

Accommodation in Bielefeld

Housing

On the following page you will find general information on the topic of housing and how you can actively search for a shared room/apartment/house in Bielefeld.

Housing is currently rather scarce in major cities and therefore quite expensive as well. Usually, up to 35% of the monthly salary/scholarship payment has to be spent on rent. One of the reasons for this is the discrepancy between supply and demand. Thus, rental prices are also rising in the city of Bielefeld.

Bielefeld University tries to support newly arriving students and academics with their arrival. Unfortunately, the university cannot regulate the current developments on the private housing market and is not a "landlord". Therefore, housing cannot be guaranteed.

Living in Bielefeld

With a population of around 344.000 Bielefeld is the largest city in the Ostwestfalen-Lippe region. The city has ten [districts](#): Brackwede, Dornberg, Gadderbaum, Heepen, Jöllenbeck, Mitte, Schildesche, Senne, Sennestadt, Stieghorst.

In general, the closer you want to live to university, the more competitive the housing market and the higher the room prices get. The city of Bielefeld has an extensive transport network and a bike sharing and [scooter system](#). Bielefeld University is easy to reach by tram and bus. As the housing market in Bielefeld is limited and housing prices are rising, students and staff move to neighboring communities/cities and travel by train. Bielefeld University can be reached in 10 minutes from Bielefeld main station.

Costs

The basic rent for a room/apartment in Bielefeld ranges from €5.78 to €10.30 per square meter (m²). The calculation of the basic rent is based on the [rent index](#). Factors for the calculation include: the year of construction, location of the property, how energetically renovated a property is, and the size of the property.

In addition to the basic rent, **service costs/operating costs** must be paid to the owner/landlord. Service costs/operating costs can include the following: garbage collection fee, water, caretaker fee, gardeners, property tax, cleaning of the hallway, water and sewage, and heating. Here you can roughly calculate using the guideline value of €2.17 per m².

In addition to basic rent and costs, you also have to consider **additional costs**, which are usually not paid to the landlord and will always arise when renting a flat. These include the [broadcasting fee](#), electricity, gas and internet.

Mietspiegeltablelle für eine Standardwohnung

(siehe Definition gemäß Erläuterungen zur Standardwohnung)

Baualtersklasse	Nettokaltmiete pro Monat in €/m ²		
	unterer Wert	Median	oberer Wert
bis 1918	5,78	6,63	7,80
1919 bis 1949	5,32	5,88	7,00
1950 bis 1960	5,45	6,06	7,22
1961 bis 1977	5,28	6,30	7,45
1978 bis 1994	5,89	6,87	7,87
1995 bis 2001	6,40	7,00	8,05
2002 bis 2010	6,91	7,84	8,76
2011 bis 6/2021	8,11	9,19	10,30

Zuschläge / Abschläge pro Monat in €/m²

(gemäß Erläuterungen der Zu- und Abschlagsmerkmale)

einfache Wohnlage	- 0,08
Gute/sehr gute Wohnlage	+ 0,42
Kleinwohnung 20 m ² bis unter 40 m ²	+ 1,73
Große Wohnungen mehr als 120 m ² bis 250 m ²	- 0,65
Barrierearmut	+ 0,58
energetische Vollmodernisierung (Gebäude vor 1978 erstellt, Sanierung nach 2001)	+ 0,85

Types of housing

Housing options usually are either a **shared room**, an **apartment** or a **house**.

If you decide on a shared room, you have your own room and share the common rooms (bathroom, kitchen, living room) with other roommates. This form of living is very common in Bielefeld. Living in a shared apartment is fun, but can also be exhausting on some days. Nevertheless, it is definitely the cheapest option and it allows you to get in touch with/meet other people rather quickly. An apartment or a house, however, you rent for yourself and your family alone.

A room in a shared apartment/apartment/house can be **unfurnished**, **partly furnished** or **fully furnished**. In Bielefeld, most rooms/apartments/houses are not furnished or partly furnished. This means that you will most likely have to buy furniture after your arrival.

Housing is distinguished according to whether it is **provided by private landlords**, **commercial operators** or **non-profit associations** (*Studierendenwerk*, housing associations).

Search for Accommodation

Below you will find housing providers in Bielefeld.

Please note that Bielefeld University has no influence on websites of external providers and accepts no responsibility for the provided information.

Student dormitories

If you pay the semester fee at Bielefeld University and are registered as a student/doctoral candidate, you can apply for a place in a student dormitory. You may even do so before you arrive in

Germany. As proof of matriculation, you can upload your letter of admission or letter of invitation to the website of the student dormitory.

The following student dormitories are available in Bielefeld:

[Studierendenwerk](#)

[BGW-Roggenkamp](#)

[Westend Campus](#)

[Rotunda Westfalica](#)

[Hollensiek](#)

Housing Associations

A housing association is a legal entity and usually owns several properties. They do not operate profit-oriented. As a tenant, you become a member of the housing association, acquire shares, can voice your own ideas and help shape processes in various areas at meetings.

Housing associations have waiting lists for apartments. Therefore, you should register as a person interested in renting at a housing association as soon as you arrive in Germany.

The following housing associations exist in Bielefeld:

[Freie Scholle](#)

[BGW](#)

[LEG](#)

[GSWG Senne](#)

[Gbb Brackwede](#)

Guest apartments on campus

The following guest apartments are available for international academics on the campus of Bielefeld University:

[Boarding House Campus](#)

[ZiF](#)

Reservation requests and bookings for guest apartments in the ZiF are made via the host institution/AG and ZiF@uni-bielefeld.de. The ZiF apartments are not available to employees of Bielefeld University.

Private rental offers - General search portals

You can find current private rental offers in Bielefeld on the following commercial and external search portals:

[Neue Westfälische](#)

[Westfalen Blatt](#)

[Immoscout](#)

[WG -Gesucht](#)

Real estate agents

A real estate agency is a professional company that specializes in brokering offers to rent or buy apartments/houses. In the case of a positive mediation and contract, a commission must be paid to the real estate agent by the tenant or landlord. If you have trouble finding a room/apartment in Bielefeld, hiring a real estate agent is another way of finding accommodation in Bielefeld.

Short-term housing - stays from 1 day up to 12 months

If your studies or research stay in Bielefeld is limited in time or you only want to book short-term accommodation for the first few weeks of your arrival, the following hotels, hostels and holiday apartments are available in Bielefeld:

[Boarding House Campus](#)

[ZiF](#)

[Hotels](#)

[Jugendherberge](#)

[Ferienwohnung](#)

[Airbnb](#)

[Immoscout](#) (Filter "befristet" and "zur Zwischenmiete")

[WG -Gesucht](#) (Filter "befristet" and "zur Zwischenmiete")

Short-term stays of up to 90 days do not have to be registered in the city.

Apartment found.....and then what?

Once you have viewed a room/apartment/house that is to your liking and you would like to rent it, proceed as follows:

Step 1:

Say yes to the shared apartment/landlord as soon as possible.

Step 2:

Make an appointment with the landlord and, if needed, the previous tenant to sign the tenancy agreement and receive the key and the landlord's confirmation (*Wohnungsgeberbestätigung*). During that meeting, the current levels of the electricity, gas and water indicators are usually noted down. In some cases, a transfer report is written. If possible, take an acquaintance, friend or colleague to the meeting with you.

Step 3:

Pay the deposit and set up a monthly standing order from your account to pay the rent.

Step 4:

Register electricity, gas, internet with external suppliers (you can directly ask neighbors and/or previous tenants about possible suppliers).

Step 5:

Register/change your new address at the [registration office](#) . Exceptions are study or research stays of less than 90 days.

Step 6:

Inform all institutions about your new address (e.g. university, banks, insurance companies).

Step 7:

Think about whether you need furniture or other household items and, if so, buy them → more info under: Furniture

Step 8:

Ask friends and colleagues for help with the move and celebrate your new room/place with a meal afterwards.

Buying furniture

In Bielefeld, in addition to traditional shops, there are also many opportunities/options to buy furniture and other household items second-hand and thus at a lower price.

[Recyclingbörse](#)

[Brockensammlung Bethel](#)

[Flea markets](#)

[Ebay Kleinanzeigen](#)

If you are buying a large piece of furniture, you can ask the seller if they can deliver it to you for a fee. If it cannot be delivered, renting a van is also an option (e.g. Cambio on Campus, Tim's Leihwagen).

Rights and duties as a tenant

Tenancy law is very complicated. If you have any problems when or while renting an apartment, you can get legal advice.

Possible examples of problems that may arise:

- You do not receive a service charge statement *Nebenkostenabrechnung* or it is incorrect.
- Your rent increases.
- Your tenancy contract has been cancelled.
- Your deposit is not returned.
- You have mold in your apartment.

It is therefore important that you get legal advice and find out about your options. The following advice centers offer advice on housing:

[ASTA Bielefeld](#) (for enrolled students/promoters)

[Verbraucherzentrale](#)

[Anwälte - Mietrecht](#)

Or become a member of a *Mieterschutzbund* (tenant protection association) right at the beginning of your stay. For a monthly fee, you can become a member and receive information on various topics. In addition, you will receive legal support in the event of a dispute.

[Mieterbund OWL](#) (Tenants' Association OWL)

Publications on tenancy law

[Wohnraummietrecht](#) (Federal Ministry of Justice)

[Das Mieterhandbuch](#) (Consumer Centre)

A-Z and a list of abbreviations

There are many terms and abbreviations in the field of housing. Below you will find a description of terms and respective abbreviations.

[Glossary of housing terms](#)

[List of abbreviations](#)

Good to know

In Bielefeld, private landlords usually want to meet prospective tenants in person and get to know them. You may also find it more convenient to view the apartment directly. Thus, finding an apartment from abroad is often or not at all possible. Therefore, consider renting a hostel/hotel/holiday apartment for the first month at the beginning of your arrival.

Be aware that there may be scams on the internet. Even in the field of housing, people may try to get money illegally by using tricks. Therefore, remain cautious if someone demands money from you without you having seen/inspected the apartment first.

Consider taking out liability insurance and/or household insurance. These insurances cover the costs for damages to the flat or your personal belongings.

"*Nettiquette*": Always give landlords feedback whether you are still interested in the room/apartment or not. If not, please always cancel! Just as you are sometimes frustrated that you don't hear back, so are landlords.

Landlords are usually interested in what you are doing in Bielefeld and whether you can finance the room/apartment. Therefore, you should briefly introduce yourself in an email. Below you will find a template letter:

If you have a tenancy agreement, you are obliged to pay the rent on time. If there are problems that justify a rent reduction, you cannot simply not pay the rent. You must inform the landlord of the damage and give him the opportunity to repair it. If you do not pay the rent, you run the risk of getting your tenancy contract terminated.

Mold → Is a classic and stressful topic between tenant and landlord. Mold can have its origin in structural defects and/or incorrect ventilation.

Usually, in every house, there are house rules that specify certain aspects, such as quiet times and cleaning of the common rooms. Familiarize yourself with the house rules at the beginning. If you are unsure, ask your landlord or your neighbors.

A party or barbecue is fine depending on the neighborhood. However, if you are planning a large party that could be noisy, notify your neighbors beforehand. You can avoid a lot of stress that way (e.g. public order office/police).

In case of emergency

Unfortunately, in some cases, people are unable to find a room/apartment despite their best efforts or due to a lack of financial resources. Don't be ashamed and reach out to us: wohnen@uni-bielefeld.de

[Wohnungsnotfallhilfen der Stadt Bielefeld](#) Bielefeld's emergency housing assistance