

SO, YOU'RE HOSTING A STUDENT FROM GERMANY.

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Thank you for hosting with AYA!

We understand that this is not only a very exciting time for you, but you may also be feeling nervous. Fear not! **Here are some helpful hints to help make your year a successful one.** *(Please note: while this information is mostly typical of a culture, it does not apply to all students. Every personality is different, so keep that in mind!)*

Please be Aware...

World War II and politics can be sensitive topics. Your student may be very aware of these historical issues and likely prefers nuanced, informed conversations over jokes or stereotypes.

German students may not say “thank you” frequently or effusively, especially in everyday situations. Their appreciation is often shown through behavior.

1 Direct Communication & Honesty

Germans value clarity and honesty. Your student may speak directly and to the point, especially when expressing opinions or asking questions. This can come across as blunt — but it's usually not meant to be rude. It reflects a desire for efficient, sincere communication.

2 Independence

While close to their families, German teens are raised to be self-reliant. Many are used to taking public transportation alone, managing their own time, and handling responsibilities with minimal supervision. Encourage independence while offering guidance.

3 Personal Space

German teens often value personal independence and boundaries. They may prefer private time after school or a personal space to recharge. While open to bonding, they might not be emotionally expressive at first — this is cultural, not a sign of withdrawal.

4 Food Preferences

Students may be used to simpler, less processed meals and may initially find U.S. snacks and fast food unappetizing. In Germany, breakfast is hearty, lunch is the main meal and dinner is light.

5 Being on Time

Being on time is a serious cultural norm in Germany — for school, appointments, and even casual meetups. Your student may expect structured routines and clear expectations. If your household is more flexible with time, it helps to set expectations early.