



Living in Germany - Tips & Tricks

uni-siegen.de

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Living in Germany



Accommodation

Please take note of your rental contract – German landlords are quite strict with it, e.g.:

Cancelation period

- Normally there is a cancellation period of 3 months, running until the end of a month. If e.g. you cancel your contract on June 14th, you have to rent the apartment until end of september.
- If you live in a shared flat (WG), please talk to your flatmates and ask for details.

Deposit

- Normally you have to pay a deposit when renting a room/flat (like 3 monthly rents, after signing the contract)
- Confirmation of the deposit: e.g receipt or note in the rental agreement
- When you move out, you only get the (whole) amount back if you leave the apartment clean and tidy. It may take some months until you get back the deposit.

„Kalt- und Warmmiete“ (basic rent + additional costs)

- The basic rent (Kaltmiete) is paid for the use of the rooms.
- The additional costs and operating costs (Warmmiete) are e.g. for water, heating, garbage disposal, janitor etc..
- Cold rent + service charges = warm rent (paid to the landlord).
- Attention: In addition, there are usually costs for electricity, Internet / telephone, etc..



Waste separation / recycling



Gelber Sack (Yellow bag)

- Plastic
- Metal (e.g. tins)
- Packaging
(e.g. milk cartons, yoghurt cups...)
- Aluminum foil



Kompost/ Bio (organic waste)

- Leftovers from fruits and vegetables
- Eggshells
- Tea bags
- Leftovers from food



Papier (paper)

- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Carton
- Cardboard



Glas (glass)

- Bottles and jars
(sorted by colour:
Green, brown, white)



Restmüll (residual waste)

- Everything else (but no electronic devices/pieces) ☐
- Werkstoffhof
(recycling centre)
- You can bring batteries to drug stores (DM, Müller, etc.)



Further information: <https://www.siegen.de/leben-in-siegen/buergerservice/abfallentsorgung/abfall-abc/>
<https://www.siegen.de/fileadmin/cms/pdf/Abfallentsorgung/AbfallTrennenMehrsprachig.pdf>
<https://www.siegen.de/leben-in-siegen/buergerservice/abfallentsorgung/abfallkalender/>

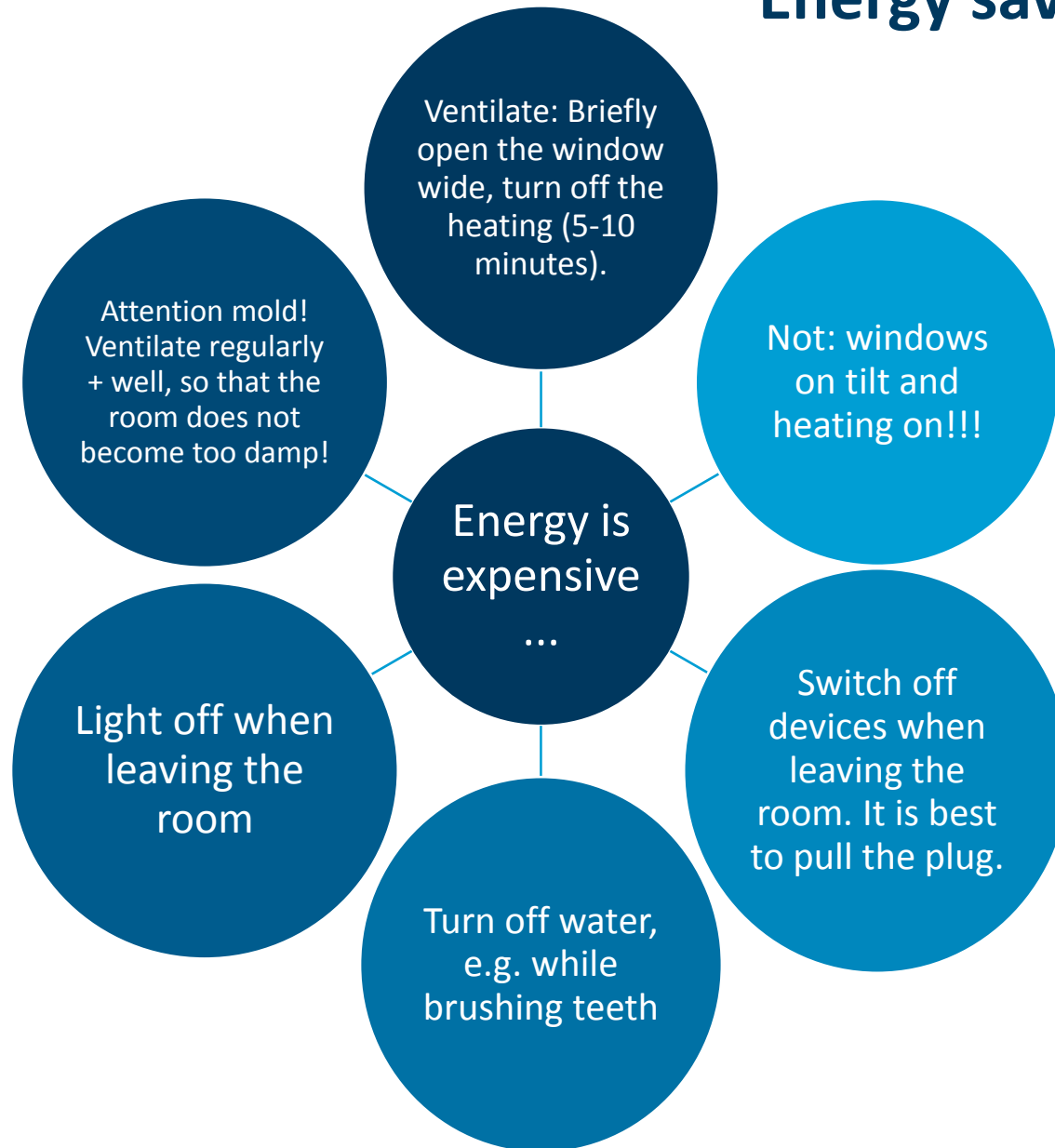
Bottle deposit



If you buy drinks in glass, plastic bottles or in cans, most of the time you have to pay a deposit which is between 8 and 25 cent.

As soon as you bring back the empty bottles/ cans to the supermarket, you'll get the money back. So do not just throw them into the waste!

Energy saving tips





Typical German behavior...

(though, of course not alle Germans are like this... ;-))

Rules



Germans tend to love rules. They have rules for most situations and like to follow them very closely.

(See traffic lights)

Misbehavior can be punished!



Punctuality & Reliability



Germans usually take punctuality very seriously!

Especially at:

- work (job interviews, meetings, etc.)
- university (exams, lectures, etc.)
- Invitations (except parties)
- Appointments

→ Up to 5 minutes earlier or later is (just!) ok, otherwise better inform the person about your delay.

→ If something has been agreed upon, it should be kept.

Rest periods



Attention: The understanding of "loud" and "quiet" can be very different -> If in doubt, ask the neighbor.

In Germany, there are legally regulated rest periods:

- Night rest: 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- All day on Sundays and public holidays
- Noon rest: regulated by landlord

That means, at this time:

- "indoor volume"
- no loud work
- no loud conversations
- no loud listening to music (-> headphones!)
- no meetings / parties

Germans usually take this very seriously! In case of disregard, the police can be called!

If a party or similar is planned, please inform neighbors friendly before (and invite them ;-)).



Direct communication



- Germans are very direct in their communication.
- It is appreciated if you are open and honest (even if it sometimes seems rude).
- Admitting mistakes is (mostly) appreciated (and expected)!

Bargaining



- Bargaining is very uncommon in Germany (except in flea markets and in the business world).
- Not good idea: Attempting to negotiate grades / exam results.
- Attempts to negotiate / bargain usually have negative consequences!

Bureaucracy



- There is a lot of bureaucracy in Germany.
- Lots of rules, lots of paperwork, lots of forms....

Tips:

- Keep calm.
- Stay friendly.
- Ask and / or get help.
- And: Even Germans often do not understand the forms ! ;-)

Privacy



- Privacy is important to Germans.
- Separation of work and career
- Possibilities of retreat, being alone
- Clear separation between "yours" and "mine"

Social manners



„Siezen“ and „Duzen“

- There are two pronouns to address someone. “Du” is rather personal, “Sie” is more respectful:
- As a rule, you use “Sie” with people you do not know and/or who are persons of respect (i.e. lecturers, at work, etc.).
- Students say “du” to each other.
- If in doubt, wait until someone offers you the “Du”

Eating

- Normally you wait until everyone is seated before you start eating.
- You try to eat quietly (no smacking) and talk friendly.



Be attentive and observe. It takes a little time to know a country and its rules of behavior.

Ask if you don't understand something (-> Stronger together on Thursday!).



And now:

**Our game for
Waste separation! 😊**

And now...

- Get some lunch!
- Leisure time in Siegen

See you in an our!

