

First Steps in Germany

Information regarding what to do after your arrival in Germany.

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1. Welcome to Germany!

We hope you had a safe and pleasant trip! Here you will find collected information of procedures and processes that you need to keep in mind when you arrive in Germany. We hope that this information will make your first days in Germany as easy as possible.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us!

2. How to get to Darmstadt?

When coming to Germany for your studies, you will most likely arrive at Frankfurt am Main airport or at the airport Frankfurt/Hahn.

There are three easy ways to get to Darmstadt from the airport in **Frankfurt am Main** and it takes around 30 minutes coming to Darmstadt.

- **Train:** you can catch a [train](#) directly at the airport that will take you to the main train station in Frankfurt (Hauptbahnhof Frankfurt am Main) and connect with another train that will take you to the main train station in Darmstadt (Hauptbahnhof Darmstadt), where you'll be able to find buses and trams to move around the city.
- **Bus:** [AirLiner](#) is a direct bus service between Frankfurt airport and Darmstadt city.
- **Taxi:** it is also possible to catch a taxi outside of the airport in Frankfurt am Main. Consider that this option might be a bit pricier than the mentioned above but will leave you exactly where you need to go.

If you arrive in **Frankfurt/Hahn**, it will be a bit more difficult and take some more time to reach Darmstadt. The easiest way to get to Darmstadt would be by train (3 hours approximately). Please keep in mind that you will have to change trains. There is also a [bus](#) that can take you to Frankfurt am Main airport or to the Frankfurt am Main main train station (Hauptbahnhof Frankfurt am Main) where you can find connections to Darmstadt easily.

Tip: visit the [Rhein-Main-Verkehrsverbund](#) (RMV) and [Deutsche Bahn](#) (DB) websites to check prices and schedules and the exact routes. You can also download their apps and get tickets there.

Tip: Transportation services leave on time, so be sure to be at least 5 minutes before the departure at the right platform or stop.

Please note, that UBER is not available in Germany. If you do not want to use public transport, you will need to take a licensed taxi.

3. Accommodation

Settle in as soon as possible in your pre-booked accommodation. You will need your new address for different processes. At first, you will need a signed contract with your landlord for the registration in the city (see below).

If you need a short term accommodation for a few days before you can move in to your apartment or room, please check out the [FAQ section](#) accommodation information for opportunities.

4. Contact your buddy and the department

We are aware of the difficulties that studying in another country might represent. Therefore, we are here to help you, accompany you and support you throughout your first semester and to help make your transition to Germany.

Please feel free to contact us via buddy.mba@h-da.de and we will get back to you as soon as possible. We will be glad to help you with any concerns or doubts that you might have. You can find more contact information at the end of this document.

5. Get health insurance

If you have not done so yet, please make sure to sign up for health insurance fulfilling the requirements of a student insurance. Please see the [FAQ](#) for detailed information on health insurance for enrolment at a German university.

You can sign up with the public health insurance company “Techniker Krankenkasse” during your enrolment. If you like to take this opportunity, please make sure that you prepare everything before you come to your enrolment appointment.

6. Enrolment & Semester fee

Before you can start your studies, you need to officially enrol in the university. Please find the exact dates and information on which documents to bring in your application documents. If you have any questions, please get in touch with the administration team (contacts see below).

If you have not paid your semester fee yet, please make sure to do so in advance to your enrolment. After your enrolment and after your semester fee has been received by the university, you will receive your [CampusCard](#) within 3-5 days or during the orientation days. This card is needed for the use of public transportation and other [benefits](#).

7. Open a bank account

With a German bank account, you can do transfers like the semester fee, pay your monthly rent or receive your salary from a part-time job. Another advantage is being able to withdraw money

from cash machines free of charge. The majority of banks in Germany offer students current accounts including an EC Card free of charge.

Please read the information regarding German bank accounts and Blocked accounts in our [FAQ](#) carefully.

8. Registration in the City

As soon as you arrive in Germany, you have maximum two weeks to register in the city's registration office (Einwohnermeldeamt). Usually you can arrange an appointment online. The date you book the appointment serves as proof of your effort to get an appointment in time.

This registration (Anmeldung) will be needed at the foreigners' office if you come to Germany with a visa. In addition, you will need the registration confirmation for a number of occasions. Therefore, please make sure to keep it safely.

For more details and the documents you need to provide during the registration, please read our [FAQ section](#) with information on registration and residence permit carefully.

9. Residence Permit

If you need a residence permit, you have to go to the foreigners' registration office (Ausländerbehörde) in the city where you are studying/living (within the first three months of your stay) after your registration in the city. We recommend going as soon as possible as it might take a while to get an appointment.

For further information and the necessary documents to bring, please see our [FAQ section](#) on registration and residence permit.

Tip: We recommend you to verify with the foreigners' registration office what documents you will need to bring. Also, in case of doubt, bring extra documents that might not be required. It is better than having to arrange a new appointment because of a missing document.

10. Learn German

Even though your entire programme will be held in English, learning German is important for the daily life in Germany. It will also increase your chances on the job market. Speaking the local language will enable you to settle in a lot quicker and to make more friends easily. Here you can find different options for learning German.

[Hochschule Darmstadt Language Centre:](#) The language centre of h_da offers German courses for different levels, which are entirely free for students. You only have to be enrolled to participate.

[German Academic Exchange Service:](#) General advice for improving your German skills.

[Goethe Institute](#): high quality language courses (100€-270€), where you can also get certified in different German levels.

[Deutsche Welle](#): e-learning platform for different skill levels (it's free!)

11. Meet People

An important aspect to enjoy your time and studies in Germany is the possibility of meeting people and make new friends. We share with you some ideas that could help you to meet people easily.

[ITT](#): The Intercultural Tutors Team, are students of the universities in Darmstadt who have been living here for a couple of semesters. They organise different activities and events.

[ESN Darmstadt](#): ESN is a student-run organisation at Technical University Darmstadt and University of Applied Sciences in Darmstadt and member of the Erasmus Student Network (ESN), one of the biggest interdisciplinary student associations in Europe. They support the integration of all international students, helping you to settle into life in Germany and have an unforgettable experience.

[Hochschulsport](#): There is a diverse catalogue of sport activities offered by the University of Applied Sciences in Darmstadt, a great opportunity to stay active and meet new people.

[German course](#): In a German course you would be able not only to learn a new language but also meet people from other study disciplines, cultures, and backgrounds.

12. Get to know the city

[Tourist information centre](#): here you will find information about Darmstadt and events.

Guided tours: [ITT](#), [ESN](#), and the [Tourist information office](#) offer different guided tours that could help you to know more about the history of Darmstadt and to discover new places.

Please see also our [FAQ](#) for some nice and interesting places to visit in and around Darmstadt.

13. Further information

You can visit the following websites for more detailed information about Germany:

- [Make it in Germany](#)
- [The Government of Hessen](#)
- [Deutsche Welle](#)
- [I am expat](#)
- [Deutschland.de](#)

14. Contact

If you have any further questions, please contact us via e-mail to mba@h-da.de or if you like to get in touch with your buddy, via e-mail to buddy.mba@h-da.de.

Please check our [website for contact details](#) of the program administration or program management of your MBA studies. We are happy to help you!

15. Checklist

First Steps in Germany Checklist

		When?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Welcome to Germany! _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Accommodation _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contact buddy and the department _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health insurance _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enrolment & Semester fee _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open a German bank account _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Registration in the City _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residence permit _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Start learning German _____	.....
<input type="checkbox"/>	Meet people & get to know the city _____	.....