 1 or 2 Euro coin deposit to lock. Prices: Regular ticket €4, discount: €2.50. Early bird/Evening: €2 (until 8.00 and after 17.00; check website for details on individual pools).

Running

No other European metropolis has more parks, forests and green areas than Berlin with a whopping total of 890 square kilometers. For joggers, there are countless paths and parkways, and newcomers to the city or those who wish to plan their jog in advance may visit ► www.jogmap.de/Laufstrecken_Berlin/ (registration is free).

Shopping: Supermarkets and more

There is a great variety of supermarkets in Berlin, everything from high end, discount, organic food to small shops specializing in seafood, Turkish or English food, for instance. Discount supermarkets like Aldi, Lidl, Penny or Netto sell food and beverages at lower prices than regular supermarkets like Kaiser's, Edeka or Rewe. Discount stores often sell no-name products or house brands, and their merchandise is stored in boxes rather than on shelves. You will not find fresh cheese, meats and fish; instead, everything is packaged and sealed. Some discount stores even offer their own organic food brands for surprisingly low prices.

High-end

- Reichelt: ► www.reichelt-berlin.de
- Rewe: ► www.rewe.de
- Edeka: ► www.edeka.de

Mid-range

- Kaiser's: ► www.kaisers.de
- Real: ► www.real.de

Discount markets

- Aldi: ▶ www.aldi.de
- Lidl: ▶ www.lidl.de
- Netto: ▶ www.netto.de
- Penny: ▶ www.pennymarkt.de

Please note: Some of the Kaiser's and Reichelt supermarkets are open Monday through Saturday until midnight. Check the websites for details.

Organic only

- Bio Company (everywhere in Berlin):
▶ www.biocompany.de
- LPG (Kreuzberg and Prenzlauer Berg):
▶ www.lpg-naturkost.de
- Erdkorn (Wilmersdorf): ▶ www.erdkorn.de
- Basic (Steglitz, Zehlendorf):
▶ www.basic-bio-genuss-fuer-alle.de

Department stores

- Wertheim ▶ www.wertheim.de
- Karstadt ▶ www.karstadt.de
- Kaufhof ▶ www.kaufhof.de
- KaDeWe ▶ www.kadewe.de

Another German (maybe European) particularity is that stores are generally closed after 20.00 and on Sundays. But this wouldn't be Berlin if there were no alternatives, providing you with the most necessary stuff even at odd hours.

Spätis (= short for *Spätverkauf*) and gas stations

It would be impossible to list all of Berlin's late-night shops. But a good indicator that a place is open at odd hours is if they call themselves *Späti* or *Spätverkauf*. These shops are mostly open until 23.00 or midnight, sometimes longer.



Don't expect to succeed with last-minute shopping for a 7-course gourmet dinner, but if you are running out of coffee filters, toilet paper or tomato sauce, help is near. The *Tankstelle* or *Tanke* (petrol stations) are also open Monday through Sunday until midnight. Selections may vary, however, and the offer is usually more limited than at the *Spätis*. Please note: Both *Spätis* and *Tankstellen* charge considerably higher prices than supermarkets.

Sunday shopping

At the *S-Bahn* stations 'Zoologischer Garten', 'Friedrichstraße' and 'Ostbahnhof', a selection of shops is open on Sundays and bank holidays until 22.00. At 'Zoologischer Garten' you can find the Ullrich supermarket, at 'Friedrichstraße' the Edeka and at 'Ostbahnhof' you have a choice between Rewe and Lidl.

Culture

Cultural activities

Berlin is well known for its cultural diversity, whether it is theaters, opera houses or cinemas. Cultural events happen every day of the week. City magazines called *Zitty*, *Tip* and the English-language *Metropolis* or *Ex-Berliner* inform you about what's up and where to go.

It is cheaper to go to the movies on so-called *Kinotag* (Mondays, Tuesdays or Wednesdays, depending on the respective movie theater). On these days, movie tickets only cost between €4 and €6 (on other days prices range from €8 to €11). In some movie theaters in the eastern districts of Berlin student discounts are available with proper student ID (one of these is the ACUD cinema).

The Orbis Humboldtianus at Humboldt-Universität is a club for international students. It organizes a wide variety of events, courses, and clubs such as a poetry club, guided tours, parties, ship cruises on the Spree, and much more:

► www.international.hu-berlin.de/an_die_hu/studierende/orbis

Furthermore, the Humboldt-Universität runs a music program that covers the whole range of classical music ensembles as well as a jazz band. Students who know how to play an instrument are invited to participate.

There is the ClassicCard that enables anyone up to 27 years old to obtain very reasonably priced tickets (if available) for performances at the Deutsche Oper in Berlin-Charlottenburg and at the Konzerthaus at Gendarmenmarkt. The following websites list everything you need to know about the ClassicCard and help you order it by e-mail:

► www.deutscheoperberlin.de

► www.konzerthaus.de

► www.kulturkauf.de

In many other theaters and opera houses student discounts are available. You can often obtain tickets at discount prices at the box office on the day of the event (*Abendkasse*).

Theater and concert tickets at prices reduced up to 50% may be bought from:

HEKTICKET at Alexanderplatz

Karl-Liebknecht-Straße 13

10178 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 230 993-0

HEKTICKET at Zoologischer Garten

(in the entrance hall of Deutsche Bank opposite the station 'Zoologischer Garten')

Hardenbergstraße 29 d

10623 Berlin

Tel.: +49 30 230 993-0

Culture on the house

You can also explore "Berlin for free": German- and English-language websites (such as the ones listed below) provide extensive information about exhibitions, concerts, sightseeing, film, etc.

CULTURE FOR FREE

- ▶ www.berlin.admission-free.org
- ▶ www.gratis-in-berlin.de (German)
- ▶ www.berlin.de/kultur-und-tickets/kultur/berlin_umsonst (German)
- ▶ berlin.barwick.de/shopping/berlin-for-free.html (German)

MultiKulti in Berlin

MultiKulti is a German abbreviation for intercultural encounter. Berlin is home to many people from all parts of the world. In all likelihood, you find cultural events and people from your own cultural background. The following list is only a small selection.

SELECTION OF MULTIKULTI IN BERLIN

Polish and Eastern Europe: ► www.pigasus-shop.de

Polish Institute: ► www.berlin.polnischekultur.de

Institut Francais: ► www.institutfrancais.de/berlin?lang=de

British Council: ► www.britishcouncil.de

Instituto Cervantes: ► www.cervantes.de

Berlin Amateurs (Spanish): ► www.berlinamateurs.com

Cultura Urbana: ► squaredog.b2mag.de

Korean Culture: ► germany.korean-culture.org

Greek Culture: ► www.griechische-kultur.de

Turkish–German Forum: ► www.das-kulturforum.de

Indian Culture Berlin: ► www.indianembassy.de/ttc/culture.htm

Institute of Cultural Diplomacy:
► www.culturaldiplomacy.org

Chinese Cultural Center: ► www.c-k-b.eu

Chinese in Berlin: ► www.chinesisches-berlin.de

International student ID

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is the only student identity card that is valid all over the world. It entitles the holder to buy tickets at special student rates and get discounts on airlines, trains and buses, for accommodation, in museums, theaters, cinemas and for other cultural events.

The card may be obtained for €12 in all student travel agencies as well as from the student welfare organization Studentenwerk. The purchase of the ISIC includes an accident insurance policy. The ISIC is valid for 16 months, from September to December of the year following the date of issue.

CHECKLIST: DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR AN ISIC APPLICATION

- Passport
- Passport-type photograph
- Student ID card

Further information and practical advice on insurance cover for travel, for studies and internships abroad may be found on the internet and in the booklet entitled “ISIC World Travel Handbook” which is obtainable at all student travel agencies.

Media

This is a short overview of the German media landscape, highlighting some of its particularities. It is by no means complete and admittedly biased by the authors' personal views and preferences.

Broadcasting

In terms of broadcasting (radio and television), there are public and private networks. Public TV stations include ARD, ZDF and the so-called *Dritte Programm* (NDR, WDR, RBB, HR, MDR, SWR), Arte, and 3-Sat. A popular public radio in Berlin is Radio Eins. Programming of all non-profit networks is based on the concept of public service, but ratings also matter. Funding is generated primarily through mandatory nationwide user fees.

The most popular news broadcast in Germany, the *Tagesschau*, can be seen every night at 20.00 on ARD, NDR and other channels (see also ► www.tagesschau.de for the livestream). Friends of view-on-demand can get the respective app and watch the 15-minute broadcast any time they like. Private television includes stations like Sat1, Pro7, Kabel1, RTL, RTL2 and some others. These are private TV stations financed primarily through commercials. Programming content is based mainly on popular appeal (ratings).

International radio programming can be obtained via satellite TV. A number of international radio stations can simply be tuned into:

INTERNATIONAL RADIO STATIONS

MulticultFM 88.4 FM: ► www.multicult.fm

National Public Radio (NPR) Berlin 104.1 FM:
► www.nprberlin.de

BBC World Service 94.8 FM: ► www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice

Radio France International 106 FM: ► www.rfi.fr

The national German radio station is called *Deutschlandfunk* 97.7 FM (► www.dradio.de/dlf), and two important radio stations with a specific focus on culture (music, literature, art, history), science and education are *Deutschland-RadioBerlin* 89.6 (► www.dradio.de/dlr) and *RBB Kulturradio* 92.4 FM (► www.kulturradio.de).

Learn German with Deutsche Welle online

This offering is free and includes online or hardcopy instructional self-study material from beginners to advanced learner. By the way, this public broadcaster can also be listened to online. You find a wealth of information and programming on German business, politics and cultural affairs. ► www.dw-world.de

Internet radio

Did you know that you can get wifi-operated radios that connect to your wireless network? Thousands of radio stations sorted by country or genre can be streamed live. Salsa or heavy metal, Burkina Faso or Canada – the choice is yours.

Periodicals

The German newspaper market includes what is called *Boulevardpresse* (tabloids), local, regional, and high-quality national newspapers and magazines.

NATIONAL WEEKLIES

Die ZEIT (newspaper): ► www.zeit.de

Der Spiegel (magazine): ► www.spiegel.de

Focus (magazine): ► www.focus.de

NATIONAL DAILIES (SELECTION)

Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung (FAZ): ► www.faz.net

Süddeutsche Zeitung (sz): ► www.sueddeutsche.de

Frankfurter Rundschau: ► www.fr-online.de

Die Tageszeitung (taz): ► www.taz.de

BERLIN DAILIES

Der Tagesspiegel: ► www.tagesspiegel.de

Berliner Zeitung: ► www.berliner-zeitung.de

Berliner Morgenpost: ► www.morgenpost.de

Most newspapers offer special subscription deals for students. Most of them can also be placed at your smartphone fingertip with the respective app or offer podcasts for subscription. International newspapers are available at basically any newsstand in town.

Health Services

If you feel sick, you may visit any doctor of your choice. It is highly recommended, though, to select a general practitioner for your first visit. Depending on your condition, this doctor can refer you to a specialist. A visit to a doctor's or dentist's office requires a co-pay of €10, but only once per quarter. Subsequent consultations of any other doctor within the same quarter are free provided you have a referral (*Überweisungsschein*). You do need to present your insurance card

and you should make an appointment if you do not want to wait too long. Not every treatment or therapy is covered by the health insurance. Your doctor will inform you about what is covered and what is not. Dental treatment, especially, usually involves extra cost. Therefore, dentists supply you with a so-called *Heil- und Kostenplan*, a sort of treatment offer that you need to submit to your insurance company for approval. They will let you know how much of it they will cover.

So where do you find the right doctor? A recommendation by a friend, the dentist's office next door, or the yellow pages are some of the options. Asking your health insurance provider is another option. You may also look up the online database of the *Kassenärztliche Vereinigung* (KV), an organization to which all doctors belong: ► www.kvberlin.de/60arztsuche/index.html.

To find English-speaking doctors, check with the us or UK embassies. In fact, the embassy of your country may know doctors in Berlin who speak your native language.

For emergencies at night or on weekends, when your primary care physician is not available, you can go to the emergency care unit of any hospital. Charité hospitals offer emergency care on the Mitte, Virchow and Benjamin Franklin campus locations. Most other hospitals have emergency rooms as well. Here, too, you need to present your insurance card and pay the co-pay.

Generally, drugs can only be obtained at the pharmacy (*Apotheke*), whether they require a prescription or not. So even for something as common as headache or flu medicine or, on the other hand, for highly special medication, you need to go to a pharmacy (or use an online pharmacy). You will find pharmacies all over town. Only a few of them are open 24 hours a day, but they will always refer you to the next open location. There are drugstores as well, but they only sell cosmetics, hygiene products, simple foodstuffs, cleaning supplies, and all kinds of other stuff, but no drugs. Also, they usually process photographs.



● ● ● ● ● ● M & B INFORMATION SERVICES

Mailing lists

► mind.brain.verteiler@lists.hu-berlin.de

Newsletter-style list used to advertise lectures, seminars, and jobs, both within the neuroscience community in Berlin and beyond. It has over 1,000 members. All faculty, doctoral students and management staff of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain are always added to this list. This list is edited by Annette Winkelmann. Here, members cannot make contributions without the consent of the editor. Join by sending an e-mail to: ► mind.brain.verteiler-subscribe@lists.hu-berlin.de

► mind.brain.community@lists.hu-berlin.de

An informal mailing list, a way to keep in touch with your fellow Mind and Brainers. It is about social gatherings and all things not (directly) related to scientific research.

► mind.brain.family@lists.hu-berlin.de

An informal mailing list for all M & B parents in order to swap experience, share good addresses for a *Kita/Kinder-garten*, playground or nanny, sell/buy children's clothes, arrange play dates.

News

Newsflash

A monthly newsflash provides members and friends with the latest news about people and events at M & B, education and the academic calendar, career opportunities and job openings as well as a message board. You will automatically be signed up for this newsflash.

Newsletter

The newsletters present research conducted by doctoral students and faculty of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain and are available online (► www.mind-and-brain.de/news/newsletter) and in print.

Social media

► www.facebook.com/pages/Berlin-School-of-Mind-and-Brain/17113772291540

Facebook website of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain providing news, pictures and information on events.

► www.researchgate.net

The School is a member of ResearchGate and operates a website and group in the network offering information on events, application deadlines and other news.

► www.academia.edu

The school is also a member of academia.edu and operates a profile in the network offering information on events, application deadlines and other news.



Websites

► www.mind-and-brain.de

The website of the Berlin School of Mind and Brain.

► www.neuroscience-berlin.com

A communal website of the many neuroscience education programs and research groups in Berlin, run by Berlin School of Mind and Brain and the Medical Neurosciences program of Charité. It highlights the many projects and people involved in the Berlin neuroscience community.

► www.neuroschools-germany.com

Neuroschools Germany is a network of selected German neuroscience programs at the level of Master's and doctoral degrees.

► www.fens.org/nens/about.html

The Network of European Neuroscience Schools (NENS) represents over 160 of those graduate schools and programs across 30 European countries that offer Master's, MD, PhD and doctoral degrees in neuroscience.

●●●●●●● LAST BUT NOT LEAST: GOOD TO KNOW
IN BERLIN / GERMANY

Emergency calls

Central emergency number (fire brigade, police, ambulance): 112

Police: 110

You can dial 112 directly from your mobile phone.

To cancel a lost credit or debit or health insurance card call the central number (*Sperr-Notruf*): 116 116.

Should this number be engaged, you can also call a

Berlin number: +49 30 40504050

Pitfalls and Denglish

You can find lots of words of German origin in English, but the German language also welcomes English words with open arms. Some familiar English words might get strange endings, genders attached to them or even new meanings. There is even a word for this: Denglish (the D stands for *Deutsch*). Denglish is widely used by children, advertisers and business alike. Unfortunately, many people who use it do not know that it is neither German nor English. This is quite a challenge for those who want to learn German.

Some examples of Denglish

Die Aircondition – air conditioning

Babysitten – to babysit

Joggen – to go jogging or running

Das Handy – the mobile phone/cell phone

Der Showmaster – the TV host

Some examples of pitfalls

Fast – almost (*not*: quick)

After – rectum (*not*: later)

Bald – soon (has nothing to do with a gentleman's hairstyle)

Mist – rubbish, or: damn it (*not*: fog)

Hell – light, bright (*not* the place where the devil lives)

Berlin vocabulary from A to Z

Like in most German regions and cities, people in Berlin have typical local slang expressions that differ from standard High German. Some expressions are often used, and after reading the following lines you will know what to say when a Berliner wishes you “Juten Morjen”, for example.

Berlinian	German	English
Abklappern	absuchen, ablaufen	to be looking for something all over the place
Alex	Alexanderplatz	a famous Berlin location

Berlinian	German	English
Ackern/abrackern	arbeiten; arbeiten bis zum Umfallen	to work till you drop
Alle sein	erschöpft sein	to be beat
Alle (Milch ist ...)	nichts mehr da, leer	something's empty, gone
Amüsemang	Erheiterung, Belustigung	having fun
Botten	Schuhe	shoes
Boulette	Frikadelle	meatball
Buxe	Hose	trousers
Dit, det	dies, das	this, that
Dufte	klasse, prima, großartig	great
Etepetete	eingebildet, fein	vain, finicky
Fuffsja	50-Cent-Münze	50 cent coin
Fetzen	Lumpen, alt-modisches/altes Kleidungsstück	rag, old piece of clothing
Fetzen	streiten	to quarrel, fight
Flitzpiepe	Dummkopf, Einfaltspinsel	dimwit, dunce
Heini	Typ	guy
Ick, icke	ich	I
Jehen	gehen	walk
Jott-Wee-Dee	ganz weit draußen	out of town, far away
Jut (Juten Abend, Juten Morjen, Jute Nacht)	gut (guten Abend, ...)	good (good evening, ...)
Kiek ma	sieh mal	look

Berlinian	German	English
Knülle	betrunken, erschöpft sein	to be drunk, exhausted
Koofen	kaufen	to buy
Loofen	laufen	run, walk
Meen	mein	my
Mia jeht's jut	mir geht es gut	I am/feel fine
Molle und Korn	Bier und Schnaps	beer and schnapps
Nuckelpinne	(sehr) kleines Auto	(very) small car
Oll	alt, abgetragen	old, shabby
Omme	Kopf	head
Platte	Plattenbau	building made of precast concrete slabs
Platte	Glatze	bald head
schnallen	verstehen	to understand, to get s.th.
Schrippe	Brötchen	bread roll
Sechser	5-Cent-Münze	5 cent coin
Sparjeltarzan	dünnere, schwäch- tiger Mann	lanky guy
Stulle	belegtes Brot	open sandwich
Watt?	Was? Wie bitte?	What? Excuse me?
Wa?	Nicht?	Isn't that right?
Zehner	10-Euroschein	10 Euro bill

Social Dos & Don'ts

Dos

- Shake hands when you are first introduced to someone – it's impolite not to.
- Be punctual – the cliché is true. Try to be on time and apologize if you are not.
- Say “*Prost*” (“cheers”) before you dipping into your beer (unless you drink alone, of course) – and look your drinking buddy in the eye when you say it. The same applies to meals: Say “*Guten Appetit*” before eating. Keep both hands (but not your elbows) on the table.
- Dinner invitations – try to be on time and bring a small gift (flowers or a bottle of wine) for the host.
- State your name at the beginning of a phone call – even if it's followed by ‘do you speak English?’
- Use the ATM – cash talks in Germany, and many restaurants don't accept credit cards.

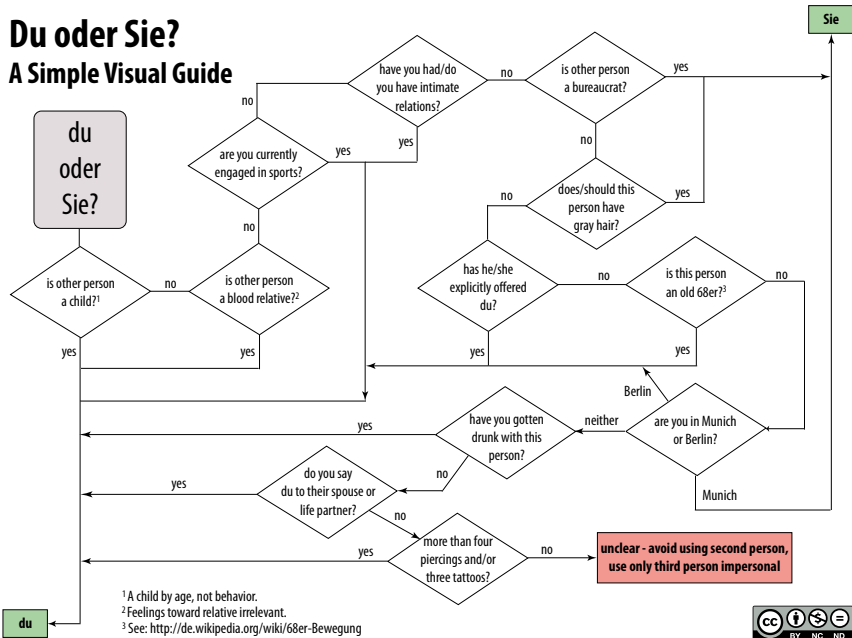
Don'ts

- Be late – everyone else will be on time.
- Send a German friend lilies – they're for funerals. Carnations symbolize mourning, too.
- Stroll in the bike lane – you'll get bruised or yelled at (or both). It's marked red for a reason.
- Cross on red – you might get fined. Watch out for police, retirees and kids (don't set a bad example!).

Du or Sie? A simple visual guide

When staying in Germany you will get acquainted with the fact that people are addressed differently depending on one's relation to them. To some you will say "Du", to others "Sie". It is often difficult for people from other countries to find out the right form of address. This easy guide will answer your questions.

Du oder Sie? A Simple Visual Guide



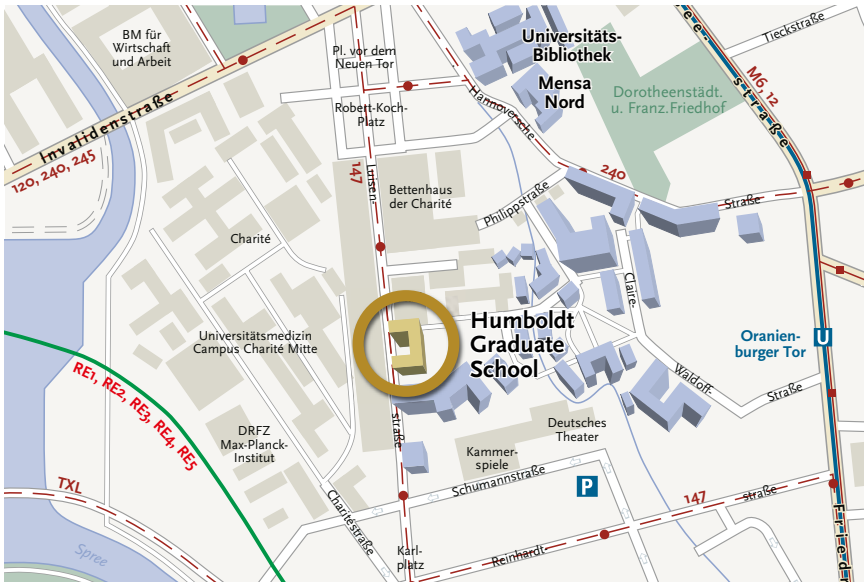


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► www.lablog.dagiebrundert.de

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