

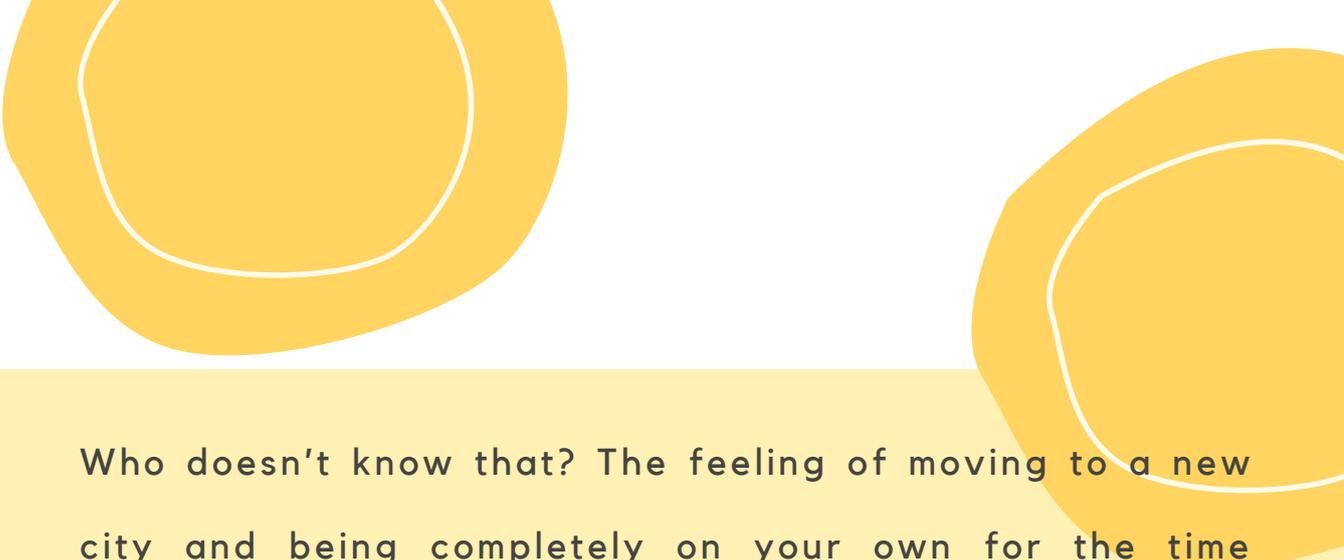
HÄ, WAS?



*quest
edition!*

by Intercultural Mentoring
Team Member, Henrike Zimmer!

**How to meet new friends
at the beginning of
your studies**

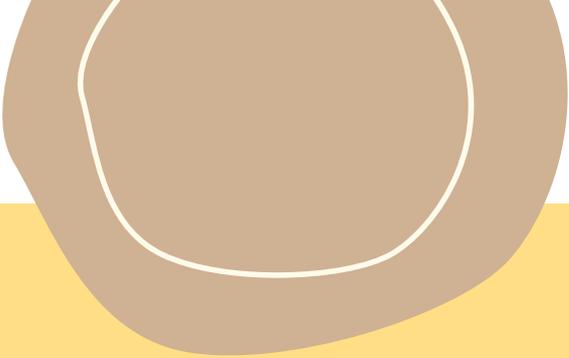


Who doesn't know that? The feeling of moving to a new city and being completely on your own for the time being. The start in the new university city brings with it many challenges. How do we say so beautifully? Yes...

"EVERY BEGINNING IS DIFFICULT!"

And this is not only true for international students, but also for us students who study in their own country. As a German, it was also a challenge for me to orientate myself in Freiburg. Of course I understand the language here, know how the system works and the culture is not as foreign to me as it is to someone from another country. Nevertheless, it took me a while to really settle in. One of my biggest concerns was the fear of not catching up fast enough. A totally unfounded fear as it soon turned out! Meanwhile I am convinced that everyone who tries to get in touch with a little own initiative, openness and patience, will make new contacts easily! Maybe my story and my tips will help you a bit to settle in Freiburg!



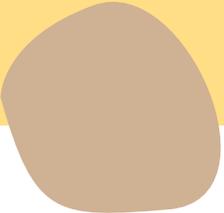


When I moved to Freiburg for my Master's degree almost three years ago, I also asked myself the question of where I could make new contacts. As a student, I believe that you generally have the advantage that you are not alone in the situation of wanting to make new friends. Already at the introductory event at the university I noticed that my fellow students came from all over Germany. So most of them felt the same as I did: no friends, no family nearby, everything on new beginnings. Actually, this situation is the best starting point for making new friends. I quickly noticed how open and sociable most of my fellow students were. I also tried to get into conversation with different fellow students and to meet them openly. Very quickly, smaller groups of friends and friendships developed with whom one could also do something outside of the university. When I look back today, I can say that I got to know 80% of my current friends in Freiburg during this initial period at the university. Therefore I can only recommend all students who are new to Freiburg to go to the introductory week. What at first sounds like a coffee klatch and boring introductory events is actually the "place to be" to make new contacts. If you should think now "Dang, I missed the introduction week", that is of course not tragic!





Studying offers many opportunities to make friends. You also get to know new people in group work. I can also recommend that you get involved at the university or take courses outside the compulsory courses. The university offers so many great opportunities! At the language school (Sprachlehrinstitut) you can learn new languages and meet students who might be interested in the same country or culture. The Studium Generale also offers exciting courses, where you can meet fellow students with the same interests. In general, I would say that common interests are a good basis for possible friendships and it is easy to talk about them.



*What are you interested in?
What are topics or activities
that inspire you? Where could
you meet people with similar
interests?*

Of course, the university is not the only place to meet new people. In the same way, you can also look outside the university for clubs that interest you. Here in Germany there is actually a club for everything: Chess clubs, art clubs, tennis clubs,... They all offer another great opportunity to get to know people! And then there is of course the modern way to make new friends... I myself have never tried this way, but I know some friends who make new friends via the internet or apps like bumble. Maybe this way of making contacts is a good alternative especially for rather shy people?!

Apart from that I can only give you the idea not to hide away but to go out, to be open and take the initiative! Always remember that others feel the same way as you (including us German students) and that true friendship does not develop overnight, but needs time to grow!

xoxo, Nengife

*It is the encounters with people
that make life worth living!*

-Guy de Maupassant-

P.S.: There's one thing I forgot: At the University of Freiburg there is also a great mentoring program especially for international students that helps to integrate and settle in Freiburg ;-)