



Before Leaving Heidelberg

You can use this checklist to keep track of the tasks you have already completed and those, which are still outstanding. The list is not exhaustive; however, we have attempted to include the most important steps to follow in preparation for your trip to Heidelberg. There is no need to adhere to the order of the tasks as given in the list.

▶ **Terminate the rental contract for your apartment**

In general, it is necessary to give notice three months in advance and in writing to terminate your rental contract. Before moving out you must carry out the renovations or repairs that are required in the rental contract. It is a good idea to arrange an appointment with your landlord to “hand over the apartment” (*Schlüsselübergabetermin*). We recommend that you take a “walk-through report” (*Übergabeprotokoll*) with you (see our download centre) to record the condition of the apartment. When you are finished inspecting the apartment with your landlord, he or she should sign the report to confirm that you have returned the apartment in good condition and that no repairs are required. The meter reading(s) are also recorded on the report, which is important for calculating the extra charges. If you do not intend to take all of your furniture or other household items with you when you leave, be sure to sell these in advance or arrange to have them picked up by the bulk trash pickup (*Sperrmüll*).

▶ **Give notice to your electricity and gas company, telephone and internet provider, cable TV company, the GEZ-Beitragsservice (collecting agency of the public broadcasting fee) and cancel any subscriptions and memberships.**

Generally, there is a notice period of three months. Terminations must be submitted in writing and should be sent by registered mail.

▶ **Cancel your insurance coverage**

If you have had insurance coverage (health, liability, household, accident etc.) during your stay in Heidelberg, be sure to cancel these before leaving the country.

▶ **Give notice of your departure at your child’s kindergarten or school**

▶ **Close your bank account**

If you have a bank account in Heidelberg, be sure to close it out before you leave and transfer all existing standing orders to your new account.

▶ **De-register at the Residency Registration Office (Bürgeramt)**

If you have been in Heidelberg for a longer stay and are registered at the Residency Registration Office (Bürgeramt), you should notify them of your departure. You can download the de-registration form (Abmeldungsformular) from the homepage of the Bürgeramt, fill it out and send it with a copy of your passport by mail to the Bürgeramt.

▶ **Cancel your job ticket**

If you were employed at the University of Heidelberg and had a job ticket, cancel this before leaving.

▶ **Give notice to your institute and the University library and give back your borrowed books and other items**

▶ **Forwarding address order for your mail**

You can put in a forwarding address order at the post office. This directs the post office to forward any mail to you at your new address. You can do this at any post office branch or on the internet at www.efiliale.de > Nachsenden lassen. You should also be sure to leave a forwarding address at the Welcome Centre and your institute.

▶ **Find out about customs regulations and duties**

Inform yourself about the customs regulations pertaining to your situation and download the necessary forms from the internet site of the German Customs Office: www.zoll.de

▶ **Submit your tax return**

You must submit your income tax return to the tax authorities (Finanzamt) by May 31st of the following year. It is also possible to submit tax returns electronically using ELSTER. Please see www.elster.de

▶ **Claim back your social insurance contributions**

In countries that do not have a social insurance treaty with Germany, it may be possible, after a waiting period of two years, to claim back your retirement insurance payments. You can obtain more information about this from the Deutsche Rentenversicherung at www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de

▶ **Clarification of your pension account at the Deutsche Rentenversicherung (statutory pension plan), if applicable**

If you have contributed to the statutory pension plan in Germany, it would be a good idea to request an account clarification (Kontenklärung). This will bring your pension account up to date and you will not have to do this shortly before you retire, at which point you may no longer have all of the necessary documents. Additionally, you should make sure that the Deutsche Rentenversicherung (www.deutsche-rentenversicherung.de) always has your current address.

Please go to our "Download Centre" (http://www.zuv.uni-heidelberg.de/international/downloadcenter_engl.html) to find other helpful information for your stay in Heidelberg.