

# Helpful Hints for Moving to Germany



Compliments of  
Hohenfels  
Army Community Service

**A Permanent Change of Station (PCS) move can be one of the most exciting and rewarding parts of an army career, new places, new faces, and new challenges. However, for the Soldier of the Army Family who is not prepared, a PCS move can be a very unhappy time.**

**Most of this unhappiness is caused by money problems associated with the PCS move. This booklet was prepared by the Army Community Service Relocation Readiness Program, to help Soldiers and their Families prepare for a PCS move. Not everything in this pamphlet will apply to you, and you will probably think of some things that are not in the pamphlet; however, it does give you a starting point for planning. GOOD LUCK!!!**



**For additional information contact Army Community Service.**

**Telephone Numbers:  
DSN 314-466-4860/2084  
CIV 09472-83-4860/2084**

# PCS'ing CHECKLIST

## 45-30 DAYS BEFORE

- Complete and forward DA Form 5434 (Request for Sponsorship)
- Visit the Transportation Movement Office (TMO) to schedule household goods pick up date.
- Visit the ACS Relocation Office/use the HOMEFRONT Program
- Contact Real Estate Agency if you are renting or buying a house at your next duty station.
- Complete and forward Change-of-Address Card to the post office.
- Gather medical and dental records.
- Prepare car for shipment/travel.
- Notify school, have transcripts forwarded.
- Arrange for pet shipment and immunization records.
- Eliminate everything you won't move.
- Prepare inventory of goods.
- Notify the Housing Office (for On Post Housing) and schedule a pre and final inspection date.
- Contact Quarters Cleaning Team.
- Notify landlord (for Off Post Housing). Provide termination notice, include PCS Orders.
- Make reservations at Transient Billets
- Take your car to the shipping facility

### **30-15 DAYS BEFORE**

- Start packing a little bit at a time. Don't wear yourself out.
- Have bank transfer accounts.
- Arrange to disconnect utilities.
- Make arrangement to have heavy appliances serviced for the move.
- Return things that are borrowed, collect those that are loaned.
- Have a garage sale to eliminate articles you don't want to move.
- Arrange to stop all deliveries, such as newspaper. Return library books.

### **7-2 DAYS BEFORE**

- Dispose of all flammable items.
- Pack suitcases
- If movers have not been asked to do so, take down curtains, rods, shelves. TV antenna.
- Withdraw the contents of your safe deposit.
- If traveling with pets, get pet tranquilizers for the trip. Make sure vaccinations and papers are in order.
- If traveling by car, have a car tune-up.
- Clean up your yard and mow the lawn.
- Empty and defrost refrigerator and freezer. Let them air for 24 hours and place charcoal, coffee, or baking soda in a sack to deodorize.

## **1 DAY BEFORE**

- Prepare lawn mower for shipment. Drain gasoline and oil.
- Finish packing personal items.
- Confirm with Transportation Office for pick-up time.

## **MOVING DAY**

- Strip beds, but leave fitted bottom sheets on mattresses.
- Accompany the van operator during inventory of things to be moved.
- Make a final check of every room before signing Bill of Lading.
- Sign and save a copy of Bill of Lading.
- Before leaving the house, make sure windows are down and lights are out.
- If you contracted a Cleaning Team, provide quarter's key.



**SMILE... You have done a superior job of getting organized.**

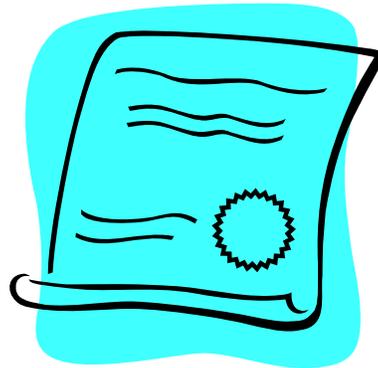
# THINGS TO DO WHILE STILL IN THE UNITED STATES

## 1. Things to purchase or arrange:

- a. Bring your Stateside Driver's License (try to renew it so it doesn't expire).
- b. Return address stickers (handy for change of address forms).
- c. Bring your current catalogs (Sears, Ward, JC Penney, etc), as many needs will have to be filled this way due to limited PX selection.

## 2. Things you should prepare to hand carry:

- a. All important papers (orders, passports, financial, insurance, etc.)
- b. Your Military Orders
- c. Social Security Numbers (necessary for members of the family who will be working or opening a bank account – even small children. Employment age is 14 years).
- d. Every member of the family should have a separate passport (even though you may be discouraged from doing so) so that all members will be protected if you choose to travel while in Germany.
- e. Birth certificates of all members so that they will be protected if you choose to travel while in Germany.
- f. Marriage license.
- g. Divorce papers (for each divorce).
- h. Citizenship papers, if applicable.
- i. Custody papers.
- j. Adoption papers.
- k. Powers of Attorney.
- l. Insurance policies.
- m. Personal will.
- n. Bank books (checking and savings).
- o. State and federal tax records.
- p. Car registration and title.
- q. Credit card records.
- r. Transportation and shipping documents.
- s. Storage documents.
- t. Voter registration information.
- u. Certified school transcripts – necessary if you're interested in applying for employment or continuing your education while in Germany.
- v. Any and all diplomas, letters of recommendation/references. Don't forget applicable addresses.
- w. Children's school records (actual or copy required for registration).
- x. Medical records, including shot records and dental records.
- y. Of course your Armed Forces ID Card (s).



### **3. Things to stock up on:**

- a. Children's clothing and shoes. Supply is sometimes depleted 2-4 months prior to the season. German clothing and shoes are high quality but expensive. Catalog orders take from several weeks to months to fill. German sales occur only twice a year.
- b. Adult shoes – supply is not dependable and is limited in popular fashions and sizes.
- c. Children's books – limited selections. If you know of any specific books that you will want for your children, you may wish to bring them with you.
- d. Large items (rugs, etc.) will not be shipped to Europe by catalog order. If you want one, buy it now and have "Uncle Sam" ship it.
- e. Any special stationary or paper supplies, party favors, etc.
- f. Prescription drugs or special medication – bring them with you, but not the prescription (prescriptions are not honored from one military medical facility to another). Do bring extra copies of eyeglasses and contact lenses prescriptions.
- g. Sewing notions (parts are available for Singer and Pfaff machines only).
- h. Craft supplies – available in very limited supply. Craft catalogs are very helpful.

### **4. Eye Care:**

Eye care (Optometry) for family members is available but there is a long waiting period for appointments. Service members and their families can purchase eyeglasses through the Optical Shop at the Nurnberg Hospital at a reduced rate.

# **THINGS TO HAVE ACCOMPLISHED BEFORE MOVERS ARRIVE**

1. If applicable remove TV antenna/cable.
2. Empty, defrost and thoroughly wash inside of refrigerator and/or freezer. These appliances need at least 2 days to dry out if mildew is to be kept to a minimum. After cleaning, leave door open. For shipping and/or storage place silica packets in each compartment this will help control mildew.
3. If applicable remove window air conditioners.
4. Assure that appliances, to include washers, dryers, and cooking stove are disconnected and cleaned. If plumbing, electrical or carpentry is needed in disconnecting, you must arrange for work to be completed on or before movers arrive.
5. Dispose of worn out and unneeded items before move.
6. Remove pictures, curtain rods, mirrors from walls. Inspect the kitchen for utensil and food racks or other holders secured to walls, cabinets, or doors. Remove these possessions.
7. Drain, dry, and disassemble waterbeds.
8. Motorcycles – Preparation: Drain gas, run until it quits, and drain oil (air gas tank out at least 2 days. Disconnect battery from spark plugs. Tape ends of wires. Secure battery. Put flap over battery and pin through the flap. Furnish and extra set of keys.
9. Make sure that model and serial number are recorded on inventory for items such as stereos, TV's, computers, VCR/DVD Players, weapons and others.
10. For your own protection, insure that your inventory is correct.
11. Ensure that you keep items you intend to take with you separate from what is being packed and picked up for shipment or storage.

## **Forms necessary for claims at destination:**

- Proof of ownership/value (receipts, appraisals, etc.), whenever possible.
- Government Bill of Lading.
- DD 619 & 619-1 – Accessorial Services.
- DD 1299 – Application for shipment.
- DD 1842, 1843, and 1844 (obtained from Claims Office).

# LIST OF IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR MOVE TO GERMANY

## 1. HOUSEHOLD GOODS (What to bring vs. what to store):

a. **Dishwashers:** They can pose problems due to high levels of calcium in the local water. Many people use good quality machines successfully, with water softeners and rinse agents. German dishwashers are best; they have a filter system and built-in water softeners. The PX sells dishwashers and they are easy to sell when you leave. Dishwashers are being installed in all government quarters. They are also becoming available through housing for private rental apartments and houses.

b. **Washer/Dryer:** Ignore any military literature that suggests you do otherwise: **STORE THEM!** Machines built to the German electrical current are available through Quartermaster issue. Your model may be fancier, but it will cost to have it converted and using it on a transformer will shorten its life span.

c. **Lamps:** Again, ignore any advice to the contrary: **BRING THEM!** Quartermaster lamps are scarce and not the most stylish. A simple adapter and a German light bulb (both available at the PX) are all that is needed.

d. **Curtains:** Opinion here is divided. Perhaps an explanation will help you decide for yourself. German curtains and drapes are hung from the ceiling, not from the wall. Therefore they are longer than average American curtains. American curtains can be easily adapted, by sewing a special hanging "tape" to the upper edge of the curtains. The only difference is that the floor length American drape (about 80 inches) is going to be approximately a foot off the floor since German curtains usually reach 92 inches. By the way, twin or double sheets made in curtains will be perfect length drapes supplied to all quarters, if you want them, by Furniture Warehouse. They hang on German style ceiling rods. Many people bring drapes, curtains, and curtain rods (or order from the States). The German's have beautiful sheers that can be purchased in all price categories.

e. **Rugs:** Bring all that you will need. The Quartermaster issue limits you to 2 room size rugs. Note that Sears and other catalogs will NOT ship their largest rugs overseas addresses and the supply and selection in the PX is extremely limited. You can buy beautiful area rugs here, but they are usually expensive.

f. **Beds:** Double beds are scarce. If you would like, bring your own (note that your king size mattress will fit perfectly across 2 twin size Quartermaster beds). Cribs are not available through Quartermaster but may be purchased from the PX of Thrift Shop.

g. **Sewing Machine:** **BRING IT!** If it is not dual voltage, it will have run by a transformer which is available through Furniture Warehouse.

h. **Small Appliances:** Some people store 110-Volt appliances and buy 220-Volt appliances here. Others use 110-Volt appliances with the available transformers. It would not be advisable to bring high-value appliances (kitchen center, etc.) as even operation on a transformer can reduce the life of the appliance. A small 1600-watt transformer can be purchased here or in the States that can be used with any appliances that work with a heating element (i.e. curling iron, hair dryer, crock pot, iron, coffee pot, etc.)

i. **DO NOT BRING:** 60 cycle items such as clock radios, clocks, etc. Also check to make sure your stereo is convertible before bringing it.

j. **Storage-Space Items:** Bring any metal shelves, book cases, wall units, chests, hanging racks that you may want. Remember there are no built-in closets in private rental housing.

k. **Decorative Items:** Bring any items that make a home your home, such as pictures, knick knacks or something unique. Since all of us depend on Quartermaster furniture to a point, our furnishings are very similar. You may, therefore, bring small items which will give your home a distinct flavor, your own end tables, director chairs, etc. Think in terms of lightweight furniture.

l. **Entertainment Items:** Bring any special serving dishes you use often. Keeping in mind that we live in the heart of the crystal and porcelain factory areas and beautiful items can be purchased at very reasonable prices.

m. **Sporting Equipment:** Bring bikes, tennis racquets, golf clubs, skis, etc. Recreation facilities, both German and military, are available. The Outdoor Recreation Center does have some of these items available for rent.

n. **Clothes:** Hohenfels climate is ever changing. Temperature in the summer varies from 60-80 degrees and the nights are cool. We do have a lot of rain. Winter brings some snow and sometimes bitter cold temperatures, climate is very humid.

o. **Drug Items:** Special drug items, such as particular brands of contact lens cleaner, can be difficult to obtain. Make sure you have some method to order or obtain hard-to-get items from the States.

p. **Catalogs:** Bring your favorite stores' catalogs. Sears, JC Penney, and Wards catalog merchandise can be ordered from Germany. Also bring catalogs from special hobby or arts and crafts stores so you can order supplies for hobby. Credit cards are easiest to obtain before you leave the U.S. Check with your favorite store before coming over to be sure they will ship items to an APO address.

q. **House Sale:** If you sold a house, bring all the papers you will need for income tax purposes. Be sure to include the IRS pamphlet on selling or buying a house, moving expenses (read these before you leave), original purchase agreement, sales agreement, and receipts for any improvements made to the house.

r. **Tax Records:** Family records, IRS records, and other business and insurance records are recommended. Remember, the IRS does not care where you are living.

s. **Shoes:** With those with hard-to-fit feet (very narrow or long), bring several pairs of shoes and an address for ordering more from the States.

t. **Furniture:** Quartermaster furniture includes upholstered chairs, but not high-back easy chairs. You may want to bring your favorite. Dining room and bedroom furniture are dark wood and a very good quality. You may wish to bring your own living room furniture, so that your house does not look like everyone else.

u. **Television:** Bring your television set or buy one here. US TV sets can be used with a transformer or converted to use 220-volt current. TV sets are available in the PX which will receive both Armed Forces TV (AFN TV) and German channels.

## 2. HOLD BAGGAGE:

This is the shipment of air-freight to Germany so it is available within 35-45 days of shipment. Check with your transportation office for the proper weight allowances. Make sure you are under the weight limit so that it will be air-freighted. There is an ACS Lending Closet here with items to lend such as irons, dishes, pots, pans, etc. until your own things arrive. Below are some things to include in Hold baggage:

- Broom, dust pan, mop, and/or vacuum.
- Dish towels, bathroom linens, and bed linens such as sheets, blankets and pillows.
- Books and hobby items for yourself.
- Toys, books, etc. that your children would especially like.
- Some of the next season's clothes since your household goods may be delayed in arriving and the season may change unexpectedly.
- Uniforms, boots, and other necessary military items.
- One or two party or evening dresses and dress blues/greens.
- Baby furniture – portable crib or playpen, walker, etc.

Although the following items are available from ACS, some people choose to bring their own:

- Dishes, flatware, glasses, pots, and pans etc. Preferably non-breakable.
- Small appliances such as coffee pot, toaster, iron, etc.

The thrift shop is another source of temporarily needed items.

The following are items that you should take care NOT TO SEND VIA HOLD BAGGAGE (since breakage is much greater in this shipment than in household goods):

- Nice chine, crystal, etc.
- High value items such as stereo, TV, expensive sewing machines, etc.
- Antiques or any other items which you value and which would be difficult to replace.
- Any breakable items.

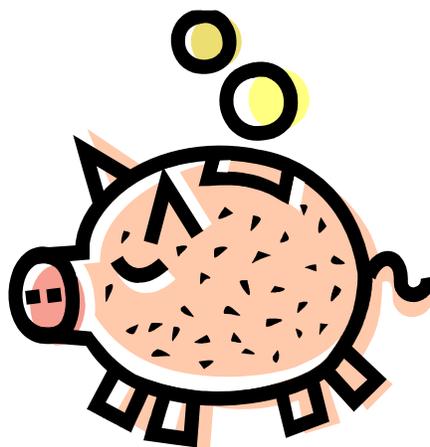
One final suggestion concerning shipments: Insist that your various pickups be on separate days so that household goods shipment, storage, and hold baggage do not get confused. Moving companies and sometimes even transportation offices may pressure you to do otherwise. INSIST that these be done on separate days.



# BUDGETING FOR YOUR MOVE

The best way to prepare for your move is to BUDGET for it. Make sure to write down all EXPECTED COSTS. Problems usually come up when we have UNEXPECTED COSTS. Brainstorm to come up with as many PCS moving costs that you can. Below is a list of the most common moving expenses which are often overlooked.

- Overweight Allowance – Remember to separate your professional items, their weight will not be counted against your actual weight allowance.
- Car Shipping – If you bought a car overseas, plan to ship it back to the States, and do not have orders to do so, you need to budget for the shipping expense. Also keep in mind, depending on which state you register your vehicle in, you will need to pay state or import taxes, and for the conversion costs if your car does not have U.S. Specs.
- Pet Shipping – To include airfare, shots, boarding while in temporary quarters or in quarantine depending on location and type of animal.
- Postage – For items you plan to mail ahead.
- Airplane Tickets – Initial costs only. It must be stated in your orders that you are authorized to purchase your own tickets and you will only be reimbursed up to the MAC rate or your initial costs, whichever is less. Remember, you must use a U.S. carrier.
- Temporary Lodging – Hotels, motels, temporary billeting, etc.
- Temporary Storage
- New/Rental Car
- Appliances
- Food – Eating out can be expensive.
- Initial Rent, Real Estate Fees, Security Deposits.
- Utility Hookup Fees/Deposits – Some states will waive these fees for military personnel. Check with your local ACS at your new duty station to see if it offers a Utility Deposit Waiver Program.
- Setting Up House Items – Rugs, curtains, paint, wallpaper, etc.
- Furniture Purchase/Rental – Remember, there are NO government furnishings in the States.
- Items That Need to Be Replaced – i.e. Spices, Plants, Cleaning Supplies, etc.
- Debts Incurred in USAREUR – DPP, HLP, Advanced Pay, Advanced OHA, etc. must be paid off prior to PCS. You may ask for an exception to policy to carry advances payment over to the States. DDP may allow you to transfer your account to the States if you fill out an early PCS agreement with AAFES.
- Moving Out Costs – Carpet cleaning, paint, wallpaper, replacement of broken items, etc.



# AIRPORT ARRIVAL INFORMATION



You have packed your baggage, you have gotten your passports, the plane just landed. You are finally in Germany! What happens next?

Depending on the area of assignment, you may land at the MAC terminal at Rhein/Main, Frankfurt, or the civilian terminal at Frankfurt or Nurnberg. Whether you arrive at the MAC terminal, or the civilian terminals, you will pick your luggage and pass through customs. The major difference here will be the distance. If you arrive at the MAC terminal, everything will be close at hand. At the civilian terminals you will have a longer walk, but there are easy to follow signs, so do not worry.

Every member of the family should have a separate passport so that all members will be protected if they have to travel alone.

## PERSONAL PAY CONSIDERATION

Temporary Lodging Allowance (TLA) may be authorized to partially reimburse soldiers for the “more than normal” expenses incurred after arrival at their permanent duty station while staying in hotels or hotel like accommodations and for expenses as a result of use of temporary lodging without adequate facilities for meal preparations and consumption. TLA is not authorized while staying with a friend or relatives in a private home except for meals as may be charged by the host. You will be briefed soon after arrival on procedures to apply for TLA. Some conditions that must be met that you need to know about now are:

- You must occupy temporary lodging.
- Receipt is required for lodging. Receipts are not required for meals, etc. as this is paid on a flat percentage area.
- Actual expense records are the primary basis for determining the amount you are paid as TLA. Without an accurate record of expenses, your entitlement to TLA may be jeopardized. Be sure to keep your receipts and a list of expenses. The maximum time period for payment of TLA is 60 days paid on a 10 day increment.

# MOVING WITH CHILDREN



In a lifetime the average American moves 12 times. At least three of these moves take place during childhood. Every year one family in five moves, and nine million school-age children must adapt to a new home and new environment.

For many families, a move offers the hope of a fresh start. But it also presents new challenges and problems. There is a new home to settle, a neighborhood to become acquainted with, friends to meet, and a new town or city to learn about. For parents, a move may also be connected with a new job or pressure to find one; for children it usually means attending a new school. But recent research on how people deal with change shows that for most families a move is only a brief disruption in their lives.

When a major change is coming, all of us would like some warning and a chance to get ready for the future. Therefore, a good first step is to discuss the reasons for the move with the children. Parents should use care in relaying this potentially upsetting information to their children since moves involve loss, allowing children to have time to prepare themselves emotionally is important.

Whenever you decide to spring the news, be ready for a less than ecstatic reaction. Children dislike change. Toddlers will mourn the loss of their room and of the house they have always lived in. School children will mourn the loss of their friends and the loss of their school. And, teenagers, along with mourning all of the above, are likely to feel rage at their parents for exerting this much control over their lives.

Telling children that everything will work out fine in the end, however, it is not the best approach. Rather, encourage children to express their worries and concerns. Be reassuring, it helps to make deliberate plans to set aside time, putting moving tasks on hold, to give your children your undivided attention.

Resist the temptation to build up excitement too soon in advance of the actual moving day. Matter-of-fact comments about the plans a week or two beforehand should be sufficient.

Don't do away with the old. Allow your child to participate in what to take along and what to discard and in any other aspect of the actual move that you can. Be sure to keep a few favorite objects on hand during the actual move from the old to the new place. Introduce change in stages. Try to let the furniture and its arrangements stay the same if you can, then gradually introduce the changes.

If you want your children to get to know their neighborhood, feel comfortable in school, and make new friends, you have to help them take the initiative. According to a study of students in 552 middle schools, published in the journal American Association for Counseling and Development, it takes a new student an average of 23 days to make friends. This does not mean this will be your children's fate. Encourage them to sign up for after school activities. Help strengthen your children's social skills.

Allow for some regression. Given the kind of disruption a move is bound to cause. Don't be surprised or alarmed to see some regression in your children's behavior during the move until they become accustomed to the new pace and people. Accept these temporary setbacks for two or three weeks until you are sure they are familiar with the new surroundings and routines and sequences of daily events can be maintained in the new place.

If your efforts to help your child adjust do not seem to pay off over time, or if his/her loneliness continues, you may want to look for additional support. Sometimes school counselors and teachers can be extremely helpful. Most children do not require professional help to resolve their feelings; however, should you feel that your child does need professional help, contact your local Army Community Service for resources within your community.



# PETS IN GERMANY

## IMPORTANT FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Whether to bring or leave the family pet is another difficult decision to make. Importing your animals into Germany requires careful planning and good documentation to avoid inconvenience. A few facts should be considered before making the decision.

**Housing Problems:** There are no restrictions on having pets in military housing (should you decide to eventually move into such housing); however, note that most military housing areas have three to four assigned “walking” areas. Due to the high incidence of rabies in Europe the Germans have a very strict leash law. Many pets, particularly large dogs, needing lots of exercise would find this a very uncomfortable life style. Although there are not restrictions about having pets in military housing, you need to be aware that many landlords will not accept pets, especially large ones. If you plan to bring pets, you can expect difficulty in finding economy quarters and you may have to pay more for them.

*Inform your sponsor if you are traveling with a pet... BE SPECIFIC!*



### SHIPPING YOUR PET

### IMPORTANT REQUIREMENTS

The following information applies to Germany only:

1. Rabies vaccinations must be given at least 30 days and not more than twelve months prior to entry or a booster given not more than twelve months prior to entry and not more than twelve months after previous rabies vaccination.
2. Health certificate or an equivalent certificate in the German language and dated no later than ten days prior to arrival in Europe. You can attain this document at many Military Vet Clinics.
3. If your pet doesn't have the required documents the pet may not be allowed to leave the United States. If allowed to leave the United States, your pet will be required to complete a quarantine of up to two months; this will be at the Sponsor's cost in a German kennel.

## SHIPMENT BY AIR

Pets need proper care to go by air. If you are shipping a dog or other pet by air, you must comply with these new rules. Here are the ones affecting your personal pet:

**AGE:** Dogs and cats must be at least eight weeks old and must have been weaned for at least five days.

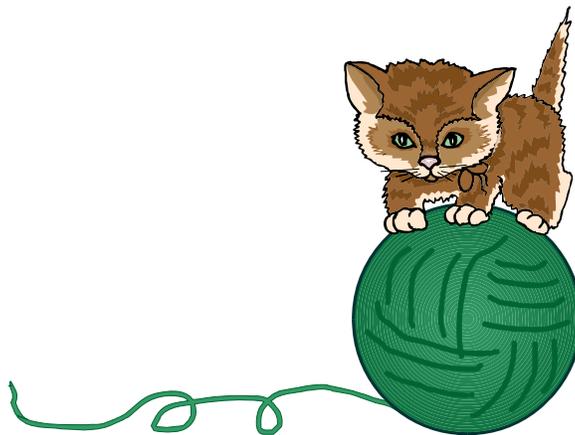
**CAGE:** You are required to supply a separate pet carrier for each pet. Cages or other shipping containers must meet stringent standards for size, ventilation, strength, sanitation, and handling. They must be:

- Large enough for the animal to standup, turn around, and lie down with normal posture and body movements.
- Strong enough to withstand shipping, free of interior protrusions that could cause injury, and with adequate access to the animal.
- Constructed with a solid, leak proof bottom, and provided with litter or absorbent material unless a wire or other non solid floor separates the animal from the bottom.
- Ventilated adequately on at least two opposite sides so that the air flows through both the upper and lower parts of the walls. There must be projecting rims or knobs on the outside to keep ventilation from being blocked by adjacent cargo.
- Fitted with handles or grips for proper handling and marked "LIVE ANIMALS" with arrows indication the upright positions.

**FOOD AND WATER FOR LONG TRIPS:** If puppies of kittens less than 16 weeks of age will be in transit more than 12 hours, you must provide food and water along with written feeding instructions. Older animals must have food at least every 24 hours and water at least every 12 hours.

**TIPS:** If you take a civilian flight, which makes a stop in England, the pet may be removed from the plane for six month quarantine. Check when you make reservations. You can expect a minimum of 15 hours travel time. Hand carry a portion of food for the pet with a food dish and water dish.

**FOR PETS TO FLY MAC:** You **MUST** reserve a space for them with scheduling you and your family for a flight. If no space is available, you must ship your pet through a civilian agency or fly on a civilian flight with your pet.



# YOUR CAR IN GERMANY

Before you can register your car in Germany, you must have proof of insurance coverage. The only proof the Registration Office will accept is the “*Versicherungsbestätigung*”, usually known as the “double white card.” This is issued by the insurance company, and is needed before registering your car. Car insurance is expensive in Germany, but you can get the best deal if you shop carefully and use some common sense. First you have to understand how the system works.

- You must have liability insurance, which covers the “other guy” when you have an accident. It does not cover your car, although the other guy’s liability will cover your car if the accident is his fault.
- Collision insurance is the insurance that covers your car if you happen to run into a tree or drive into a lake. You do not have to have collision insurance if there is no lien on the car, but you may want it if you drive an expensive or newer car. If you drive a “hooptie” you may want to pass on it.
- Comprehensive insurance is the type of insurance that covers theft and vandalism of your car, in addition to what is covered by liability and collision. It also covers a variety of unavoidable accidents, such as a rock that cracks your windshield.
- Insurance comes with a deductible, or the portion of damage you must pay yourself before the insurance company pays the rest. Higher deductibles mean lower premiums, lower deductibles mean higher premiums. Deductibles start at DM 500.



Once you figure out what type of insurance you need, you will discover that Germany offers two different systems of insurance: the U.S. system (usually called the NATO Tariff) and the German system (German Tariff). The two systems base their rates on totally different factors. The NATO tariff is based on the driver’s age and marital status. The German tariff is based mainly on the car’s horsepower and the driver’s accident record.

Which insurance – NATO or German – should you buy? It is hard to say. It depends on how old you are, how large your car is, how good your driving record is, and whether or not you are married. Speak to a reliable agent and compare process before you buy. In the meantime, consider the advantages and disadvantages of each system. Keep in mind that insurance is considerably more than in the U.S. Also a lot of German insurance companies require that the car has to run under “German plates.”

The U.S. forces do not control the U.S. NATO Tariff or any of the other insurance companies. Rates for Liability coverage are set by the German insurance commission based on the statistics on claims cost of accidents charged to U.S. Forces personnel. The companies set own collision and comprehensive rates.

People who want to buy German Tariff coverage and get credit for claim-free driving in the U.S. must have a letter from the home or the regional office of their stateside insurance company. It has to include their policy number, dates of coverage, and claims record. The policy must be in the individual’s own name. The record of a person who was listed in the policy as an occasional driver only will not be accepted usually. If the letter is submitted later, the company may refund the difference.

More complete information may be obtained in USAREUR pamphlet 550-160. This pamphlet is distributed through the community POV Driver's Testing station in Hohenfels, and can be picked up at the Vehicle Registration Office in building 10. Further questions on vehicle insurance should be sent to:

USAREUR Registry of Motor Vehicles  
ATTN: Vehicle Insurance Specialist  
APO AE 09102  
DSN: 370-8647

Cars, new and old, must pass a very rigid and thorough inspection before they can be registered to operate. Cars brought from the states arrive in Bremerhaven and are usually sent to Grafenwoehr. There they must pass inspection before they will be allowed to leave the area. Malfunctioning parts, bad muffler, excessive rust and low tire tread are not tolerated. Your car must be picked up in Grafenwoehr. It will not be shipped all the way to Hohenfels.

When you arrive in Hohenfels, stop by the Transportation Office or Vehicle Registration Office. There you will obtain detailed information on picking up your car in Grafenwoehr, addresses of insurance agents, registration procedures, and testing for your driver's license. Keep in mind that you may not drive or register your POV until you obtain a SAREUR driver's license.

To serve the military motorist, AAFES Europe has facilities on most installations which include gas stations, garages and/or auto part stores. AAFES is also the outlet for gas coupons that entitle members of the U.S. Forces to rationed amount of tax-free gasoline. These coupons can be used at AAFES gas stations, or ESSO gas stations on the economy as well as ARAL and BP gas stations on the German Autobahn. Since December 1996 leaded gasoline is no longer sold in Germany.

Repairs to your car can be made either by AAFES garage, a local mechanic or at the auto craft shop on post. Parts for American made cars are sometimes slow to arrive in Hohenfels. So be prepared for delays in repair work. Parts for German made cars can be obtained through local part stores, or collected for a small fee at various "Junk Yards" in the area.



# MANAGING YOUR STRESS

Relocation can be a stressful time no matter how often you have moved in the past. Listed below are a few tips on how to help you handle stress compiled by Dr. Louis Kopolow, chief of patient rights and advocacy at the National Institute of Mental Health. Incorporating these simple suggestions into your life will enable you to enjoy both yourself and others.



- **TRY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.** When you're nervous, angry, or upset, release the pressure through exercise or physical activity. Running, walking, playing tennis or working in your garden are some activities you might try. Physical exercise will relieve that uptight feeling, relax and frowns turn into smiles. Remember, your body and mind work together.
- **SHARE YOUR STRESS.** It helps to talk to someone about your concerns and worries. Perhaps a friend, family member, teacher, or counselor can help you see your problem in a different light. If you feel your problem is serious, you might seek professional help from a psychologist, psychiatrist, or social worker. Discussing your anxieties with someone may avoid more serious problems later.
- **KNOW YOUR LIMITS.** Get enough rest and eat well. If you are irritable and tense from lack of sleep, or if you are not eating correctly, you will have less ability to deal with stressful situations. If stress repeatedly keeps you from sleeping, ask your doctors for help.
- **MAKE TIME FOR FUN.** Schedule time for both work and recreation. Play can be just as important to your well-being as it is for your work. You need a daily routine just to relax and have fun.
- **CHECK OFF YOUR TASKS.** Trying to take care of everything at once may seem overwhelming and as a result you may not accomplish anything. Instead, make a list of what tasks you have to do, then do one at a time checking them off as they are completed. Give priority to the most important ones and do those first. When you have completed the tasks, congratulate yourself for a job well done instead of focusing on what still needs to be done.
- **COOPERATE.** Must you always be right? Do other people upset you – particularly when they don't do things your way? Try cooperation instead of confrontation; it's better than fighting and always being "right." A little give and take on both sides will reduce stress and make you both feel more comfortable.
- **IT IS OK TO CRY.** A good cry can be a healthy way to bring relief to your anxieties, and it might even prevent a headache or other physical consequence. Deep breaths also will release tension.
- **CREATE A QUIET SCENE.** You can't always run away, but you can "dream the impossible dream." A quiet country scene painted mentally or on canvas can take you out of the turmoil of a stressful situation. Change the scene by reading a good book or playing soft music to create peace and tranquility.

Most individuals do not require professional help to resolve their feelings; however, should you feel that you need professional help, contact your local Army Community Service for stress management workshops within your community.

# SOME GERMAN CUSTOMS



## RESIDENTIAL LAWS:

In the residential areas, radios and musical instruments must be played so that the volume of sound does not disturb people living in close proximity. It is forbidden to play music, sing or to make any public disturbance. This includes, in particular, loud radios and record players, etc., after 2200 hour (10 PM).

When running or using the engine of a motor vehicle, all unnecessary noise must be avoided. This is particularly important between 200 (10 PM) and 0700 (7 AM) hours.

In general, between 2200 and 0700 hours, any activity is forbidden which may disturb sleeping persons. Certain towns and parishes may grant exemption in individual cases or in certain cases.

In congested apartment areas, beating and similar means of cleaning carpets, mats, upholstery bedding mattresses, etc., is forbidden on the street, in gardens, on window sills or balconies, terraces, roofs, or front doors on roadside. Beating and similar means of cleaning the articles enumerated above is permitted in courts and courtyards adjacent to living quarters, on balconies and window sills facing such courts and courtyards.

Washing WILL NOT be hung outdoors on Sundays. Watering of flowers on balconies and windows sills must be done in such a way that the dripping of water is avoided.

It is forbidden to clean or repair vehicles on public roads.

Under common law, the tenant of each apartment must do his share to keep the hallway and staircase outside his apartment clean. The tenant should also clean the window of his apartment, both inside and outside including the frame twice a month.



## THEATER, CONCERTS, MOVIES:

Wear either your uniform or dark suit to theater performances and concerts. Movies are informal, but you can only go in between performances. There will be different prices for various seating areas inside. Sometimes your ticket will designate merely the area, but if you are given two tickets, one will be for a designated seat.



## TITLES AND NAMES:

Germans don't use first names as readily as American. The best practice is to use a German's last name until there is mutual agreement to use first names. There is even more rigidity in the use of the two words of address – "Sie" and "Du". Children and pets are always addressed "Du", but with adults stick to the formal "Sie" until there is a mutual agreement to switch. If a German has a title, use it.



## FLOORS:

What Americans call the first floor, the Germans call "Erdge Schoos" or ground floor. The U.S. second floor is the German 1 Stock.



### **WALKING:**

Germans are great walkers. You will find many of families out walking particularly on Sunday and Holiday afternoons. If there are two sidewalks running parallel along the street, the one closest to the street is probably a bicycle path. Use the one for walking.



### **THE MAN WALKS ON THE LEFT:**

As a basic rule, a man walks on the left side of a woman in Germany, in the street and everywhere. The place on the right is always the place of honor so to speak. Thus, a young girl would walk on the left side of an older woman. When two men and one woman walk together, the woman should walk in the middle. If a man walks with two women, he would normally also stay in the middle so as to devote equal attention to both.

Why this rule? There are a couple of explanations: the first one is very romantic and says that the escort always wanted to be close to the side where the lady's heart was. The other gives a more practical reason; since the knight used to have his sword on the left side it was natural for the woman to go on the other side, where the sword would not disturb her.



### **INVITATIONS:**

If you are invited to a German home, dress for the occasion. If you do not wear your uniform, wear a tie and coat. For an evening invitation, it is best to wear a dark suit. If you are invited for a meal, it is customary to take small bouquets of flowers for the hostess. Usually an uneven number according to the size of the flower is given. Remove the paper wrapping before you hand the flower to your hostess. Do not take red roses; they are usually offered only by a lover to his sweetheart. If it is a large party with man guests, flowers may be sent before the party or the next day along with a short note.



### **CAFES:**

German cafes are not merely smaller restaurants. They are primarily places to go for something to drink, or a conversation with a friend, perhaps. The most popular beverages served in cafes are coffee and tea, and cafes normally have a good assortment of pastries to go with them. Go only when you have an hour to spend. The proprietor will not mind if you stay. Cafes are normally crowded at "coffee time", which is normally between 1500 and 1700 hours.

The so-called "Tanz-café" will have dances in the evening or afternoon. You may ask any woman present to dance. The customary expression is: "Darf ich bitten?" if she has a male escort, you say to him "Gestatten Sie?" (Do you mind?); when the dance is over, accompany the lady back to her table and thank her and her escort.



### **TOASTING:**

When Germans toast, they raise their glasses to each other, take a sip, and then raise their glasses again. Most toasts do not include clinking glasses. If a guest is being toasted, that person remains seated, and does not drink. Then the guest will offer a toast to his host/hostess. If wine or beverages are being served, and you don't care for any, a motion of your hand is a sufficient signal to fill your glass. You may also turn your glass upside down before wine is poured. Refusals are considered more thoughtful than leaving filled glasses untouched. If toasts are expected, however, a small amount of wine should be accepted.



### **PUBLIC RESTROOM:**

Public restrooms are normally called "toilets" and are usually marked with either a picture of a man or woman or say "Herren" for men and "Damen" for the ladies. There will be a small charge to use a public restroom in Germany, so be prepared with some change before you head that way (airport, train station, etc). Also, don't be surprised if at some places you are charged every step of the way such as:

1. Using the toilet
2. Paying for paper
3. Washing your hands (water)
4. Drying your hands (hot air, or paper)



### **TAXI LANGUAGE:**

Taxi rates vary from town to town. Within one area the rates may vary according to the time of day, the number of passengers and the amount of luggage transported. The number of passengers a driver may take is limited by law. You should make certain you have "DM" in small denominations. Taxi drivers may charge you for expending the time and gasoline traveling to a bank or currency exchange. If you are uncertain for the cost for a taxi ride, you should ask about the fare to your destination beforehand. If you disagree with the driver on the fare, ask for a receipt "Quittung" and report the matter to your commanding officer.

# DINING OUT IN GERMANY

Dining out in Germany can be a lovely experience but it can also be a costly experience unless one is careful. In the Southern Bavaria area there are German, Greek, Italian, Chinese, Czechoslovakian, and Mexican restaurants. What a tremendous choice!

A few tips may help make your dining experience more enjoyable.

1. Decide the type of food you want before you go.
2. Remember that 15% for salary is included with the bill. Small tips for service are good. A small tip will be appreciated by the waiter or waitress.
3. check outside for prices and menu. Many of the restaurants have these posted so that you do not have to go inside to find the cost of food offered.
4. Any drink in Germany from mineral water to hard liquor is expensive and will always add several dollars to your total bill.
5. most restaurants in Germany expect patrons to spend time enjoying their meal. This may bother some of us who want to eat and run. If at all possible plan to take time to enjoy.
6. Eating out is much more expensive than eating at home, so watch your budget when planning to eat out. Do it for special occasions and as a reward for some task completed or goal reached. Too much eating out can ruin a budget.
7. There are many menu items that are new to Americans over here in Germany. Many of these are very delicious. Dare to try something different.
8. Many restaurants have English menus available so you know what you are ordering. If no menu is available, most restaurants have someone who speaks English to assist you. Don't be bashful, ask them.
9. Remember the beer is stronger here in Germany so don't get caught drinking and driving. Many restaurants serve and after dinner drink at the close of the meal. So allow for this, or if you are driving share it with someone else.



**WE WISH YOU  
A PLEASANT STAY  
IN GERMANY!!!**



**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

**ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE  
RELOCATION READINESS PROGRAM  
DSN: 314-466-4860/2480  
CIV FROM GERMANY: 09472-83-4860/2084  
CIV FROM U.S.: 01149-9472-83-4860/2084**