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Neighbor Law — Quiet Hours, House Rules and Conflicts

Quiet hours (22–6), Sunday rest, house rules, grilling on balconies and neighbor disputes.

Deutsche Begriffe: Ruhezeiten | Hausordnung | Sonntagsruhe | Lärmbelästigung | Nachbarrecht

Quiet Hours in Germany

Quiet hours in Germany are **regulated by law** and through house rules:

Time	Rule
22:00–6:00	Night rest — room volume
Sundays and public holidays	All-day quiet
13:00–15:00	Afternoon rest (depends on house rules)

What is "room volume"?

Noise that is **not audible outside the apartment**. Soft music, conversations, and television are allowed — loud parties, drilling, or vacuuming are not.

House Rules

House rules are usually posted in the stairwell or part of the lease. Typical rules:

- **Stairwell cleaning** — cleaning schedule with neighbors
- **Strollers/bicycles** — not to be stored in the stairwell

- **Pets** — ownership often requires permission (dogs, cats)
- **Grilling** — on the balcony allowed or forbidden depending on house rules

Grilling on the Balcony

Rules vary:

- **Electric grill:** usually allowed
- **Charcoal grill: forbidden** in many leases (smoke nuisance)
- **Gas grill:** often treated like charcoal
- **In the garden:** liberal, but inform neighbors first
- **Tip:** Check your lease and house rules

Noise Disturbance — What to Do?

As the Affected Party

1. **Talk politely** — neighbors often don't realize how loud they are
2. **Written complaint** — send a letter to the neighbor (document!)
3. **Inform your landlord** — the landlord has a duty of care
4. **Keep a noise log** — note date, time, and type of noise
5. **Call the municipal office** — for repeated violations (fines up to €5,000)

As the Cause

- Construction and renovations: **only Mon–Sat, 7:00–20:00**
- Washing machine/dryer: **not** during quiet hours
- Musical instruments: max. 1–2 hours/day, not during quiet hours
- Children's noise: is **not noise** in the legal sense

Avoiding Neighbor Disputes

- **Introduce yourself** — greet neighbors when moving in
- **Communicate** — inform neighbors before parties or renovations
- **Be willing to compromise** — small concessions prevent big conflicts
- **Mediation** — many cities offer free dispute resolution services