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Your First Week in Germany — What to Do Immediately?

Anmeldung, SIM-Karte, Bankkonto and Supermarkt — the essential steps for your first week.

Deutsche Begriffe: Anmeldung | SIM-Karte | Bankkonto | Meldebescheinigung | Supermarkt

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Days 1–2: Arrival and Orientation

Your first days in Germany can be overwhelming. Focus on the essentials:

• **Buy a SIM-Karte** — Prepaid cards are available at Aldi Talk, Lidl Connect, or Lebara at any Supermarkt (from 5–10 €). You'll need your **passport** for activation (video-ident or in-store).

• **Explore the Supermarkt** — Aldi, Lidl (discount, cheap) or Rewe, Edeka (more selection). Opening hours: Mon–Sat approx. 7:00–22:00. **Closed on Sundays!**

• **Get a public transport ticket** — Buy a daily or weekly ticket. The **Deutschlandticket** (63 €/month) covers all local public transport nationwide.

Days 3–5: Registration and Banking

Register Your Residence (Anmeldung)

You must register at the **Bürgeramt within 14 days**. Required documents:

• Completed registration form

• Passport / ID card

• **Wohnungsgeberbestätigung** from your landlord

• Rental contract (copy)

Tip: In major cities, book an appointment online immediately — waiting times are often several weeks.

Open a Bankkonto

With your **Meldebescheinigung** from the Bürgeramt, you can open a Bankkonto:

• **Branch banks:** Sparkasse, Commerzbank, Deutsche Bank

• **Online banks:** N26, ING, DKB — faster, often without Schufa check

• Required: Passport + Meldebescheinigung + Tax ID (arrives by mail)

Days 5–7: Setting Up Daily Life

• **Household items** — Drugstores (dm, Rossmann) for hygiene products; cheap household goods at Action or Tedi

• **Meet your neighbors** — Introduce yourself to your neighbors. This is customary in Germany and builds trust.

• **Follow traffic rules** — Don't block bicycle paths, wait at traffic lights (even as a pedestrian!), respect quiet hours (22:00–6:00)

Checklist for Your First Week

• □ Buy and activate SIM-Karte

• □ Find Supermarkt and drugstore

• □ Book appointment at Bürgeramt

• □ Register residence → get Meldebescheinigung

• □ Open Bankkonto

• □ Get public transport ticket

• □ Wait for tax ID (arrives by mail in 2–4 weeks)