

## 1. Types of Child Care

Berlin offers an array of private and public child care options.

German Terms	English Equivalent
<b>Private</b>	
Tagespflege / Tagesmutter (some are also public)	Childminder
Kinderbetreuung im Privathaushalt	Home child care / Nanny
Au-pair	Au-pair
Kinderhotel / Kinderpension	Kids Hotel / Kids Pension
<b>Public</b>	
Kita (short for 'Kindertagesstätte' or 'Kindertageseinrichtung')	Pre-school / Kindergarten
Elterninitiative / Kinderladen	Parent Initiative
Tagespflege / Tagesmutter (some are also private)	Childminder
<b>Child Care in Special Situations</b>	
Notbetreuung im Privathaushalt	Emergency home child care
Babysitter	Babysitter

Generally, public is cheaper, but private may be more flexible. The chart on the following pages provides a basic description and comparison of the above alternatives.

## Summary of Child Care Options in Berlin

(Partially based on source: pme Familienservice GmbH)

Private child care				Public child care		Child care in special situations	
Tagespflege / Tagesmutter Childminder	Kinderbetreuung im Privathaushalt Home child care / Nanny	Au-pair	Kinderhotel / Kinderpension Kids Hotel / Pension	Kita Pre-school / Kindergarten	Elterninitiative / Kinderladen Parent Initiative	Notbetreuung im Privathaushalt Emergency home child care	Babysitter
Description of child care							
Regular, long-term childcare in the home of the childminder, often with her own children. Small groups of 3-8 children.	Regular, long-term, individual child care at child's own home	Individual child care in family home up to 30 hours per week, up to 12 months; lives with family.	Regular or occasional child care in group at a Kita-like facility	Regular group child care in public facility; various concepts (incl. e.g. Montessori); mixed or non-mixed age groups.	Regular group child care in facility organized by the Parent Initiative; various concepts, similar to Kitas. Usually employs professional child care givers. Funded by state on same basis as Kitas.	Individual child care at child's home in emergency situations (e.g. illness).	Individual child care at child's home. Typically evenings, outside parents' work hours.
Age group							
0-3 years.	Flexible.	Flexible.	2 months – primary school begin.	2 months – primary school begin (different Kitas have different minimum ages).	2 months – primary school begin (different Parent Initiatives have different minimum ages).	0-14 years, depending on child care service.	Flexible.

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<b>Tagespflege / Tagesmutter</b> Childminder	<b>Kinderbetreuung im Privathaushalt</b> Home child care / Nanny	<b>Au-pair</b>	<b>Kinderhotel / Kinderpension</b> Kids Hotel / Pension	<b>Kita</b> Pre-school / Kindergarten	<b>Elterninitiative / Kinderladen</b> Parent Initiative	<b>Notbetreuung im Privathaushalt</b> Emergency home child care	<b>Babysitter</b>
<b>Parent involvement</b>							
Parent accompanies child to Tagesmutter for up to four weeks until child feels comfortable (Eingewöhnung). Travel time. Regular discussions about the child.	Parents, child and care-giver need time to get comfortable. Regular discussions about the child.	Integrating the au pair into the family.	Parent accompanies child to facility for up to four weeks until child feels comfortable (Eingewöhnung). Travel time. Regular discussions about the child.	Parent accompanies child to Kita for up to four weeks until child feels comfortable (Eingewöhnung). Travel time. Some involvement of parents – type and degree depending on Kita concept.	Eingewöhnung (as for Kitas). Travel time. Usually much parental involvement, e.g. in organization, cleaning, repairs, cooking, sometimes in child care or substitution when regular child care is cancelled	Little more involvement than making arrangements with the service. Sometimes possible to meet care-giver in advance, sometimes not.	Parents, child and care-giver need time to get acquainted. Sometimes necessary to pick up and drop off babysitter.
<b>Costs</b>							
Approx. 4-5 € per hour per child or 650 €/ month for full days*.	Approx. 7-11 € per hour + costs associated with being an employer (Arbeitgeberkosten)*.	Approx. 350 € per month + (own) room + board.	Approx. 5-6 € per hour. Blocks of hours may be purchased at cheaper rates.	Set by the State of Berlin, based on parents' combined income. See link below for calculation.	Set by the State of Berlin, based on parents' combined income. See link below for calculation.	Approx. 10-13 € per hour*.	Approx. 6-12 € per hour*.
<b>Times available</b>							
4-5 days per week, mornings or full days (opening hours usually 7:30 am-4:00 pm, but may vary – discuss with Tagesmutter).	4-5 days per week mornings or full days (negotiate exact times with care giver).	Maximum limit of 30 hours per week; exact hours negotiable.	As needed.	5 days per week, mornings or full days. Family's need for child care is determined by State (see attached application for Kita voucher).	5 days per week, mornings or full days. Family's need for child care is determined by State (see attached application for Kita voucher).	As needed.	From time to time, usually evenings, exact hours negotiable.

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<b>Tagespflege / Tagesmutter</b> Childminder	<b>Kinderbetreuung im Privathaushalt</b> Home child care / Nanny	<b>Au-pair</b>	<b>Kinderhotel / Kinderpension</b> Kids Hotel / Pension	<b>Kita</b> Pre-school / Kindergarten	<b>Elterninitiative / Kinderladen</b> Parent Initiative	<b>Notbetreuung im Privathaushalt</b> Emergency home child care	<b>Babysitter</b>
<b>Flexibility</b>							
Somewhat flexible. Child care outside normal hours not usual but negotiable.	Very flexible; however, difficult to organize just a few hours per week. Evening work not usual.	Flexible, but limited by 30 hours per week and possible German course.	Very flexible. No min. or max. number of hours. Single days possible.	Fixed opening hours; some Kitas open until later in evening. Mornings or full-day childcare possible. Booking for single days not possible. Little flexibility for exceptional situations	Generally same as for Kitas. Parent Initiatives tend to have shorter opening hours than Kitas.	Very flexible. Exceptional situations are a prerequisite for this type of child care, so not a problem.	Very flexible.
<b>Possible cancellations</b>							
Tagesmutter closes for holiday (4-6 weeks per year - parents notified in advance of closing time) or due to illness. May close altogether at any time (4 weeks' notice is usual).	Same as Tagesmutter.	Not available when on holiday or ill. May decide not to continue as au pair (4 weeks' notice necessary).	Very rare – no holiday closing times.	Holiday closing times (approx. 3-4 weeks per year) are posted in advance. Cancellations due to illness are rare because other staff members can substitute. Cancellation of the entire contract is very rare.	Similar to Kitas.	Since this type of child care is arranged on short notice, cancellations due to holiday or illness are rare.	Not available when on holiday and or ill.
<b>Child care when child is ill</b>							
Possible, if illness is mild - discussed case by case.	Possible, discussed case by case.	Possible, discussed case by case.	Possible, if illness is mild; otherwise not.	Possible, if illness is mild; otherwise not.	Similar to Kitas.	Illness is often a reason for this type of child care, so not a problem.	Possible, discussed case by case.

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Tagespflege / Tagesmutter Childminder	Kinderbetreuung im Privathaushalt Home child care / Nanny	Au-pair	Kinderhotel / Kinderpension Kids Hotel / Pension	Kita Pre-school / Kindergarten	Elterninitiative / Kinderladen Parent Initiative	Notbetreuung im Privathaushalt Emergency home child care	Babysitter
<b>How to organize it / who to contact</b>							
<p><b>Private:</b> Child care agencies (see suggestions below).</p> <p><b>Public:</b> Local public office for children and family services (Jugendamt) – see contact info below.</p>	Child care agencies (see suggestions below).	Child care agencies (see suggestions below).	See suggestions below.	Local public office for children and family services (Jugendamt) – see contact info below.	Check Internet or notices in local stores or organizations for initiatives in your neighborhood – or start one yourself! For requirements, see e.g. <a href="http://www.eltern-info.de/">http://www.eltern-info.de/</a> . Contact Jugendamt for funding options. See contact info below.	See suggestions below.	Child care agencies or notices in local stores or organizations.
<b>Advantages</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Family environment</li> <li>- Somewhat flexible</li> <li>- Playmates for your child</li> <li>- Outside home environment</li> <li>- Inexpensive alternative when Kita place is not available</li> <li>- Small group ideal for children with special needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual child care</li> <li>- Flexible</li> <li>- Home environment</li> <li>- No travel time</li> <li>- Possible household help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual child care</li> <li>- Flexible</li> <li>- Home environment</li> <li>- No travel time</li> <li>- Possible household help</li> <li>- Cultural enrichment</li> <li>- Comparatively inexpensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional child care and facilities (sometimes incl. outdoor premises)</li> <li>- Contact with other children</li> <li>- Very flexible</li> <li>- Alternative when a Kita place not available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional child care and facilities (sometimes incl. outdoor premises)</li> <li>- Contact with other children</li> <li>- Some bilingual options available</li> <li>- Least expensive form of child care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional child care and facilities (sometimes incl. outdoor premises)</li> <li>- Contact with other children</li> <li>- Some bilingual options available</li> <li>- Usually inexpensive (comparable to Kita)</li> <li>- Strong parental influence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child care available in emergency situations</li> <li>- Some services free to Charité and FU employees (see suggestions below)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individual care</li> <li>- Flexible</li> <li>- No travel time with children</li> </ul>

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<b>To consider</b>							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varying degrees of qualification (NB: public Tagesmütter are certified by the State)</li> <li>- Travel time for drop-off and pick-up – advisable to find something close to home or work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Often no other children as playmates</li> <li>- Non-family member in the household</li> <li>- Parents are considered official employers – high input and cost; potential conflicts of interest</li> <li>- Comparatively expensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varying degrees of qualification</li> <li>- Often no other children as playmates</li> <li>- Possibly long adjustment phase</li> <li>- Cultural differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Somewhat expensive compared to public option</li> <li>- Travel time for drop-off and pick-up</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Travel time for drop-off and pick-up – advisable to find something close to home or work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Much parental involvement</li> <li>- Travel time for drop-off and pick-up – advisable to find something close to home or work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comparatively expensive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sometimes necessary to pick up and drop off babysitter</li> </ul>

\* Cost estimates partially based on information provided by pme Familien Service GmbH, see [http://www.familienservice.de/filebase/ddl-f5378bf7c9634b34a5cce96c675e1b3d/Vergleich\\_KB.pdf](http://www.familienservice.de/filebase/ddl-f5378bf7c9634b34a5cce96c675e1b3d/Vergleich_KB.pdf). Actual costs may vary.

A **German-language summary** of child care in Berlin can be found at:

<http://www.berlin.de/imperia/md/content/senatsverwaltungen/senwaf/frauen/kinderbetreuung.pdf>