

# At home with GESOBAU

Living made easy

Hier wohnt Berlin.

# GESOBAU



# WELCOME TO GESOBAU

You have just found your flat or have recently moved in:  
This short guide will help you with any questions you  
may have. Here you'll find information about your lease  
agreement, moving in and house rules.

Your GESOBAU



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# 1

## MY NEW HOME

I've done it and can soon move into my new flat.  
But first, I need to do a few things.

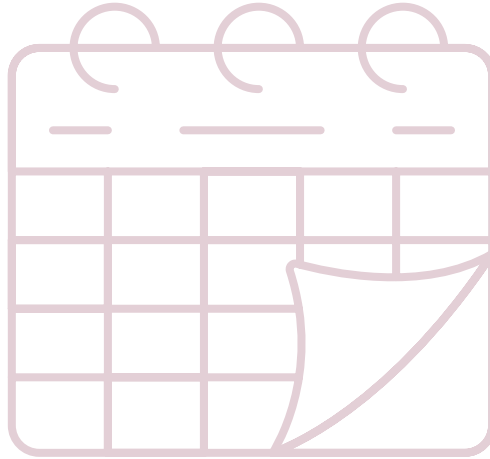




## **THE LEASE AGREEMENT**

I need to sign the lease agreement. This is usually done at the main GESOBAU office in Berlin-Pankow. My landlord will call me to arrange a date for this. All parties must be present for the signing.

In exceptional cases, the lease can be sent by post. Here too, all parties to the contract must sign the agreement.



### **THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS INCLUDED IN THE LEASE AGREEMENT**

- In addition to the basic (net) rent, I must also pay any utilities and service charges (e. g. heating and hot water costs).
- The rent must be paid on time and in full no later than the third working day of the month.
- I should allow GESOBAU to collect my rent from my bank account. By issuing a SEPA Direct Debit mandate, I ensure that the rent is always paid on time.
- I am required to pay a security deposit for my flat. I pay this before I move in.

My security deposit is returned when I move out and nothing is broken. Any outstanding amounts will also be checked. I can pay the security deposit in three instalments. The first instalment is due at the start of the lease.

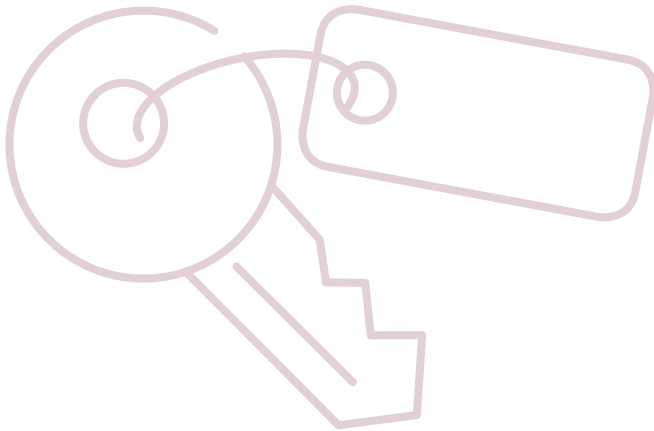
- I may not make any alterations to my flat. If I want to modify anything, I must ask my landlord beforehand.
- The notice period is three months. Notice must be given in writing at the end of the month. The landlord will confirm termination of the agreement.

## THE HANDOVER

- My landlord will make an appointment with me for the handover of the flat.
- I will receive my key at the handover.
- A report is prepared during the handover of the flat: Everything must be in order. I inspect my flat and my landlord notes down anything important. For example: windows, doors and floors are clean and undamaged. The walls are usually painted.

All current meter readings are included in the report.

- The report also makes note of how many keys I receive.
- The landlord and I sign the handover report and I receive a copy for my records. I can bring someone along to help me with the handover, e. g. to translate.



# 2

## SHORT CHECKLIST FOR MOVING IN

A new flat can be exciting. It's easy to forget something.  
This short checklist should help!





## ○ REGISTER THE NEW ADDRESS

I must register my new address with the relevant residence registration office within two weeks. I will receive a document from GESOBAU for this.

## ○ REGISTER THE ELECTRICITY AND GAS METERS

I must also register for electricity (and gas and water if applicable) in my own name with a provider of my choice. For this I use the meter reading, which I read together with my landlord during the handover and which is recorded in the handover report.

## ○ PAY THE “RUNDFUNKBEITRAG”

Each residence is required to pay a TV and radio licence fee known as the “Rundfunkbeitrag”. Some people may be granted an exemption, e. g. by obtaining a certificate from the job centre (Jobcenter). Further information can be found here: [www.rundfunkbeitrag.de](http://www.rundfunkbeitrag.de)

## ○ CHANGE OF ADDRESS

I notify the bank, insurance companies, my employer, the school/day care centre, my family and friends of my new address.

I can set up a forwarding request for my post at the post office. This means my post will be sent to the new address even if the old address is on the letter; this can be in place for several months.

## ○ TAKE OUT INSURANCE

The most important insurance policies for tenants are:

### **Liability insurance**

This insurance is very useful if I accidentally break something. It helps with any damage I cause to others. For example, if I turn the bath taps on and forget to turn them off. My flat would be flooded. And so will my neighbours' flats. That could be very expensive.

### **Contents insurance**

Contents insurance insures everything in my flat and my basement. If I am away and there is a break-in and my things are stolen, contents insurance helps.

# 3

## THE HOUSE RULES

My lease comes with house rules. This is important when living in a building where many different people live: older and younger people, people from different countries, families with children, couples, students or tenants with pets.



## GUESTS

- I am allowed to have guests in my home. It is important to note that my guest must also adhere to the house rules.
- If my guest stays with me for longer than six weeks, I must inform my landlord.
- If I want a long-term subtenant or flatmate, I must ask my landlord for permission beforehand.



## PARTIES

- If I want to have a party, e. g. a birthday or house-warming party, I will put up a notice in the building informing my neighbours of this.
- I will ask my guests to be considerate so they do not disturb anyone.

## TV

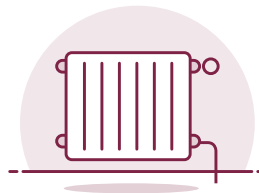
- I do not need any special aerials from GESOBAU. I am not permitted to install a satellite dish.
- In most cases, GESOBAU has already installed connections in the flat. I can ask my account manager about GESOBAU's contractual partners.

## VENTILATION AND HEATING

Moist air must always be ventilated from the flat immediately, otherwise mould may form. Moisture in the air is produced when cooking, washing, showering or bathing.

A few short rules:

- I will fully open the windows two to four times a day.
- When I ventilate the room, I will turn the heating off.
- I will heat all rooms sufficiently and equally.
- The ideal temperature for living rooms is 20 to 21 degrees Celsius, and 18 to 19 degrees Celsius for hallways, bedrooms and kitchens.





## **RUBBISH**

My rubbish goes in the correct bins in the rubbish bin area. It may not go next to the bins or on the floor. I am also not permitted to throw rubbish down the toilet or in washbasins. It is important to separate rubbish in order to preserve resources and the environment.

This means:

- Paper goes in the blue bin.
- Food waste goes in the brown “Biogut” bin.
- Recyclable materials such as plastic go in the yellow bin.
- Other rubbish goes in the black bin.
- Glass goes in the glass container.
- I will dispose of bulky waste and pollutants at the BSR recycling centre (BSR-Recyclinghof).

Further information on separating rubbish can be found in the tenant handbook.

## **QUIET HOURS**

There are certain times when you are not permitted to make any noise, whether you are in your flat, the corridors or the courtyard:

- Every day between 1 pm and 3 pm and between 8 pm and 7 am is quiet time.
- Quiet on Sundays and public holidays is particularly important.

During these times, I will turn my music and TV down and will not use the washing machine or vacuum cleaner.

## **TERMINATION/SEPARATION/ DISSOLUTION OF A SHARED HOUSEHOLD**

- If I live with someone or live in a shared flat, all flatmates are required to sign the lease.
- If someone wants to move out, I must notify GESOBAU of this decision. Everyone who has signed the lease is held liable for the flat.



## SAFETY

I pay attention to safety. This means:

- I will not leave things lying in the corridor. The stairs are an escape route. Everyone must be able to use them unhindered in an emergency.
- I will not store flammable substances such as gas or oil in the basement.
- According to the house rules, barbecues on the balcony, on terraces or on recessed balconies are not permitted. The smell may bother other tenants and barbecues represent an increased fire hazard.

When something breaks, I will notify GESOBAU via the app “GESOBAU Berlin” or via the property manager.

## PETS

I am allowed to have a pet in my flat. Before I get a pet or before I move in with my pet, I ask GESOBAU what the rules on pets are.

What I need to know:

- If I am moving in with a dog, I need written approval from my landlord. I must provide my landlord with the following information: breed, name, date of birth, microchip number, information on size and a photo of the pet.

I will include the following documents with my application:

- Copy of proof of liability insurance for dog owners
- Copy of tax office registration (tax number)

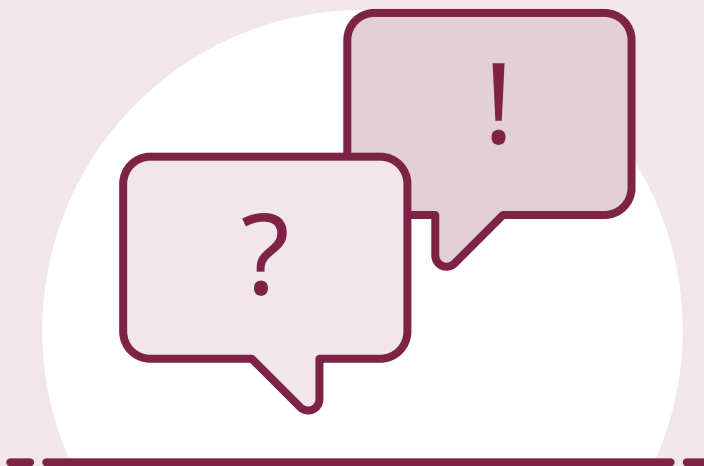
Dogs must be on their lead on GESOBAU property at all times. If I have a pet, I am responsible for the cleanliness and good behaviour of my furry companion.



# 4

## QUESTIONS ABOUT RENTING

Some rumours are persistent.  
We deal with the most common ones here.



**The landlord has a second key.**

**No.** They do not have a key and cannot enter my flat alone or without notice.

**The lease can be cancelled.**

**No.** I am required to give proper notice. I must wait for the notice period to end before I can move out.

**Once I move out, I no longer have to pay rent or any utilities and service charges.**

**No.** I am obligated to pay the costs until the end of the lease agreement. The utility bill for the property I rented from my previous landlord will be forwarded to me at the new address.

**The stairs are part of my flat.**

**No.** The stairs are a common area because they are used by all residents. I must respect common areas.

**The tenant is free to choose the next tenant.**

**No.** I can recommend someone who is interested in my flat to GESOBAU. GESOBAU selects the tenant themselves.

**If I give the landlord some money, I'll find a new flat faster.**

**No.** That is attempted bribery and is against the law. We are required to report such offences. And we don't charge commission, which means that the tenant does not pay any agent fees.

# 5

## THE ABCS OF RENTING





## A

### ACCOUNT MANAGER

If I have questions about my → **lease** or the house rules, I can contact my account manager via the app, email, post or telephone. The contact details can be found in my lease or in the house rules.

### ADDITIONAL COSTS (UTILITIES AND SERVICE CHARGES)

Additional costs are those costs that GESOBAU incurs through managing the property. There are 17 types of additional costs (utilities and service charges), both net and gross. These include heating and hot water costs, rubbish disposal or house cleaning. Any additional costs (utilities and service charges) are agreed upon in the lease.

## APP

The App "GESOBAU Berlin" provides a convenient way for tenants to contact GESOBAU in order to report damage or ask questions. Tenants can also view their current meter readings for heating and water.

## B

### BASIC (NET) RENT

The basic rent – also known as net rent – is based on the size and location of my flat and the year the building was built. It does not include any → **additional costs (utilities and service charges)** (→ **gross rent**).

## C

### CABLE CONNECTION

There is a broadband connection in my flat. GESOBAU has a contract with the network providers PÿUR and Vodafone Deutschland. They provide the signal. This is included in the operating costs. I can receive many channels, even from abroad.

### CARETAKERS/ PROPERTY MANAGERS

The caretakers/property managers have various tasks such as inspecting the facilities.

### COMMUNAL FACILITIES

The stairwell, the courtyard, the laundry room, the garden and the children's playground are there for the use of all tenants. It is therefore important to be considerate of others, not to store things there and to keep the common areas clean.

## COSMETIC REPAIRS

Tenants carry out cosmetic repairs once they have given notice. This includes tasks such as wallpapering and painting. Whether I am required to carry out any repairs and which repairs I am required to carry out is recorded in my lease. If I have any questions, I can contact my landlord.

D

## DIRECT DEBIT

This process is also called a SEPA mandate. A SEPA mandate allows GESOBAU to debit the rent from my bank account. I don't have to worry about anything, and the rent is always paid on time if there is enough money in my account. It also prevents overdue notices.

G

## GROSS RENT

The gross rent is the total rent I have to pay for my flat each month. This consists of the → **basic rent** and → **additional costs (utilities and service charges)**. The additional costs are an advance payment for the net and gross operating costs. This includes heating costs and garden maintenance, for example.

H

## HEATING COSTS

Heating costs are billed annually. My heating bill includes my payments made and a calculation of my actual consumption. I then either have to pay more or receive a credit.

## HOUSING BENEFIT

In Germany, you are eligible to receive a housing benefit (Wohngeld) when your income is too low to pay rent. The housing benefit is a contribution towards your housing costs. It is a social benefit under the German Housing Benefits Act (Wohngeldgesetz, WoGG). Further information can be found at [service.berlin.de](https://www.service.berlin.de) or at the Berlin citizens' office (Bürgeramt).

L

## LEASE AGREEMENT

The lease agreement governs my rights and obligations and those of the landlord. I receive the lease from my → **account manager** together with any other important documents. I keep my lease in a safe place.

## P

### PROTECTION AGAINST EVICTION

The landlord may not terminate a tenant's lease without cause. However, the landlord can terminate the lease if the rent has not been paid, for example. Or when the house rules are not followed and this causes significant disruption to other tenants' peace.

## S

### SECURITY DEPOSIT

A deposit provides the landlord with security. If I move out at some point and have damaged the flat, the landlord can use my security deposit and withhold the appropriate amount. The security deposit is equivalent to three months → **basic (net) rent**.

### STANDING ORDER

A standing order is a regular and automatic money transfer. I can use it to pay the rent every month so I don't have to keep going to the bank to transfer the money. A standing order or direct debit authorisation (→ **direct debit**) can be used for the rent. Please note: There must be enough money in the account.

## T

### TERMINATION

If I want to move out, I must give notice in writing. The notice period is three calendar months. Only then is the lease terminated. If I do not live alone, all parties to the lease must sign the notice of termination. Otherwise it is not valid.

## W

### WOHNBERECHTIGUNGS-SCHEIN (WBS) (SOCIAL HOUSING ENTITLEMENT CERTIFICATE)

The WBS is an official certificate. Whether I am eligible to receive a WBS depends on my income. With a WBS, I am entitled to social housing. Social housing is subsidised with public funds. Further information can be found at [www.berlin.de](http://www.berlin.de) or at the Berlin citizens' office (Bürgeramt).

# 6

## MY CONTACT AT GESOBAU



## THE “GESOBAU BERLIN” APP

I can use the free app to report damage at any time of day, see my meter readings for heating and electricity, and look up anything about my lease. Download it from the App Store or the Google Play Store.

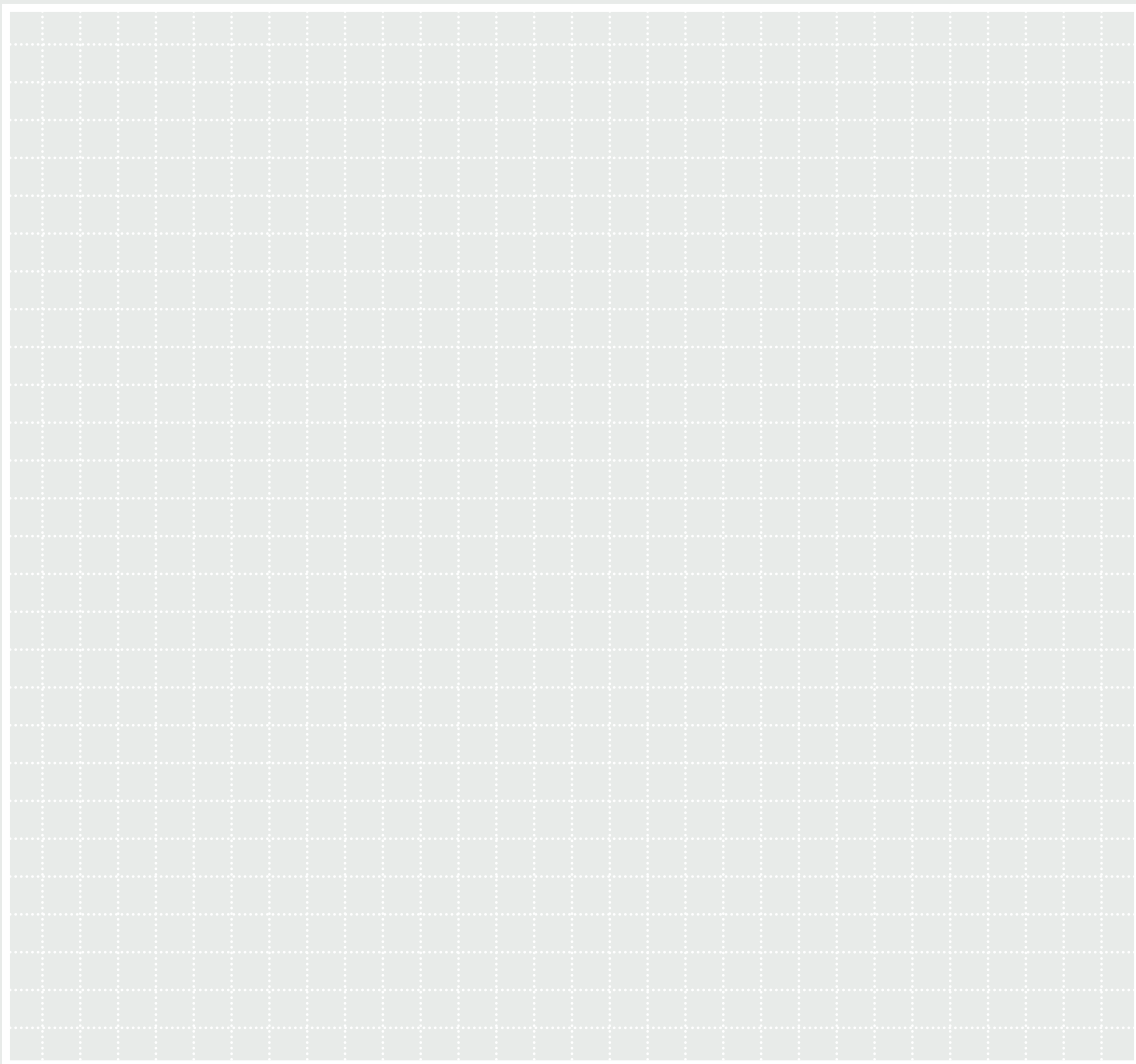
## 24-HOUR HOTLINE

The free hotline is available daily around the clock at (030) 4073-0. I can contact my account manager directly Monday to Thursday 9 am to 5 pm and Friday 9 am to 2 pm.



**ADDRESS**  
GESOBAU AG  
Stiftsweg 1  
13187 Berlin

## MY NOTES



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