

## A German Visa Makes Visiting Germany Sound

Obtaining a German visa is important under certain circumstances and you'll want to ensure you know the rules. There's no sense in breaking any laws. If you do, your visit could be tragic.

It depends on the purpose of your stay within Germany that determines whether or not you need a visa. You can get student visas, business visas, tourist visas, and others.

Another factor in the necessity to obtain a visa is your citizenship. If you are from another EU country, coming for a visit or work, you won't need one. If you are a US citizen, for example, you will. Most of the African and Asian countries do have the need to get a visa even for a short visit, however.

But the length of time of your stay is one of the most vital factors. If you are coming to Germany for a stay of less than 90 days, you won't need a German visa but must, of course, have a valid passport.

When you want to come to work in Germany and are not an EU citizen, you will need a visa in order to apply for a job. There are a number of rules regarding work permits and applications that you should be aware of so you abide by all the laws and don't have trouble and waste time.

Right now, you basically have a "one-stop shop" for your application process needs. When you go to the Aliens Office (German: *Ausländeramt*) this organization simultaneously regulates the whole procedure. You won't be able to get your residence permit without first having a decision made on your work permit.

When you are in your home country and want to arrive in Germany to begin looking for work, the best thing to do is to go to the German consulate in your home country and get your German visa there. This makes it not only less complex and usually faster, it is strongly encouraged as you will likely not receive a visa when applying for it in Germany!

You'll likely need to get a local person who will cover the costs in case you are expelled from Germany for some reason. This is only a formality. Certainly you won't get yourself expelled! Or I would certainly hope not!

So whether a tourist or coming to Germany for business, without a visa you can stay up to three months. But these periods are only granted once in a six-month period. This is also called the 90-day/twice-a-year rule.

You can't extend your visa unless there is a circumstance which would make it completely necessary. If you get into a situation where you are unable to travel, get hospitalized or are summoned for court, you might get an extension. But remember, Germany is very strict on these

exceptions.

Documentation you'll need is an important thing to know when applying for your German visa. Of course, there's the passport. But you also must have a passport valid for three months beyond the end of the period you are applying for. There must also be a blank page for the visa.

You'll also need application forms (one each for the number of travelers), 2 passport photos, proof of financial support and medical insurance, and proof of purpose of visit. Call the German consulate in your home country to find what other papers may be required.

Whatever your reason for going to Germany for a length of time, it's always a good idea to do it right the first time. It's not fun to use up time and energy trying to correct errors in paperwork. That's time you could spend enjoying German hospitality. ;-)

A German visa is a necessity in some circumstances. Don't be intimidated by the legalities. Get your visa and be off to one of the most beautiful countries in the world.