



# The guide for a good neighbourhood



# The neighbourhood guide of



MEHR WOHNEN. MEHR GEISLINGEN.

“We do not learn how to get to know people when they come to us; we must go to them to find out how things are with them.”

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



## Good coexistence is the most important thing

House rules are usually not pleasant reading – but they serve a good purpose. On the one hand, they promote your safety and that of your neighbours. On the other hand, they contain rules that put living with your neighbours onto a solid foundation. But the house rules are no more than a basis. Because a functioning household community is not created by rules, but by people who are open, considerate and friendly with each other.

That is easy to say – and falls to all of us, but is sometimes difficult. Especially where people with different backgrounds live together in a confined space, it almost inevitably comes to a conflict of interests. In the film “We are the new”, the residents of a retirement home mostly like to celebrate continuously, while in contrast the students in the neighbouring apartment quietly study – in some houses it is vice versa.

That there are such contradictions is human and normal. It is important that you deal constructively with it.

A good example of how not to approach it is provided by the Austrian psychologist Paul Watzlawick in his book “The Pursuit of Unhappiness”. He describes, among other things, the emergence of a neighbourhood conflict.

*A man needs a hammer to drive a nail into the wall.  
He is likely to ask his neighbours about lending this to him.*

*But suddenly doubts come to him as to whether the neighbour would comply with his request: hadn't he recently greeted him rather reluctantly? The man imagines that the neighbour wouldn't lend the hammer to him out of sheer malice. One thought leads to another, and when he finally rings at the neighbour's door and he opens it, he only shouts at him: “Keep your hammer, you lout!”*

This story is a satire. However, it harbours a wise morality: Whoever recklessly assumes evil intentions in his fellow men, makes life difficult for himself and others.

Our “Guide for a good neighbourhood” should therefore encourage you above all to interact regularly with your house neighbours and to meet them on friendly terms. In addition, the most important points of the house rules are explained. The illustrations make the sense of the rules clear and hopefully cause you to smile.

# Starting aids

## Before moving in ...

Moving presumably means an amount of stress and hard physical work for you. However, your move is also no pleasure for your future neighbours: Eventually, it will cause substantial rumbling in the staircases. A small notice, in which you inform them when you are moving in and ask for their understanding for the fact that it will be a bit noisy in the entrance hall, will ensure that you gain their immediate sympathies.



## After moving in ...

Introduce yourself at some time ... particularly to your neighbour. Eventually you will spend a lot of time with them in a narrow space. Just like you initially shake hands with your colleagues at the start of a new job, you should also briefly introduce yourself personally to your neighbours in the house (in big houses, to the neighbours on your floor). This friendly gesture will immediately provide a good impression.



# Security

## Keep doors closed

All house access doors should basically be closed. In this way, it is avoided that burglars or other unjustified people can enter the house too easily.

However, the doors should not be bolted. Because in case of fire, or if rescuers have to get into the house, it can depend on every second. This also applies to all fire prevention doors in the buildings.

### Tip:

*It is precisely older people who unfortunately become more and more frequent victims of swindlers, who have got admission to their flats under false pretences and pinch objects of value there. If it strikes you that older neighbours respond to supposed visitors unsafely or anxiously, you should stand by them: just the presence of other people deters fraudsters.*

## Keep escape and rescue routes free

Free routes can save lives. Hence, the access roads to the houses, the corridors and staircases, as well as the underground passages, must be kept free as escape routes and for emergency operations by the fire brigade and rescue services.

That is: Please do not place any shoes and plants in the staircases. Also for this reason, bicycles, motorcycles etc. should not be set down in the general spaces in the house. Even well-intentioned entrance hall decoration can do damage in case of emergency.







## Security also on the balcony

If you hang flower pots from your balcony, please only hang them on the inner side for reasons of safety. Especially if people use the space underneath your balcony, the balcony plant pot should not be able to fall on anyone. If you're not sure, we'd be happy to advise you about the proper fixtures. And don't be too wasteful when watering your flowers: protect your downstairs neighbours from soily water on their balconies or terraces. You should also ensure that balcony parapets and the façade plaster is not discoloured by soily water.

# Sound and smoke

## Basically

Between 10pm in the evening and 7am in the morning is quiet time. During this time, no loud household appliances should be put into operation, like mixers or washing machines, and music and television should not be heard by your neighbours. These rules also apply on Sundays and holidays.

Between 1 pm and 3 pm in the middle of the day and also between 8pm and 10pm in the evening, you should not engage in especially loud activities like making music, pounding, hammering and the like.

## Children need free space

When children play, it sometimes gets wild. And we don't want to spoil the joy of playing for children – even in the quiet times. So child noise is basically not considered to be noise pollution. However, it applies here as with all things: thoughtfulness never hurts. So for the quiet times, parents should suggest to their children games which make little noise. Moreover, soft-soled slippers can dampen the noise of stamping.

## **If the washing machine rumbles**

Washing machines can cause small earthquakes – hence, they should basically not run during the quiet times. The volume is also sometimes due to the washing machine being in an uneven position – so can you perhaps reduce the noise level by moving it or attaching small felt pads on the bottom?

## **Making music**

The rule of thumb for making music in a flat is: no more than three hours daily – and exclusively outside the quiet times. If you play an especially loud instrument, such as a percussion instrument, you should significantly reduce the practice times – you should not have to bear it from your neighbour for more than one hour daily.

## **Parties and celebrations**

You and your neighbours basically always have a claim to the fact that the quiet times are respected. On the other hand, we do not want to forbid anybody from also once inviting a few more guests.

If you plan a celebration: Inform your neighbours with a notice, or better still with a personal conversation. This allows them to get used to the idea that it will be louder and to plan their evening accordingly. The best case is to combine the information with an invitation to call in themselves.

With it, you will increase the chance that your neighbours will accept it if it sometimes gets a little bit too loud.



## **What do you do about rule violations?**

If party noise or hammering is driving you to despair in the late evening when your neighbour moves in: Ring, and ask in a friendly way for a little bit more quiet. If the noise is still tolerable, there is also nothing against simply turning a blind eye sometimes.

If the noise pollution piles up, then you should address this openly. Here, you should consider: Nobody is making a noise to harass you. Accordingly, your request for more quiet should be put forward in a friendly and objective manner. Give concrete examples of disturbances of the peace and explain briefly why this bothers you (possibly that you must get up early in the morning and cannot fall asleep because of the loud music) and so you are asking for specific changes.

If personal talks have no effect and do not stop the noise pollution, then you should turn to us. Please inform us in writing who is responsible for the noise, how this comes about (music system etc.), at what time of day and how often. Please also name possible witnesses.







## Smoking

Smoking is permitted on balconies and terraces as well as indoors. If you do smoke indoors, please air the rooms regularly. The same applies to smoking as many things in life: be considerate. Please ensure that your cigarettes are completely extinguished in the ashtray, then disposed of properly. Please refrain from simply flicking cigarette ends from the balcony – especially in dry weather.

## Having a barbecue on the balconies and in the communal areas

For reasons of fire safety, no charcoal barbecues are permitted on balconies and terraces. Please use an electric grill instead. And please be considerate: announce any planned barbecues. Why not invite your neighbours over

In the communal garden, charcoal grills may also be used provided that you keep a sufficient distance from the house. Inform your neighbours if you plan to have a barbecue in the garden, so that they can close their windows.

### **Tip: Use aluminium trays**

*If you use aluminium trays to cook your meat, you can minimise the production of smoke.*

# Cleanliness and tidiness

## Division of labour

In most of our buildings, you as the tenants are responsible for cleaning all shared spaces, e. g. the stairwells, corridors etc. There is generally a set rota dictating which tenant must clean which areas. If you're not sure when it's your turn to do certain tasks, ask your neighbours or speak to our janitorial team – they'll know what to do.

## If you sometimes can't ...

Vacation, illness or other reasons can lead to the fact that you cannot perform your duties. In this case you should ask a neighbour to take over the job for you – you should offer to reciprocate.

## If not everybody takes part ...

If your neighbour should forget one time to perform his cleaning duties, point it out to him in a friendly manner. But if, in spite of your tips, he regularly neglects his duties, kindly inform us.

## Tip: get help if you need it

*If you're not able to fulfil your cleaning duties for communal areas, arrange for someone to take over for you. Don't shy away from asking your neighbours or friends. Young people looking to earn pocket money are especially willing to help.*

## Putting out the yellow bags

Yellow bags should be put out a day before the collection – but not earlier. Because the rubbish attracts vermin, stinks and is not a nice sight for visitors.

## Temporary storage of yellow bags

You can put the yellow bags in temporary storage in your tenant basement – although you should not forget them there. Because even in the basement, pests are attracted. The balcony is not a suitable place for temporary storage.



## Renovation waste

Old wallpaper, flooring and other renovation waste do not belong in the community dustbins. Find out about the instructions at the disposal company.

## Unnecessary advertising

If you do not want to get any advertising brochures or other promotional advertising, it is best to attach a sticker with the words “No advertising” onto your mailbox. If you don’t want to this, dispose of any unnecessary advertising normally in the trash – the letterbox system is not the right place, in any case.

## Unwieldy cartons

When disposing of cardboard packaging, crush it before throwing it into the paper bin. In this way, you avoid wasting space.



## **Bulky waste**

Discarded pieces of furniture, lumpy mattresses or ramshackle bicycles are typical bulky waste goods. If you have instructed the collection, put your bulky waste in front of the house at the earliest in the evening before the disposal date. In this way, you prevent “waste tourism” from being created.

## **Waste separation in general**

Remember that you have to cover waste disposal costs yourself. So, reducing and properly sorting your rubbish won't just be good for the environment, but your wallet too.

## **Soiling of the communal areas**

“Normal” street dirt that gets into the house via your shoes is removed via the regular cleaning of communal areas. However, spilled drinks or packaging that has fallen down are to be removed by the person causing it.

## **“Shake out”**

You would sometimes like to thoroughly shake out your carpet? Or shake out your bedding? Wherever you do this: Make sure that the dirt does not end up with your neighbours.

## **Drying laundry**

If you dry your damp laundry in your flat, it can easily lead to mould growth due to the humidity. Hence, it is best to use the balcony or – if available – the drying room for this. If this is not possible, pay special attention to regular ventilation! (see p. 32)

## Cars and garages

### Repairs etc.

If you do not obstruct other tenants, there is nothing against your changing your tyres in the parking spaces. However, for changing oil and larger repairs, the parking spaces and the site of our apartment blocks are not available.

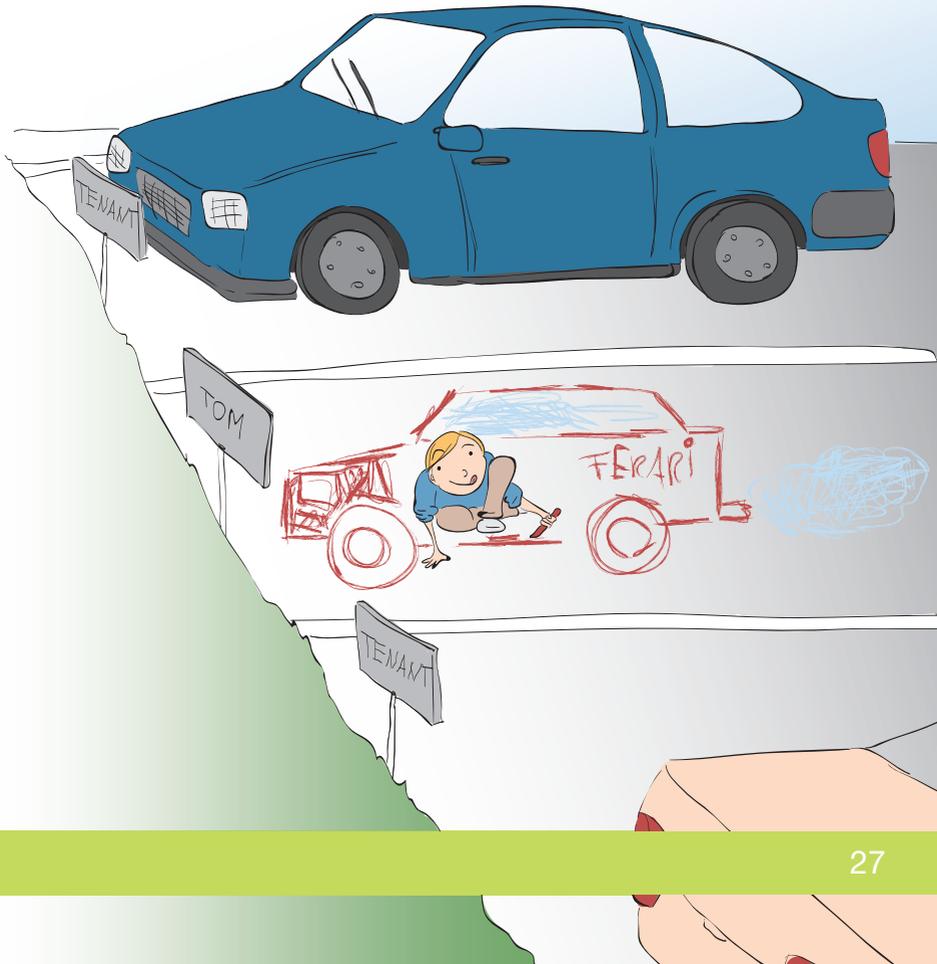
### Car washing

If you would like to wash your car, please drive to a car wash.



## Cleanliness of the parking spaces

If you have rented a parking space or a garage from us, you are also responsible for keeping this clean (and if necessary the entrance).



# Running around and playing

## In the outdoor area

Playing must expressly be on the green areas. Whether football, hiding or with toys brought along: We are pleased if children use the green areas – a legal guardian should ensure that the flowerbeds and shrubs are not affected in the process.

## Do not make too much noise

When children are playing, it easily becomes a bit noisy. So especially loud forms of playing shouldn't take place during the quiet times. A legal guardian should also ensure that no unnecessary noise pollution is caused by the game, such as playing football against the house wall or even against lattice or garage doors.

## Keep playing areas in order

Make sure that your children leave the playing area as they found it.





# Animals and people

## Duty of information

In principle, there are no rules against pets in your apartment. But please remember that you must tell your landlord – us – if you have any large pets (such as cats and dogs). Recurrent issues with noise, smells or similar may be grounds to terminate your contract.

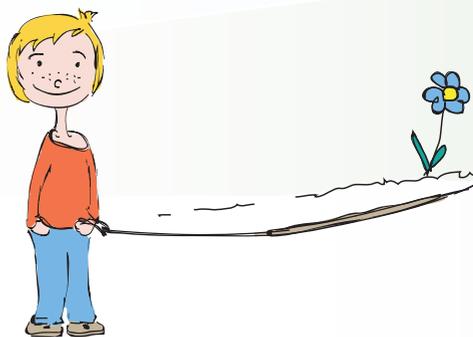
## Be considerate – keep your pets on a leash!

Some people are afraid of certain animals. Your dog may belong to the friendliest creatures in this world, but to a neighbour who has had a bad experience with our four-legged friends, it can nevertheless give a big fright. Therefore, please always be considerate of your fellow man. This includes ensuring that you always leash dogs in our buildings and also on the properties.

## Remove any droppings

It can sometimes be difficult to avoid that an animal searches out a place to put its droppings in the communal areas.

Nevertheless, whoever goes regularly for walkies with his dog has a good chance that it does not immediately visit the first available flowerbed. And if it anyway happens once: Remove the droppings of your four-legged friend immediately and completely.





## Ventilation and heating

### **Intermittent ventilation in the staircase**

Especially during the cold season, the windows should remain closed in the staircase. Intermittent ventilation two times per day is enough. In this way the building remains warm without becoming stuffy. For this it applies: Whoever opens the window should also close it again.

### **Tip: Heating in the flat**

*Never shut down the heating completely in the living rooms even when absent during the day. Cooling down and re-heating is more expensive than maintaining a slightly lower average temperature. As a rule of thumb it applies: It should never be colder than 15 degrees in the living rooms during the heating period. You spare not only the environment, but also your purse through this. In the process, you prevent the growth of mould.*

### **Tip: Short, intense ventilation**

*Open the windows completely three to four times daily for about five minutes: In this way the humid air can escape from the flat, without the flat cooling down. Incidentally, this also applies in bad weather: Even when it is raining, the cold outside air is drier than the warm room air.*

### **Tip: Correct positioning of pieces of furniture**

*Wide pieces of furniture like cupboards and sofas should not stand directly against the wall. With a few centimetres of distance, the air can circulate behind the pieces of furniture, so that it does not go mouldy there so easily. This applies in particular for the usually colder, external walls, on which water condenses especially easily.*





For a good cohabitation, your



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