

Dual vocational training

- You generally need to have passed a school leaving examination (Schulabschluss) to start an apprenticeship, also known as **vocational training**, for a job.
- The school leaving examination has a big influence on which vocational training you can do. Getting good grades will increase your child's chances of finding the training place they want.
- In vocational training young people learn the knowledge and skills they require to work in a specific occupation.
- In Germany there is a special form of vocational training: **dual vocational training**. Dual vocational training includes practical learning in a company. It also includes lessons in a Berufsschule (vocational college).
- Dual vocational training takes place at two learning location in alternation.
- If you want to begin dual vocational training, you need to find a company that is prepared to take on the practical part of the training. A company that offers practical training is known as a training company, in German: **Ausbildungsbetrieb**.
- It is important to apply for dual vocational training **in good time**. The exact deadline by which you need to apply can vary, depending on the type of training. You need to ask the company about this.
- If the training company accepts the application, the young person signs a contract with the company. This written contract is known as the **Berufsausbildungsvertrag**.
- During the dual vocational training, the young person receives a monthly salary. This is known as the **Ausbildungsvergütung**. The amount depends on the job the young person is training for, and is written in the Berufsausbildungsvertrag. The amount increases during every training year.
- The theoretical part of the dual vocational training takes place in the **Berufsschule**. It also aims to deepen the general educational level of the students. The job that the adolescents want to learn decides which Berufsschule (vocational college) they will attend.
- There are commercial, administrative, home economics and agricultural vocational colleges. Many Berufsschulen are state-funded. But there are also private Berufsschulen. For some schools you have to pay tuition fees.
- Lessons at the Berufsschule take place at various times. Lessons can take place on specific days of the week. They can also take place in blocks of several months. If this is the case, then the practical part of the training at a company also takes place in blocks.
- The Berufsschule for the dual vocational training in your child's desired job is some distance from where you live.
- The vocational training usually takes 2, 3 or 3½ years. The **duration** depends on the chosen occupation.

- At the end of the training, the trainees have to pass **examinations**.
- There are written and practical examinations. The students only receive the occupational qualification if they pass the examinations.
- Adolescents with an occupational qualification in a handicraft trade are known as “gesellen” (“journeymen”). They can continue to attend a college. But they can also continue to train in their occupation. For example, they can study to become a “Meister” (“master”) in their profession. This entitles them to run their own company and train other people.
- There are approximately 330 different jobs that you can learn in dual vocational training. The chances of finding a job after doing the vocational training differ, depending on the job. In some professions, employees are urgently sought-after. It’s a good idea to find out about the entry opportunities before starting the training.