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ENGLISH RELOCATION GUIDE · DRESDEN

Finding a Flat in Dresden — *the complete guide*

A calm, practical handbook for international researchers and professionals moving to Dresden: how German renting really works, where to search, which district fits your workplace, and the words you'll need along the way.

SECTION ONE

How renting works *in Germany*

The German rental market runs on a handful of fixed conventions. Once you know them, the paperwork stops being intimidating.

COLD RENT VS. WARM RENT

Kaltmiete (cold rent) is the bare rent for the space.

Warmmiete (warm rent) adds **Nebenkosten** — running costs for heating, water, waste, building upkeep. As a rule of thumb, expect roughly a quarter to a third on top of the cold rent. Listings usually quote the cold rent, so always confirm which figure you are reading.

THE DEPOSIT

The **Kaution** (security deposit) is capped by law at **three net cold rents** (§ 551 BGB) and you may pay it in **three monthly instalments**. It sits in a separate account and is returned after move-out, minus any justified deductions.

SELBSTAUSKUNFT & SCHUFA

Landlords ask for a **Selbstauskunft** — a short self-disclosure form (name, job, income, household). They also like a **SCHUFA** credit report, which newcomers simply don't have yet. In practice a **work contract plus a short employer confirmation** replaces it convincingly.

YOUR APPLICATION FOLDER

Viewings are competitive. Arrive with a complete digital folder so you can apply on the spot:

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Passport / ID copy | ☐ Work contract |
| ☐ Employer confirmation | ☐ Last 3 payslips (if any) |
| ☐ Selbstauskunft form | ☐ SCHUFA or equivalent |
| ☐ Previous-landlord reference | ☐ Short cover note |

GOOD TO KNOW

Since the **Bestellerprinzip** (2015), whoever hires the agent pays the agent. For rentals that is almost always the landlord — as a tenant you should not be charged commission.

SECTION TWO

Where to search

No single portal shows the whole market. Combine the big listing sites with Dresden's large cooperative and municipal landlords.

PLATFORM	TYPE	WHAT IT'S GOOD FOR
ImmoScout24	Portal	The largest listing site — widest choice, most competition.
Immowelt	Portal	Second big portal; overlaps with ImmoScout but worth a parallel search.
Immonet	Portal	Shares listings with Immowelt; useful for catching alerts early.
WG-Gesucht	Shared / flats	Best for shared flats (WG) and short-term rooms — ideal on arrival.
Kleinanzeigen	Classifieds	Private listings and sublets; more direct, but screen carefully.
Vonovia	Large landlord	National housing company with a sizeable Dresden portfolio; apply on their own site.
WiD — Wohnen in Dresden	Municipal	The city's own housing company; affordable stock, often needs a WBS.
Housing cooperatives	Genossenschaft	Membership instead of a high deposit — shares are refunded when you leave.

KEY INSIGHT

A large share of Dresden's housing stock belongs to **cooperatives** and the **municipal WiD** — and much of it **never appears on any portal**. Contact them directly and register early; waiting lists move quietly in the background.

SECTION THREE

Districts *for newcomers*

Choose your district around your workplace and lifestyle. Dresden's average net cold rents run roughly **8–12 €/m²**.

Johannstadt

MPI-CBG · UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL

Walking distance to the Max Planck Institute and the university hospital, with rents below the city average — the natural first choice for life-science researchers.

Südvorstadt

TU DRESDEN CAMPUS

Right at the TU Dresden campus. Student-and-academic character, cafés, quick tram links across the city.

Klotzsche & the north

SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY

Closest to the chip fabs — TSMC-ESMC, Infineon, GlobalFoundries. Quieter, greener, more suburban; ideal if you work in the north.

Neustadt

NIGHTLIFE · INTERNATIONAL CROWD

Dresden's liveliest quarter: bars, independent shops and the most international crowd. Vibrant rather than quiet.

Striesen-Blasewitz

FAMILIES

Leafy villa streets popular with families — the upper end of the local rent range, calm and well-connected.

ORIENTATION

The next page maps typical public-transport times from each district to the main workplaces — the fastest way to see which neighbourhood actually fits your commute.

SECTION FOUR

The commute *matrix*

Typical daytime tram & S-Bahn travel times from seven residential districts to four key destinations.

	 MPI-CBG / University Hospital Johannstadt-East	 TU Dresden Campus Südvorstadt	THE SOUTH-NORTH AXIS  Semiconductor North TSMC · Infineon Klotzsche	 Main Station / Old Town City centre
Johannstadt	0–10	15–20	35–45	10–15
Südvorstadt / Plauen	15–25	0–10	35–45	5–10
Neustadt	15–20	20–25	20–30	10–15
Striesen / Blasewitz	10–15	20–25	40–50	15–20
Klotzsche / Hellerau	30–40	35–45	0–10	20–25
Löbtau	25–30	10–15	40–50	10–15
Pieschen	25–30	25–30	15–25	15–20

≤ 15 min
 15–30 min
 30–40 min
 > 40 min

Dresden is a 20-minute city — *except on the south-north axis.*

Typical daytime public transport times, rounded — own estimate based on DVB connections, not real-time data.

SECTION FIVE

Glossary *of rental terms*

Ten German words you'll meet again and again — in plain English.

Kaltmiete

COLD RENT

The bare rent for the living space, before any running costs.

Warmmiete

WARM RENT

Cold rent plus **Nebenkosten** — the total you actually transfer each month.

Nebenkosten

RUNNING COSTS

Heating, water, waste and building upkeep; roughly a quarter to a third on top of the cold rent.

Kaution

DEPOSIT

Security deposit, max. three net cold rents (§ 551 BGB), payable in three instalments, refundable.

Selbstauskunft

SELF-DISCLOSURE

A short form on your job, income and household that landlords use to screen applicants.

SCHUFA

CREDIT REPORT

Germany's credit-scoring record. Newcomers have none yet; a work contract fills the gap.

WBS

HOUSING ENTITLEMENT

Wohnberechtigungsschein — a certificate for subsidised flats, granted below certain income limits.

Übergabeprotokoll

HANDOVER RECORD

The move-in/out inspection report noting the flat's condition and meter readings. Insist on one.

Bestellerprinzip

WHO-ORDERS-PAYS

Since 2015, whoever hires the agent pays them — for rentals almost always the landlord.

Kündigungsfrist

NOTICE PERIOD

Three months for tenants (§ 573c BGB); landlords face longer, escalating periods.

Red flags & rental scams

Dresden's market is safe, but relocation scams target newcomers who can't view in person. A few rules keep you clear of them.

01 Never pay before viewing

No deposit, no "reservation fee", no first month — nothing before you have seen the flat in person and signed a contract. This single rule defeats most scams.

03 The "landlord abroad"

A supposed owner who is travelling, can't meet you, and wants the key sent by post after a transfer (often via a look-alike escrow service) is fake. Walk away.

02 Suspiciously cheap = bait

Prices far below the usual 8–12 €/m² are lures. A central 70 m² flat for 400 € warm does not exist; it's there to collect your money and details.

04 Pressure tactics

"Many others are interested, pay today to hold it." Real landlords let you view and read the contract. Urgency is a manipulation, not an opportunity.

IF IN DOUBT

Ask to see the flat and meet the owner or a local agent face to face, and pay only into a named German bank account after signing. An English-speaking local agent removes the guesswork entirely.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Provided by *Immobilienpartner Sachsen*

Your English-speaking real estate agent in Dresden. We help international researchers and professionals find the right flat — from first search to signed contract and handover.

Full guide online:

immobilienpartner-sachsen.de/en/guide/finding-a-flat-in-dresden

Updated regularly.

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