

Checklist before leaving home

- **Apply at least 3 months in advance for a visa** valid for the time period of your planned stay in Germany. (Note: An employment contract will not be given on a short-term tourist visa.) Please check with the German diplomatic or consular authority in your home country to find out what documents are required to apply for a visa.
- Apply for accommodations as soon as possible.
- Apply for school and child care (if applicable).
- Arrange interim health insurance (e.g. travel insurance) for coverage in Germany until you obtain insurance here.
- Put together a portfolio of **required documents**:
 - Valid passport (the expiration date has to exceed the intended date of return by at least three months)
 - Letter of invitation from the university or host institution, including the duration of stay
 - Proof of financial resources
 - International driver's license (if applicable)
 - International vaccination card
 - A few biometric photographs (for more information, see <https://www.epassportphoto.com/blog/2008/07/german-passport-photo-requirements/>)

You will need to present different documents and personal records on several occasions to several institutions. Which documents or records are needed depends on the circumstances.

In general, you will need to bring originals of the following documents, plus, if applicable, translated and officially authenticated copies:

- Bachelor's, Master's, PhD or other university certificates
- Other relevant credentials (if applicable)
- Birth certificate
- Marriage certificate (if applicable)

In general, make sure of the following:

Bring originals and copies of all documents. German authorities want to see originals and keep a copy for their records.

All documents not issued in English or German have to be translated. In addition, the correctness of the translation has to be confirmed (authenticated) by a German diplomatic or consular authority in your home country or, if you are already in Germany, by a certified translator in Germany.

For more information on authenticating documents for Germany, see http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Laenderinformationen/01-Laender/Konsularisches/Beurkundungen_node.html.

Please be aware that you have to bring **most of the above documents** (if necessary, translated and authenticated) **for family members who are accompanying you** as well. Check with the German diplomatic or consular authority in your home country for details.