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Standesamt — Marriage, Birth Certificate and Name Change

Marriage registration with Ehefähigkeitszeugnis (€40–100), birth notification within 7 days, and name changes.

Deutsche Begriffe: Standesamt | Eheschließung | Ehefähigkeitszeugnis | Geburtsurkunde | Namensänderung | Heiratsurkunde

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Marriage in Germany — Step by Step

Marriage in Germany is only legally valid at the **Standesamt** — church or religious ceremonies have no legal effect.

Prerequisites

• Both partners must be **at least 18 years old**

• No existing marriage (present divorce decree)

• **Ehefähigkeitszeugnis** — foreign nationals need this document from their home country. It confirms that there are no obstacles to marriage. Some countries do not issue such a certificate — in that case, the **appellate court** decides on an exemption.

Required Documents

• Valid passport or ID card

• Extended registration certificate (not older than 4 weeks)

• Birth certificate (certified and translated by a sworn translator)

• Ehefähigkeitszeugnis or exemption decision

• If applicable, divorce decree or death certificate of former spouse

Costs

Service	Fee
Marriage registration	**€40–100**
Marriage ceremony (standard time)	included in price
Saturday wedding	**€50–100 surcharge**
Marriage certificate	**€12 per copy**

Process

1. Registration at the Standesamt of your place of residence (6 months to 6 weeks in advance)

2. Review of documents by the Standesamt (duration: 2–6 weeks)

3. Schedule an appointment for the marriage ceremony

4. Wedding before the registrar with at least 2 witnesses

Birth Registration — Deadline 7 Days

After a child is born in Germany, the birth must be registered **within 7 days** at the responsible Standesamt. The responsible office is the Standesamt of the **place of birth** (not place of residence).

Required Documents

- Birth certificate from the clinic
- ID cards/passports of both parents
- Marriage certificate (for married parents)
- Paternity recognition (for unmarried parents, preferably before birth)
- Birth certificates of both parents

The Child Receives:

- A **German birth certificate** (regardless of parents' nationality)
- Automatically a **tax identification number** after registration

Name Change

Name changes in Germany are only possible in **exceptional cases**:

• **After marriage:** Shared marital name, double name, or retention of own names

• **After divorce:** Return to birth name

• **Public law change:** Only for "important reason" (e.g., offensive name, gender transition)

The application for name change after marriage is free and is determined directly during the marriage ceremony. A subsequent change costs **€25–100** and requires an application at the Standesamt.
