

FAQs on the flat hunting in Leipzig

Leipzig is not only known for a vibrant cultural scene but also as an attractive city for students. Flat hunting can become a challenge, especially if you are new to the city or have little experience with the local housing market.

This document is here to help you navigate the Leipzig housing market. Please note that this is only an indication and does not claim to be exhaustive.

Please note: Here you find tips regarding the search of an apartment on the general housing market. If you are looking for information on a place in a student hall of residence, please visit our website for [housing](#).

Note for international students: Please note that proof of residence is essential for residence in Germany. If you have any questions or uncertainties, we recommend that you contact the social counselling service.

How you can live in Leipzig

Leipzig offers a variety of housing options for students with different needs and budgets. These are the most common housing options:

- **Student Hall of Residence:** The cheapest and most practical option exclusively for students. The halls of residence are run by Studentenwerk Leipzig and offer furnished rooms, all-inclusive rents, common rooms and are close to the university.
- **Private Student Hall of Residence:** These offer similar advantages to our halls of residence. For example, they are also furnished and have fitness rooms, but are privately run and therefore considerably more expensive.
- **Apartment for rent:** They are usually not furnished, so you have to buy everything for the flat, often including the kitchen. There are additional operating costs as well as costs for electricity and internet. Rented flats are a good option for those who want to stay in Leipzig throughout their studies, as a longer-term tenancy agreement is usually concluded with a minimum period of residence.
- **Shared flat(WG):** Several people share a rented flat. Ideal if you would like to live with others and share costs. In a shared flat, you share a flat with other students/people, which not only makes life cheaper, but also more social.
- **For subletting:** A flexible and often short-term solution. You rent a room or flat from someone who is temporarily away or a room in the flat is sublet to you.

For the transition until you have found a place to live:

- **Pension/Hostel/Hotel/Airbnb:** If you need accommodation immediately but have not yet found a permanent solution, hostels, hotels or Airbnb can be a good temporary solution. Although these options are more expensive, they offer short-term availability and flexibility. Asking for discounted rates for a longer stay can be worthwhile.

General tips for flat hunting

To make the flat hunting in Leipzig more efficient, we advise to schedule multiple viewing appointments per day and to come to Leipzig in person to visit them. Bring all necessary documents to, in the best case, close the tenancy agreement right away.

For international students:

To ensure that you have safe accommodation when you arrive in Leipzig, we strongly recommend that you book accommodation in a hostel, hotel or via Airbnb in advance from your home country for the first 4-6 weeks. The housing market in Leipzig is very tight and it can be difficult to find a room. Please note that the Leipzig Student Union and the universities cannot offer emergency accommodation. Many renters also expect you to be in Leipzig in person to sign the rental agreement. A German bank account is often required.

Housing options in Leipzig and the surrounding area

The most popular districts for students in Leipzig are Südvorstadt, Zentrum, Plagwitz, Schleußig, Connewitz, Reudnitz and Gohlis. Life is particularly good here, but rents are correspondingly higher and there is a high demand for flats and shared flats. As a result, the chances of finding accommodation there are often slim.

We therefore recommend to look at other districts like Grünau, Schönau, Paunsdorf, Großschocher or Heiterblick. Thanks to the well-developed network of trains and buses, it is easy to get to the university from there.

Another option is to look on the outskirts of Leipzig or in the Leipzig region. Places such as Markkleeberg, Schkeuditz, Taucha, Rackwitz, Delitzsch and other towns in the surrounding area are well connected to the S-Bahn network. These towns can be easily reached with the semester ticket, and from there you could find a flat in Leipzig in the long term. The housing market usually eases somewhat towards the end of the year, so it might be easier to find something suitable then.

Tip: Founding a new shared flat as an alternative

If there are only larger flats on the market, setting up a new shared flat could be a good option for you. Have a look on social media, especially in the (fresher) groups of your degree programme, for others who are also looking for a flat.

Flat offers in Leipzig: You can find more options here

If you are looking for a flat or a room in a shared flat there are multiple platforms and options that you can use. Here are some tips:

Flat-sharing portals:

- WG-gesucht.de
- Wohnungsbörse.net
- WG-Suche.de

Kleinanzeigen:

- eBay Kleinanzeigen

- Tauschwohnung.com

Leipzig platforms:

- Das Schwarze Brett Leipzig

Real estate portals:

- Immobilienscout24.de

Cooperatives:

- Unitas
- Lipsia
- VLW
- Baugenossenschaft Leipzig

Private Student Hall of Residence:

They provide furnished apartments, are more expensive though:

- Brera
- The Hood Leipzig
- Basecamp Leipzig
- Staytoo Leipzig
- Studentenapartments Leipzig

You can find more by doing a Google search with the keyword 'private student residences Leipzig'.

Social Media und Messenger-Gruppen:

- **Facebook:** Look at groups like „Flatshare Leipzig“, „WGs Leipzig“, „WG room available in Leipzig“, „Zwischenmiete Leipzig“ or simmlar.
- **Telegram:** Use groups like „Sharing is Caring West“, „Sharing is Caring Ost“, „Sharing is Caring Südraum LE“ oder „Willkommen! Gruppen-Vernetzung Leipziger Sharing is Caring SIC“ (this group refers to the appropriate flat search group; mention in the introduction that you are looking for a flat).

Tips for the transition: How to find temporary accommodation in Leipzig

If you are looking for short-term accommodation in Leipzig, there are various options. Look in Leipzig groups or on platforms such as 'WG gesucht' for offers for interim lets. You could also consider 'mechanic's flats' or guesthouses - these are fully furnished and can be rented on a daily or weekly basis, but are often more expensive than a room in a student hall of residence.

Another alternative are hostels which are often cheap. Here you can find an overview over the hostels in Leipzig:

<https://www.german.hostelworld.com/Jugendherbergen/Leipzig/Deutschland>.

Always ask for discounts if you want to stay for a longer period of time.

If, despite all your efforts, you are affected by homelessness or fear that you will become homeless, do not hesitate to contact the social housing assistance provided by the Leipzig Social Welfare Office. You can find further information here: <https://www.leipzig.de/buergerservice-und-verwaltung/aemter-und-behoerdengaenge/behoerden-und-dienstleistungen/dienststelle/soziale-wohnhilfen-505>

➔ **When should I start looking for a flat?**

You should start looking for accommodation as early as possible, ideally 3 to 6 months before your planned move, or as soon as it becomes clear that you will get a place to study in Leipzig. Register on various property portals and activate notifications to be informed immediately about new offers. Prepare a personalised and charming application text that is convincing. This should be quickly adapted to the respective advert and must be sent as soon as an attractive offer is received, as a large number of people usually apply. Take advantage of every viewing appointment offered and endeavour to look at several housing options at the same time, as one viewing is not the same as a commitment.

➔ **What is cold rent and what is warm rent?**

Cold/Basic rent: Costs for the use of the living space, which relate to a euro amount per square metre of living space.

Operating costs/Additional costs: Running costs incurred for the use of a rented flat. For example, heating, water, rubbish collection or caretaker services. All costs that can be passed on to tenants can be found in §2 of the Operating Costs Ordinance (BetrKV). Sometimes the operating costs are set very low in order to make the property attractive, which can result in an additional payment of operating costs (explanation below).

Warm/Total rent: Cold rent + operating costs

Please note: Electricity and internet usually have to be contracted yourself, these costs are then added on top.



What is an additional operating cost payment?

An additional payment for operating costs is due if the monthly share of the operating costs paid is not sufficient to cover the actual operating costs incurred. At the end of a year, the landlord/landlady prepares a statement of operating costs from which the additional payment is calculated. Check the utility bill thoroughly for comprehensibility and correctness and clarify any ambiguities or errors directly with your landlord/landlady. If necessary, adjust the monthly advance payments to avoid future back payments if the actual costs are regularly higher. Tenants' associations or operating cost assistance associations check back payments for plausibility. Membership costs around 100-120 euros per year and can help you to recognise and avoid unjustified back payments.

Please note: If you are unsure, please contact our [legal assistance](#) service. You will find the contact details at the end of this document.



What forms/types of tenancy agreements are there?

Pay attention to the type of rent advertised and the type of rent stated in the tenancy agreement:

- **Staggered rent**

The staggered rent is a rental agreement with fixed, regular rent increases that are already agreed in the rental contract. It offers transparency and planning security for tenants and landlords, as future rents are known in advance. Legally, it must be recorded in writing and increases may not exceed the statutory cap. Additional rent adjustments to the basic rent during the graduated rent are excluded.

- **Index rent**

The index-linked rent is a rent structure in which the rent is linked to the consumer price index (CPI), which is determined by the Federal Statistical Office. The rent is regularly adjusted to the development of the CPI. In recent years, this has always meant an increase. You pay an unchanged rent for at least one year before an adjustment is possible, which must be communicated in writing.

- **Subletting**

Subletting means that a tenant sublets part or all of the flat he/she has rented to another person. The main tenant remains the contractual partner of the landlord and bears the main responsibility for the payment of rent and the condition of the flat. The subtenant pays rent to the main tenant and generally has fewer rights than a direct tenant. A subletting agreement must be authorised by the landlord/landlady. It cannot be sublet permanently if the main tenant moves out.

What is a main residence / secondary residence and what do I need to keep in mind?

Main residence: is the place where you mainly reside and have your centre of life. You must register with the Citizens' Registration Office within two weeks of moving. Among other things, this determines your right to vote, can have tax implications and affects insurance policies and contracts.

Secondary residence: an additional place of residence in addition to your main residence, which must also be registered and can lead to a second residence tax in Leipzig and some other cities. It is important to make a clear distinction between your main and secondary residence, to register both in good time and to report any changes immediately in order to take advantage of legal and tax benefits and avoid problems or fines.

Please note: If you often visit your parents at the weekend, no secondary residence is required.

What if the landlord insists on including my parents in the tenancy agreement?

If the landlord insists on including your parents in the tenancy agreement, this is not recommended. It could lead to consequences that are subject to second home tax. In addition, complicated situations can arise with liability issues, especially when it comes to damage or rent arrears. It is particularly problematic in a shared flat, as liability issues and responsibilities between flatmates can become unclear. Instead, it would be more advisable to offer a guarantee or an account with sufficient assets as security.

What is a rent guarantee?

A guarantee is a contractual agreement in which one person (the guarantor) undertakes to vouch for the fulfilment of the obligations of another person (the principal debtor). In the context of finding accommodation, this means that the guarantor is liable to the landlord if the tenant is unable to pay the rent or fulfil other contractual obligations. The guarantee can help to strengthen the tenant's creditworthiness and provide the landlord with additional security. However, a surety agreement should only be concluded for your own child, not for a flat share, as the guarantor would otherwise also be liable for the obligations of the other flatmates. A surety therefore only makes sense if you have your own flat.

What does main tenant / subtenant mean and what constellations are there?

Main tenant and subtenant describe the legal relationship within a subletting situation. The main tenant is the direct contractual partner of the landlord and bears the main responsibility for the payment of rent and the condition of the flat. The subtenant rents part or all of the flat from the main tenant, but is not a direct contractual partner of the landlord.

Constellations may vary: In the case of main tenant/main tenant, this means that both are equal main tenants of the tenancy agreement. In the case of main tenant/subtenant, the main tenant is the direct contractual partner of the landlord, while the subtenant rents from the main tenant. If someone moves out, a new tenancy agreement may be required, depending on the agreements and the landlord's specifications.

→ **How do I find a suitable shared apartment?**

In order to find a suitable shared apartment, you should be prepared for an intensive application process. Prepare to face many competitors and present yourself positively at viewings and castings. Important criteria when looking for a shared apartment include the location and size of the apartment, the harmony with the roommates, the division of costs and tasks and the overall housing costs. It is advisable to think about these points in advance in order to find a shared apartment that meets your needs and ideas.

→ **What rental agreement or liability models are there in a shared apartment?**

There are three basic liability models in a shared flat (WG):

- **Individual tenancy agreement:** Each flatmate has their own tenancy agreement with the landlord. This means that each flatmate is only individually responsible for their own share of the rent. Problems of one person do not directly affect the others and each person can terminate the contract independently.
- **Joint tenancy agreement:** All flatmates are joint tenants of a single tenancy agreement and are jointly and severally liable. This means that each tenant is liable for the entire rent and any damage caused by a flatmate. In this case, all flatmates are equal main tenants.
- **Main tenant-subtenant constellation:** One person (the main tenant) has concluded the tenancy agreement directly with the landlord, while the other flatmates (subtenants) rent from the main tenant. In this model, the main tenant is responsible to the landlord, while the subtenants pay their rent to the main tenant and have no direct contractual relationship with the landlord.

→ **What is the best way to deal with a deposit when setting up or moving into a shared flat?**

When setting up or moving into a shared flat, it is important to clearly regulate the deposit: It should be stipulated in the tenancy agreement and confirmed in writing. Receipt of the deposit should also be confirmed in writing.

What documents do I need for a flat viewing and later for the tenancy agreement?

For a flat viewing and later for the tenancy agreement, you should have prepared the following documents in paper form or as a back-up in digital form: A valid identity card or passport to confirm your identity, proof of income such as BAföG notice, parents' declaration of maintenance payments, account with plenty of savings for monthly withdrawals. You can also submit a tenant's self-disclosure, which sets out your personal and financial circumstances. Schufa information is also often requested.

What is a previous tenant certificate and where can I get one?

You will usually receive a previous tenant's certificate from your previous landlord or property management company, which confirms your rental period and rent payments. If you previously lived at home and cannot provide a previous tenant's certificate, bank statements or payslips could serve as alternative confirmations to prove your solvency and reliability as a tenant. It is advisable to contact the new landlord or landlady in advance to clarify which documents they will accept.

What is Schufa? Where do I go for information? What if there is an entry there?

Schufa is a German credit agency that collects and evaluates information on the creditworthiness of private individuals. This information is passed on to companies, banks and landlords to support their decisions when granting loans or rental contracts. For a Schufa report, you can contact Schufa Holding AG directly, preferably by ordering online at <http://www.meineschufa.de>. Select the free information there.

If there is a negative entry, you should check the cause of the entry, contact the creditor to clarify any outstanding debts and, if necessary, apply to Schufa for a correction. If necessary, you can also explain the circumstances of the entry to your potential landlord/landlady to emphasise your reliability as a tenant.

Landlords may obtain this information from the time when the conclusion of the tenancy agreement is directly dependent on the Schufa information. However, it is not permitted to request a report at the first viewing without a specific commitment from the landlord. You can voluntarily bring the Schufa report with you to viewings, as the housing market in Leipzig is tight and quick decisions may be necessary.

What are typical contract traps?

When signing a tenancy agreement, there are some typical contractual pitfalls that you should be aware of. These include unclear provisions on ancillary cost accounting, inadequate agreements on cosmetic repairs and renovations as well as clauses on rent increases.

It is also important to check the type of tenancy agreement, especially in the case of graduated rent or index-linked rent, in order to assess the future development of rental costs and avoid surprises. In addition, you should ensure that all verbal agreements are recorded in writing to avoid misunderstandings and to safeguard your rights as a tenant. If you are unsure, it is highly advisable to seek [legal assistance](#), for example from a tenants' association, to avoid legal pitfalls and protect your interests.



Which insurance policies make sense for me as a tenant?

As a tenant, you should consider taking out certain types of insurance to protect yourself against financial risks associated with your flat. Personal liability insurance is essential as it covers damage that you unintentionally cause to third parties, such as water damage. Contents insurance protects your personal possessions from damage caused by fire, burglary and more. In addition, legal expenses insurance can be useful to cover legal costs in disputes with the landlord, for example over repairs or rent reductions.

Counselling service


Contact

Studentenwerk Leipzig – Social Counselling

Center for Social Services, Gutenbergplatz 4, 4.OG

Studenten Service Zentrum, Goethestraße 3-5, EG

Studentisches Familienzentrum (StuFaz), Nürnberger Str. 42, EG

 raumteiler@studentenwerk-leipzig.de



<https://www.studentenwerk-leipzig.de/en/counselling-social-issues/social-counselling/>

Your advantages

- ✓ Extensive counselling for your individual situation
- ✓ Support for taking decisions
- ✓ Free counselling services
- ✓ Anonymous counselling possible
- ✓ We are subject to the duty of confidentiality.

 **Here you can find further counselling services regarding the topic housing:**

Legal Assistance for students financed by the semester contribution fee and state funds

SAMMLER & MÜLLER Rechtsanwaltskanzlei

Grassistraße 27

04107 Leipzig

Telefon: +49 341 14 99 884

<https://www.studentenwerk-leipzig.de/en/counselling-social-issues/legal-assistance/>

You can also contact the following organisations:

- Tenants' association
- Social counselling
- Consumer protection centre
- Operating costs assistance association

Please note: Legal advice from an external lawyer is very expensive.