



AU PAIR HANDBOOK

a practical guide for your
au pair

 **connect**AuPair



Welcome!

This text will show up at the first page of the au pair handbook and should therefore contain some nice welcome message to the au pair.

Important information

- This is the place to list all important information the au pair should find immediately when opening the hand book
- E.g. the emergency call number, important phone numbers and the home address

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Allergies

- Are the children allergic to something?
- If the answer is positive, what should the au pair do if one of them has an allergic reaction?

Argument

- Do the children argue frequently?
- How can the au pair deal with it?

Bathroom

- Does the au pair have her/his own bathroom? If not, during which times can (s)he use the bathroom?
- Where can (s)he get fresh towels (also e.g. for friends staying overnight)?
- Are shampoo and other sanitary products provided?
- Are there any other rules regarding the bathroom? (E.g. it's not allowed to take a shower during the night, it's not allowed to take a shower for more than xx minutes, otherwise there isn't enough warm water, it's mandatory to switch on the ventilation and/or to leave the door open to prevent mould formation,...)

Cleanliness & Cleaning

- What are the families rules regarding cleanliness?
- E.g. which parts of the house can be entered with outdoor shoes? When do the kids have to wash their hands?
- Does the family have a cleaning lady to help cleaning the house? If yes, will she also clean the au pair's room?
- What are the au pair's responsibilities regarding this topic?
- Where can the au pair find cleaning supplies for cleaning e.g. her/his room?

Clothes

- Do the children know how to dress themselves or do they need help from the au pair?
- Should the au pair take care that the children are dressed decent and warm enough, or is the decision what to wear up to the children?
- Where can the children's clothes be found? Where are used clothes stored? Where to put dirty clothes (to be washed)?
- What to do if clothes are ragged?

- If the au pair needs clothes for her-/himself, does the host family provide used clothes e.g. from former au pairs or themselves?
- Where can the au pair buy clothes for her/him? (see also #shopping)

Comfort

- How can the au pair comfort the kids best when they are sad or angry?
- Is the au pair e.g. allowed to offer them sweets to comfort them?

Computer

- Will the family provide a computer / laptop for the au pair? If not, is (s)he allowed to use the family's computer?
- Where can the au pair print or scan documents?

Cooking

- Does the family want to taste food from the au pair's home country?
- Is there anything that someone in the family doesn't eat at all?
- Can the au pair cook a different meal for herself/himself? (see also #meals)

Daily routine

- How does the children's daily routine look like?
- Do the children have any other classes or activities besides kindergarten/school? For example,

piano lessons, ballet, etc.

- Should the au pair take the kids to these activities? Where do they take place?

Diapers

- Do the children still need diapers?
- How frequently should the au pair change the children's diapers?
- How are the diapers disposed?
- Is there a special packed bag that the au pair should bring with her/him when she/he is out with the children?

Doctor

- If the au pair needs medical care, which doctor should (s)he contact?
- How does (s)he get an appointment?
- What documents does (s)he need to bring to the appointment?
- What's the name and phone number of the children's pediatrician?
- In case of an accident, should the au pair contact the children's pediatrician first or should she/he take the children directly to the hospital? (You can also link to #first aid here and eventually add the pediatrician's phone number to the #important information section)
- What documents should the au pair bring for an emergency / a routine appointment for the children?

Drinks

- What are the children's favourite drinks? How do they like them prepared?
- Are there any drinks the children are not allowed to drink (e.g. coffee, cola,...)?
- How much should the children drink per day?
- Should the au pair remind them of drinking regularly?

Duties & household chores

- Besides looking after the children, what are the au pair's duties?
- How do the children help / what are their duties to keep the house in order?

Electronic devices

- Do the children have access to other electronic devices like smart phones, tablets or computers?
- How much time should the au pair allow them to play with these devices?

Energy saving (heating, lightning,...)

- Should the au pair help to save energy? What are specific rules in this regards?
- How can the au pair regulate the temperature in her / his room and bathroom?
- What are the rules about ventilating the different rooms?
- What if the au pair is afraid of the dark? Is (s)he allowed to keep the light on all the time? Are there areas in the house, where the family wants the lights to be always on (also during night)?

Fire

- Does the family have smoke or carbon monoxide detectors installed? If yes, how to act in case they give an alarm?
- How to act in case of a fire?
- Where are the fire extinguisher and the fire blanket located?
- Fire evacuation plan: What are the exit options (is there a fire ladder?), where is the family meeting place outside,...?

First aid

- Where can the au pair find the first aid kit?
- Will the au pair be trained in first aid by you or will (s)he take part in a first aid training?

Free time

- What can the au pair do best in her/his free time?
- What are the rules e.g. regarding using common rooms, the car,... during free time?
- What are the rules if the au pair wants to stay away overnight?
- (At what days and which times the au pair has her free time is described in the #time schedule)

Friends

- Can the au pair meet her/his friends at the host family's home?
- What about the children's friends? Which of them are the children allowed to visit on their own (list with their names, addresses and phone numbers)?

Games & handicraft work

- What kind of games do the children like?
- Are there any (indoor) playgrounds near the house?
- If the au pair wants to do handicraft work with the children, how should (s)he organize the necessary material (buy on her own, ask the parents,...)?

Grandparents

- Where do the grandparents live?
- Do the children visit them regularly? Should the au pair bring the kids to their house?
- Are they available in case of an emergency? If yes, their phone number should be added in the #Important information" section!

Holidays

- How many days off does the au pair have?
- Is there a preferred time when the au pair should take her/his holidays?
- How long in advance does the au pair need to schedule her/his holidays?
- Are there any dates on which (s)he definitely needs to stay with the children and would not be able take her/his days off?

- Does the family plan to spend their holidays together with the au pair?

Insurance

- Has the family taken out a health insurance for the au pair?
- If not, must the au pair take out one? What is the best company for her/him?
- What other insurances (travel, car,...) are necessary? Which of them has the family already covered, which should the au pair take out?

Internet & Wi-Fi

- What's the access data for the lan / Wi-Fi?
- Is the au pair allowed to pass on this information to friends who visit her / him?
- Are there any limits in Wi-Fi usage / does the family have a limited data plan?
- Is the au pair allowed to download movies, music or other contents?

Key

- Which keys does the au pair get?
- What happens if the au pair loses the keys?

Kindergarten

- How do the kids need to be dressed for kindergarten?
- What should their lunch box contain?
- When exactly do the kids have to be in kindergarten, how to bring them there and when and how to pick them up again?

Language course

- Where and how can the au pair find a suitable language course (provide a list of language schools, if available with links to their homepage)?
- How much does the host family contribute to the cost of the language course?
- What is the best time of the day for taking the language course?

Laundry

- Is the au pair allowed to use the washing machine any time (s)he needs to?
- Where can (s)he find a manual for the washing machine (alternatively, a short manual can be inserted here)?
- If the au pair is expected to wash the clothes of the children, a short manual can be inserted here about which washing powder to use, what kind of softener to add, which clothes to wash separately, ...

Meals

- Are there fixed times for breakfast, lunch and dinner?
- Does everybody eat together?
- Is the au pair allowed to take food to her/his room?
- What should the au pair do if (s)he doesn't like the food of the family at all?
- Is the au pair allowed to cook for her/his own?
- Are the children allowed to eat e.g. in their own room or watch TV while eating?

Mobile phone

- Will a mobile phone / SIM card be provided to the au pair?
- If not, where can (s)he buy a cheap SIM card?

Mobility

- Is the au pair allowed to use the family's car, motorbike,... or is there an own car, motorbike, bike,... for the au pair?

- Does the au pair need to have an international driving license or even need to acquire a local driving license to be allowed to drive a car / motorbike? (For more info about this, see also "driving license" in the "step by step" section of the country information!)
- What are the rules regarding car seats for children in the host country?

Money

- What must the au pair pay with her/his pocket money, what will the family pay for? E.g. sweets for the kids, public transportation tickets to go to the language class or used in her/his free time, expenses when travelling together with the family,...
- If (s)he wants to, can the au pair work extra hours for extra money (Attention: this is forbidden in many host countries - more information can be found in the "rules & regulations" section of the country information!)?

Neighbours

- Who are the neighbours that the family knows and has contact with?
- Are the children allowed to go to them by themselves?

Orderliness

- What are the family rules regarding orderliness?
- E.g. tidying up after playing, where to store the toys,...

Privacy

- Which rooms is the au pair allowed to enter without asking / knocking at the door?
- Which rooms is the au pair not allowed to enter at all?

Public transportation

- How can the au pair go to the city centre / the next town / ...?
- Where can the bus / train timetable be found? Is there e.g. an app available?
- Is there a monthly ticket available (for local traffic)? How much does it cost?

Reachability & Questions

- During which times the au pair has to be available by phone?
- How should the au pair reach out for the host family at different times of the day?
- Is it e.g. better to call the cell phone number or to send a message via WhatsApp?
- Will there be regular "meetings" with the au pair to address open questions?

Religion

- Which religion does the host family practice and what does this mean in everyday's life?
- How should the au pair talk with the children about religion?
- Are there any religious rules the kids and the au pair have to stick to?
- If the au pair has a different religion, how should (s)he talk to the kids about it?

Rest periods

- When do the children usually go to bed / sleep (also during the day)?
- What are your rules for these times? Is it e.g. allowed to play music, take a shower,... or would this disturb the children's sleep?

Room

- Can the au pair make any changes to her/his room? For example, hang a picture, change the wallpaper, paint the wall, etc.
- Where can the au pair find pillows, bedclothes, blankets?
- What should the au pair do if something in her/his room is broken?

- How about locking the room when the au pair is not at home? In which cases would the host family enter the room?
- Should the kids be allowed to enter the au pair's room?

Rules

- What are important cultural rules when living in the host country?
- E.g. how important is punctuality in general and for the host family?
- Are there any special family rules?
- Can the au pair define own (additional) rules for the children?

Safety

- What are the do's and don'ts regarding children's safety? E.g.
 - Can the children already cross the street on their own?
 - Are they allowed to use a sharp knife?
 - Are they already capable of lighting a fire in the fireplace on their own?
 - ...
 - What are some safety / security rules around the house?
- Who is allowed to enter the house when the family is not home (e.g. cleaning lady, neighbours,...)?
- When to answer the door?
- What are general safety / security rules when living / travelling in the host country?

School

- Is the au pair expected to bring the kids to school and pick them up after school? If yes, where is the school, how does (s)he get there,...?
- Is the au pair expected to support the kids with doing their homework or packing their school bags? If yes, where does (s)he find the time table,...?

Shopping

- Where can the au pair buy all sort of things: food, general supplies, clothes, medicine etc?
- Is the au pair expected to do grocery shopping? If yes, when (add to the #time schedule) and where does (s)he find money and the shopping list?
- If the au pair needs to buy something for the kids, how does (s)he proceed? Is there e.g. a purse with money for that? Does she have to hand in the receipt afterwards? What is (s)he allowed to buy and what not?

Smoking

- What are the general rules regarding smoking in the host country?
- What are the rules regarding smoking in the host family's house, garden, car,...?

Sports

- Where can the au pair practice any sports, indoor or outdoor?
- Does the family practice any kind of sport? If yes, can the au pair join them?
- Can the au pair borrow any sports materials from the family, like balls, rackets, etc?

TV

- What kind of TV shows are the children allowed to watch on their own, which together with the au pair?
- What kind of TV shows are absolutely forbidden?
- Is there a maximum amount of time the children are allowed to watch the TV?
- Where can the au pair watch TV in her/his free time?
- Where to find the television programm?

Time schedule

- How does the daily and weekly time schedule for the au pair look like?
- How stable / flexible is this plan?
- How frequently will this plan need to be changed and how will the au pair be informed about it?

- How can the au pair make change requests to this schedule?

Waste

- Is waste separation common in the host country? If yes, what are the rules? How exactly does it work in the host family's home?
- What are the rules for waste disposal in the au pair's room and bathroom?