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Schule — School System in Germany

Germany's mandatory education system starts at age 6 and lasts 9-10 years, divided into primary school and specialized secondary schools. Public education is free, though parents cover costs for materials and extracurricular activities.

Deutsche Begriffe: Schule | Grundschule | Gymnasium | Realschule | Hauptschule | Schulpflicht

Schule — School System in Germany

School Attendance Obligation (Schulpflicht)

In Germany **YOU MUST** send your child to school:

- From age 6
- For 9-10 years (depends on the state)
- No school = financial penalty or imprisonment!

Stages of Education

1. Grundschule (Primary School)

- Age: 6-10 years old
- Grades: 1-4
- All children together

2. After Grundschule — Division!

School Type	For Whom	What's Next
Gymnasium	Best students	Abitur → University
Realschule	Average	Mittlere Reife → Vocational school/Technical college
Hauptschule	Weaker students	Hauptschulabschluss → Apprenticeship
Gesamtschule	Everyone together	Various paths

How to Enroll Your Child?

- 1. Anmeldung** (Registration) at the local school
- 2. Schuleingangsuntersuchung** — Pre-school medical examination
- 3. Documents:** Birth certificate, Anmeldung, vaccinations

How Much Does It Cost?

Public school = **FREE**

BUT parents pay for:

- School supplies (~50-100€/year)
- Field trips (~100-200€/year)
- After-school care (Hort) — 0-200€/month
- School lunches — 3-5€/day

Financial Assistance

If you have low income:

- **Bildung und Teilhabe (BuT)** — see separate article
- Free lunches
- Free school supplies
- Free field trips

Important Words:

German	English
Zeugnis	Report card
Hausaufgaben	Homework
Elternabend	Parent-teacher meeting
Klassenfahrt	Class trip
Nachhilfe	Tutoring
Schulranzen	School backpack

Important for Foreigners!

- Your child does NOT need to know German — there are preparatory classes
- School MUST accept your child (Schulpflicht)
- Polish weekend schools available (Polish language, history)