

Finding Accommodation

A Guide for International Students
in Gießen & Friedberg



Impressum

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Introduction

The purpose of this brochure is to give you information and tips regarding finding a place to live and helping make your search easier. This can possibly be difficult in Gießen and Friedberg. At the beginning of the winter semester available dormitory rooms (German: Wohnheim) and shared flat rooms (German: Wohngemeinschaften, abbreviated as WG) are scarce. Thus we suggest that once you have received your acceptance to study in Gießen or Friedberg and have decided to study here you quickly begin to look for a place to live. The nearer the semester draws, the more difficult it is to find a room. Because more students apply for dormitory rooms belonging to the office of student affairs (German: Studentenwerk) than are available, it is often necessary to search for shared flats, dormitories, or flats in the private housing market.

We cannot give any guarantees in regards to the quality of the rooms and flats found through this brochure nor can we guarantee that this brochure is all encompassing. You may discover tips about finding rooms in this region of which we are not aware. Thus we appreciate your feedback, ideas, and suggestions as to how to improve this brochure.



1. Student Dormitories Leased Through the Office of Student Affairs (Studentenwerk Gießen)

The office of student affairs leases inexpensive student dormitory (Studentenwohnheim) rooms starting at 180€ monthly in Gießen and Friedberg, but, many students apply for these rooms. Consequently, it can happen that one does not get one of these rooms in the first semester of study. Should this be the case for you, you can have your name put on the dormitory waiting list. Your name automatically remains on this list for the following six months. These six months begin with the date you give as the date you desire to move into the dormitory. Should you not obtain a room within these six months, but still desire one, then you


need to inform the office of student affairs. Sometimes the office of student affairs asks those on the list whether they are still interested in obtaining a room before the six months have passed. In such a case you will receive a written inquiry. **You must make sure that the office of student affairs always has your correct postal address.** If you do not reply to this inquiry, your name will be taken off of the waiting list. If you do reply, your waiting time begins anew as of this date.

If you are interested in a room in the student dormitory please contact the office of student affairs.




 **Studentenwerk Gießen**
Wohnheimverwaltung Gießen
Otto-Behaghel-Str. 23
35390 Gießen
Tel.: 0641 40008-302/ 303/ 304/
305

General information:

 [www.studentenwerk-giessen.de/
Studentisches_Wohnen/](http://www.studentenwerk-giessen.de/Studentisches_Wohnen/)

Dormitory application:

 [www.studentenwerk-giessen.de/
Studentisches_Wohnen/Wohnheim-
antrag.html](http://www.studentenwerk-giessen.de/Studentisches_Wohnen/Wohnheim-antrag.html)

2. Searching For Housing in the Private Housing Market

In this section we present information in regards to finding a room in the private housing market in Gießen and Friedberg. Of course, we cannot grant guarantees in regards to the quality of the rooms or the flats. It is advisable to view the property being offered before agreeing to take it.

Train connections between Gießen and Friedberg are good and the towns are only about a 20 minute train ride apart. Since there are more shared flats available in Gießen than in Friedberg, it might be a good idea for Friedberg students to also look in Gießen for a place to live. In addition to looking for a place to live in Gießen and Friedberg, it might be of value to also look elsewhere in the surrounding region. Frequently the rent costs are considerably lower in villages outside of Gießen and Friedberg and the bus and train connections are often acceptable. The JLU and THM semester tickets make it possible to use local public transit-services (“Nahverkehr”) without any cost to the students, thus the use of buses and trains does not result in any additional costs.



2.1 Internet Housing Portals

The best way to privately search for a room in a shared flat or for a flat for yourself is to look into the internet housing portals.



In many cases, you can also post a free advertisement (ad) there for a room. A few online portals are listed below:

Gießener Express




You will find many shared room advertisements on the online version of the Express magazine:

 www.marbuch-verlag.de/okaz
 Click on Wohnen: Biete Giessen

Many shared flats are advertised in the following portals:

 www.wg-gesucht.de
 www.studenten-wg.de


Further online portals are, for example:

 www.immobilio.de
 www.studenten-wohnung.de/suche.php (*Gießen*)
 www.homecompany.de (*Friedberg*)




2.2 Other Places to Check in Order to Find Privately Advertised Housing


Housing ads can also be found on the AStA homepages

 **The THM Gießen AStA**
Wiesenstr. 14
next to the cafeteria "CampusTor"

 www.asta.thm.de/giessen/service/wohnungsangebote

 **The Justus-Liebig-University (JLU) Gießen AStA**
Otto-Behaghel-Str. 25
Haus D

next to the cafeteria Otto-Behaghel-Straße

 <http://asta.studierendenschaft-giessen.de/service/wohnungsboerse>


 **The THM Friedberg AStA**
Wilhelm-Leuschner-Str. 13

 www.thm.de/asta/friedberg/

There is a folder with ads for rooms and shared flats in front of the AStA room in Friedberg (Wilhelm-Leuschner-Str.13). This folder can be found on the ground floor in Building C (if you do not find the AStA room, ask for it at the "Information"). It is worth your while to check this folder because it is kept in good shape and most of the ads are up to date.

The office of student affairs housing market

The office of student affairs lists private rooms and flats for rent under

 <http://134.176.79.136/wohnboerse/main.php>

↳ Click on Wohnungsanzeigen auflisten (Biete)

Posted Notices

Many shared flats hang up notices when they have a room to rent. You will find such on the bulletin boards at the THM campus (for example at the THM cafeteria entrance, on the THM campus in the connecting hallways between Buildings A-B-C, in the different college departments). A larger number are to be found at the Justus-Liebig-University, for example at the cafeteria Otto-Behaghel-Straße, Philosophikum 1 bus stop Rathenaustraße; old cafeteria-Otto Eger Home, Ludwigstr.; Philosophikum 2 foyer; university library, Otto-Behaghel-Straße Philosophikum 1; university main building, Ludwigstraße.

Local Newspapers and Magazines

Local newspapers and magazines are good places to find shared flats and, especially, flats.

An overview of the local newspapers and localities where you can read or hang up notices can be found under:



www.uni-giessen.de/cms/studium/studienbeginn/wohnen/anzeigen

Here are a few examples:

Gießener Anzeiger



www.giessener-anzeiger.de

↳ Click on Anzeigen • Immobilien •
Miete, Zimmer / WG

Accommodation ads are in the Friday print version of the newspaper.

Gießener Allgemeine



www.giessener-allgemeine.de

↳ Click on Anzeigen • Immobilien •
Vermietung, Zimmer und Wohnge-
meinschaften

Accommodation ads are in the Friday print version of the newspaper.

Wetterauer Zeitung (for Friedberg)



www.wetterauer-zeitung.de

↳ Click on Anzeigen • Immobilien •
Vermietungen

MAZ - Mittelhessische Anzeigenzeitung



<http://maz-verlag.de/>

This is delivered on Wednesdays free of cost to all households.

Information pertaining to the Pendleton Barracks housing project in Gießen (where you will find student shared flats and subsidized housing) can be found under:



<http://gsw-giessen.de/wohnprojekt-pendleton-barracks.html>

ESG and KHG Housing

The Protestant Student Community (Evangelische Studierendengemeinde or ESG) will rent out twelve unfurnished student rooms in the upper flights of their newly reconstructed “Martin Bucer-Haus” in the Henselstr. 7 as of winter semester 2011/12. Active participation in the broad spectrum of topics of the Protestant student activities is desired of the tenants.



ESG

Henselstr. 7
35390 Gießen
Tel.: 0641 76757



www.esg-giessen.de

Send applications to:

@ info@esg-giessen.de

The Catholic Student Community of Gießen (Katholische Hochschulgemeinde Gießen or KHG) has two shared flats, one with 5 rooms and the other with 3 rooms. They are furnished. They can be leased to needy students. Participation in various Catholic forums is desired of the tenants. Send your applications to Father S. Karl, Wilhelmstr. 28, 35392 Gießen, Telefon: 0641 78031, www.khg-giessen.de.




3. Private Dormitories in Giessen


In addition to the dormitories that are run by the office of student affairs, there are private dormitories in Giessen.


 **Privatwohnheim**
Marburger Straße 84
35396 Giessen
Administration: H. Münch,
Tel.: 0641 34522

40 single rooms, 30 maisonettes

 **Privatwohnheim**
Bleichstraße 37
35390 Giessen
Administration Tel.: 0641 73691

23 single rooms

 **Privatwohnheim**
Wätzenborner Weg 7
35394 Giessen
Administration Tel.: 0641 73691
(Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri 9 -12)

 www.studentenwohnheim-giessen.de

123 single rooms with kitchenette and refrigerator

 **Privatwohnheim**
Am Bergwerkswald 2a
35392 Giessen
Administration:
W. Steinbrecher
Turnsstr. 1
35418 Buseck
Tel.: 06408 940225

11 apartments, 28 shared flat rooms



4. Shared Flats, Tips for your Search

4.1 Shared Flats

Many students in Germany live in shared flats. This entails sharing a flat with other residents. Usually this means having a room to oneself. Bathrooms and kitchens are shared with the other residents. If you lease an entire flat, it is common that the landlord asks first to see proof of your income or for a signed document from someone willing to vouch for you as the potential tenant before he/she offers you a contract. This practice is usually not the case in shared flats.

4.1.1 *Furnished versus Unfurnished Rooms*

Furnished rooms are not common. Sometimes one can discuss if some of the prior tenant's furniture may be bought from him/her. But, if not stated otherwise in the ad, assume that the room is unfurnished. If you are leasing as an interim tenant, then the room will probably be fully furnished. For more information concerning leasing as an interim tenant see the next section below; for more information as to where you can obtain inexpensive furniture furnishings see the section "Furniture and Furnishings".

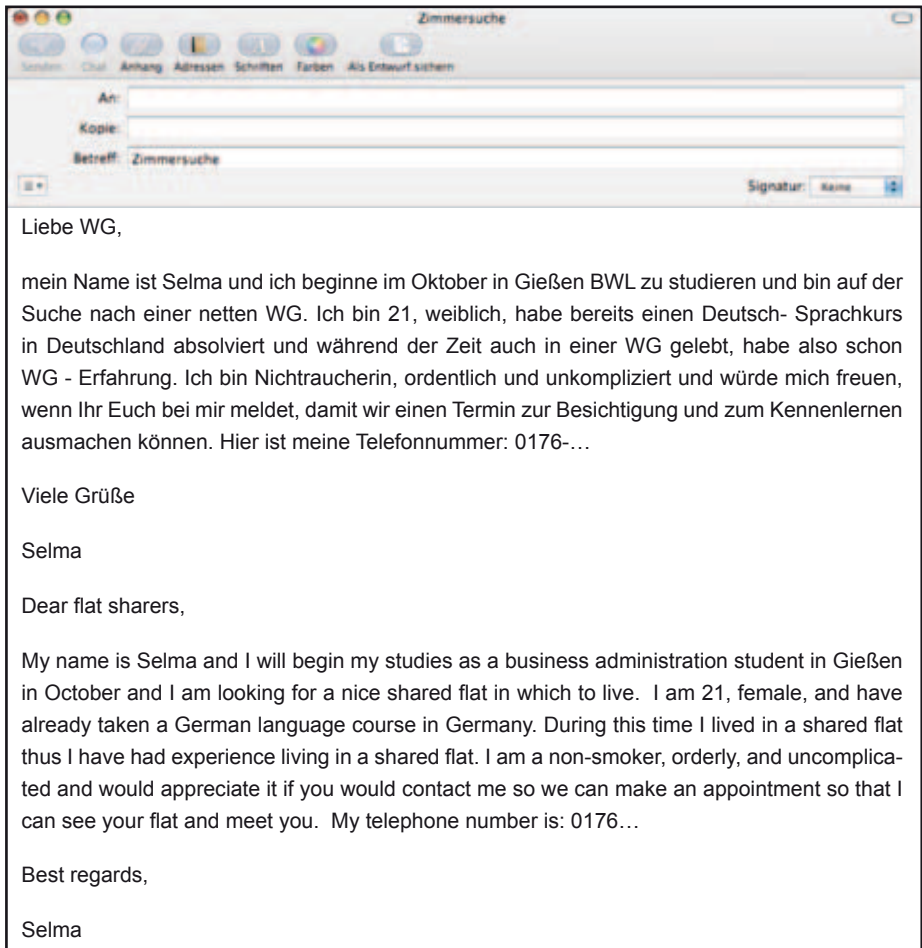
4.1.2 *Interim Rental*

Interim Rental means that a room or flat is sublet for a given amount of time. This is frequently the case when the tenant spends a semester abroad or does an internship elsewhere. Subleasing a room may be a good solution for the beginning. Although this means having to move out when the tenant returns, it is often less difficult to find a room to sublet since these are less popular than leases which have no fixed termination day. While living in a sublet room, you then have time to look for a room in which you can stay for as long as you wish. Furthermore, it is not rare that during the period that you sublet one of the other flat sharers moves out and thus you can take over his/her room as a long-term tenant.

4.1.3 *Contacting Shared Flats*

Living in a shared flat usually means living with people similar in age. Thus, it is not common to use formal language when making contact and therefore one usually uses the German "Du" form of address. Normally one either rings up or writes an email to the shared flat that is looking for a resident. If you are writing an email, include your telephone number and also tell a bit about yourself. The following is an example for this type of enquiry (first in German and then translated into English):





4.1.4 Viewing Shared Flats

The next step is to view the room and to get to know the people who already live in the shared flat. Afterwards, one usually sits together for about 15-30 minutes to get acquainted and to see if you take a liking to one another. Because shared flats are very popular in Germany and there is a scarcity of rooms in Gießen and Friedberg, there probably will be several

candidates who will come to view the room. The residents then decide which candidate fits best into their shared flat. One usually gets a response from the residents whether one has been chosen within a few days after having viewed the flat.



4.2 Communal Living in a Shared Flat

4.2.1 Communal Shared Living Flats versus Shared Flats 'Out of Convenience'

How much is done collectively in a shared flat varies greatly from one shared flat to another. In some shared flats one frequently spends time together in the kitchen, goes shopping together, and cooks together. In other shared flats the tenants hardly see one another. If an ad for a shared flat has the text: "We are not a shared flat 'out of convenience' " (German: "Wir sind keine Zweck-WG"), this usually indicates that the residents are interested in a communal daily life. Shared flats out of convenience are usually such that the residents spend little time with one another and the primary interest in living together is to save money since it is cheaper to share a flat than to live alone.

4.2.2 Shared Flat Fund

Frequently the refrigerator is divided into sections according to the shelves and compartments so that each resident can place his/her own items into his/her section. In some shared living flats some groceries and other commodities (for example: butter, milk, salt, sugar, oil, cleaning supplies) are bought and used jointly. Other shared living flats have a communal fund into which everyone pays

regularly and all of their groceries and other commodities are financed in this matter.

4.2.3 Household Cleaning Plans and Winter Duties

In order to make communal living as pleasant as possible and avoid conflicts some shared flats have a household cleaning plan in which it is marked who is responsible for what and when. Many shared flats also have rules in regards to the washing of dishes. Some cleaning plans also have remarks in regards to the winter duties. If there is no janitor and the city does not take on the responsibility, the tenants are responsible for removing snow from the sidewalk and steps in front of their building. This is very important because if someone falls and gets hurt because of snow and ice that was not removed, the tenants are held liable for (medical, etc.) costs that may result. Similarly, tenants may also be responsible for regularly cleaning (wiping) the shared staircases and hallways in buildings shared with other flats in which more than one living unit exists. How tenants take care of this varies from shared flat to shared flat. In order to avoid conflicts, ask your flat mates how they handle this.



4.2.4 Waste Separation

The waste is separated into various components in most German households. Usually there are organic wastes (leftover food, etc.) and the “yellow sack” (German: Gelber Sack) for packaging that has a green dot on it and is not made of paper or glass. Furthermore, paper and glass products are also placed into separate containers. Most other items are placed into the “Restmüll” container. If you have questions about the waste separation system, ask one of the tenants with whom you live.

4.2.5. Smoking

There are also varying rules in regards to cigarette smoking. Some shared flats do not want to have any smoking in the flat, not even in the residents’ own rooms. Other shared flats allow smoking in some of the rooms, for example, in the individual’s own room; other shared flats allow smoking in all rooms. If it is important to you how the shared flat deals with this, ask when you look at the flat or when you ask for an appointment to look at the flat.

The above points are only some examples of possible shared flat rules. Each shared flat has its own rules by which they live. Generally speaking, in order to ensure a sense of well being in a shared living unit, it is necessary that all tenants are friendly

and respectful of one another. When you are uncertain about terms of your rental agreement and other policies, it is best to ask for further clarification, and not to let your questions go unaddressed.

4.3 Support When Viewing Rooms and Flats

The Catholic Student Community Gießen (Katholische Hochschulgemeinde Gießen, abbreviated as KHG) offers to escort international students when viewing flats and rooms. The escorts are local students who are willing to come along with you to view an object. They have all had experience in applying for shared living flats or apartments. For further information contact:



www.khg-giessen.de/beratung/79-beratung/340-unterstuetzung-bei-zimmer-oder-wohnungsbesichtigung



Katholische Hochschulgemeinde Gießen
Wilhelmstraße 28
35392 Gießen
Tel.: 0641 78031
Fax: 0641 78033



www.khg-giessen.de

4.4 Obtaining Furniture and Furnishings

In addition to the large furniture stores in the greater Gießen area, there are numerous other possibilities to obtain inexpensive and possibly used furniture and furnishings. Here are a few examples:



The online edition of the Gießener Express advertises used, inexpensive furniture and furnishings.



www.marbuch-verlag.de/okaz/



Click on "Möbel / Hausrat"

Flea Markets: There is for example a flea market on the Karstadt department store parking place in Gießen:



Karstadt department store parking place

Rodheimer Straße 116
35398 Gießen

Flea market from April to October on Saturdays from 6 AM to 3 PM



www.marktcom.de/veranstaltungen/8702-Am-Karstadt-Schnaepchenmarkt

Student online advertisements: used furniture from students for students:



www.studenteninserate.de/moebel-einrichtung/giessen.d/

The Jugendwerkstatt in Gießen sells used, sometimes repaired furniture, at very inexpensive prices.



www.jugendwerkstatt-giessen.de/produkteundleistungen/daskaufhaus/index.html

The daily newspapers Gießener Anzeiger and Gießener Allgemeine have a flea market for the sale of items costing up to

25€ every Tuesday or Wednesday. You will find household items and furnishings here:



www.giessener-anzeiger.de



www.giessener-allgemeine.de

It is also advisable to check for notices concerning furniture sales around the THM and JLU and the cafeterias.



5. Emergency and Short Term Housing

If you are looking for a place to stay to bridge a short time period or if you are still waiting to hear about a shared flat enquiry, the following dwellings might be of help:

5.1 Gießen

-  **Youth Hostel Gießen**
 Heiko L. Gibhardt
 Richard-Schirmann-Weg 53
 35398 Gießen
 Tel.: 0641 65879

 @ giessen@djh-hessen.de

 € One night plus breakfast as of
 18,50€

In an emergency the Gießen office of student affairs (Studentenwerk Gießen) might be able to provide **emergency accommodations**. In these accommodations there are many beds in a room which you would share with many other students who are looking for a place to live. Accommodation in the emergency accommodations is not a permanent solution and is only possible for several weeks. In this regard, please contact the dormitory department:

-  **Notunterkunftvermittlung
Wohnheimabteilung des
Studentenwerks Gießen**
 Tel.: 0641 40008-300
 (Gießen and Friedberg)

 @ FM-WHV@studwerk.uni-giessen.de




5.2 Friedberg

-  **Guesthouse Alder**
Königsberger Str. 6
61169 Friedberg
Tel.: 06031 62239
- @ info@seminar-und-gaestehaus.de
- € Single room as of 21€ per night
Double room as of 42€ per night

-  **Guesthouse Heil**
Florstädter Straße 47
61169 Friedberg
Tel.: 06031 5319
- @ info@gaestehausheil.de
-  www.gaestehausheil.de
- € Single room 30€ - 40€ per night
Double room 55€ - 47€ per night
Prices including breakfast

-  **Guesthouse „Hanauer Hof“**
Familie Bernd Heinrich
Fauerbacher Straße 6
61169 Friedberg
Tel.: 06031 5575
- @ info@hanauerhof-friedberg.de
-  www.hanauerhof-friedberg.de
- € Single room 40€ per night
Double room 70€ per night

-  **Haus Friedberg der EKHN
(until end of 2011)**
Kaiserstraße 2
61169 Friedberg
Tel.: 06031 162910
- @ maria.kueck@ekhn-net.de
- € 54€ - 63€ per night



6. Leases (Rental Contracts) and the Landlord and Tenancy Laws

Before you sign a lease (rental contract) examine it closely. There are several types of leases. Temporary leases include, for example, explicit dates as to when the lease begins and ends. That means that neither the landlord nor a tenant can give notice of termination during the duration of the contract (exception: dismissal with immediate effect, German: "Fristlose Kündigung") Note: Not all temporary leases are legally correct. Have this checked (for example at the legal advice service of the JLU AStA, Otto-Behaghel-Straße 25D, Room 17)!

In the case of an open end lease the time for giving notice of termination is generally no later than the third business day of the third month before you intend to vacate the flat. For example, if you want to end your lease on August 31, you must give notice no later than the third weekday in June. It is not legal to agree upon a longer period for having to give notice. The notice of termination must be a written notice and it must be signed by you. An email does not suffice. It is best to personally present the notice of termination in the presence of a witness or to send it to the landlord by registered mail.

You can get more information in regards to tenancy laws as well as standard rental contract forms if you go onto the website of the German tenancy association:



www.mieterbund.de

Furthermore, the JLU AStA offers free counselling in regards to topics concerning lease rights. While classes are being held during the semester they can be reached from 11 AM to 1 PM on Mondays and Wednesdays and while classes are not being held from 12 noon to 1PM in room 17 in the Otto-Behaghel-Straße 25 in Gießen.



7. Abbreviations in Flat and Room Advertisements

2 MM KT	(2 Monatsmieten Kauti on) 2 months' rent as deposit
BaWa	(Badewanne) bathtub
Blk	(Balkon) balcony
DaBo	(Dachboden) attic
DG	(Dachgeschoss) attic floor
EBK	(Einbauküche) fitted kitchen or kitchenette
EG	(Erdgeschoss) ground floor
HK	(Heizkosten) heating costs
inet	internet
KM	(Kaltmiete) rent excluding all utility, heating costs, etc.
KT	(Kauti on) deposit
m	(männlich) male; Number and then m or w (for example, 2 m, 1 w) = number of male and female tenants (in the example, 2 male tenants, 1 female tenant)
NK	(Nebenkosten) additional charges, includes water, heating, electricity, utility and possibly other costs
NkVz	(Nebenkostenvorauszahlung) monthly payment in advance of additional fees („Nebenkosten, see NK“). The correct amount of your consumption will be verified and adjusted according to your actual consumption at a later date. You may then get back a certain amount of your paid fee if your consumption was low and you might need to pay an additional amount of money if your consumption was high.
NR	(Nicht raucher) Non-smoker
OG	(Obergeschoss) upper flight
renov	(renoviert) renovated
SpüMa	(Spülmaschine) dishwasher
VB	(Verhandlungsbasis) asking price
w	(weiblich) female; Number and then m or w (for example, 2 m, 1 w) = number of male and female tenants (in the example, 2 male tenants, 1 female tenant)
WaMa	(Waschmaschine) washing machine
Whg.	(Wohnung) flat



WK	(Wohnküche) a larger kitchen in which one can also sit and socialize comfortably
WM	(Warmmiete) rent usually including heating and water costs, usually excluding electricity costs
ZH	(Zentralheizung) central heating
ZKB	(Zimmer-Küche-Bad) room-kitchen-bathroom
zzgl.	(zuzüglich) plus

Legal Disclaimer

Neither the Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen University of Applied Sciences, nor the Gießen Office of Student Affairs (Studentenwerk Gießen), nor the Justus-Liebig-University may be held responsible for any actions taken as a result of the information presented in this publication. It is the sole responsibility of the user to determine the charges and policies associated with the housing options and related services presented in this guide.

