



Dear Expats,

It's a leap year, which means February has 29 days! Enjoy that extra day.

February in Karlsruhe can be dark, wet and dreary. Or it might snow. Or spring might arrive early. One never knows. To lighten things up, Germans celebrate **Carnival (Fasching)**. The celebrations started in November and end on Ash Wednesday (February 26th). Many clubs (Vereine) host special events and programs. For background information about local traditions, please look on our [Fasching page](#). The regional highlight is the Karlsruhe parade on Shrove Tuesday (February 25th) starting at 14:11 and going through the inner city. Towns around Karlsruhe as well as Karlsruhe neighborhoods also stage parades and events (see below). It's not for everyone, but if you are new to Germany, the parades allow you to get a feel for the celebration without the need to actively participate — although part of the fun is dressing up. Many stores in the area have costumes for sale – and for more elaborate costumes, there are some costume rental stores.

If Fasching isn't for you, let music and art take you away. February brings the **International Händel Festival** to Karlsruhe as well as the **art KARLSRUHE** trade fair.

Important Fasching or Carnival Dates

For background information about local traditions, please look on our [Fasching page](#).

February 20 — Schmutziger Donnerstag (Dirty Thursday) or Altweiberfastnacht. Lots and lots of parties everywhere.

February 22 - 29 — School holidays for the Karlsruhe school system.

February 23 — Fastnacht (carnival) parade in Durlach starting at 14:11. About 100,000 people line the streets of Durlach to watch the 70+ floats and bands march by. Trams are re-routed.

February 24 — Rosenmontagsumzug (carnival parade) in nearby Ettlingen starting at 14:11. Over 80 groups with 2000+ participants parade through the inner city ending at the Rathaus.

February 25 — Fastnacht (carnival) parade in Karlsruhe starting at 14:11 with 80+ floats and marching bands. Most stores and public institutions in the inner part of the city close either early or for the day. Trams are re-routed. An estimated 15 tons of candy (Kamellen) are tossed to the crowd along the parade route.

March 2 – 4 — Basler Fasnacht is a big celebration in Basel starting at 4 a.m. on March 2nd and running for 72 hours. The entire inner city is dark; the only light coming from those marching in the parade.

Karlsruhe News

- For the first time in 50 years, there will be NO Pfennigbasar in Karlsruhe in 2020.
- Watch out for pickpockets in the inner city, especially between noon and 6 pm! Smart phones and wallets are the most popular items being stolen. It's a hassle to replace these items, so take a few precautions:
 - be aware of your surroundings
 - keep important items in closed inner pockets or closed handbags
 - do not let your handbag out of sight, even in department stores
 - do not hang bags on your chair in restaurants – keep them where you can see them
- Starting March 1, 2020, parents or guardians need to prove that their child has been immunized against measles before the child may take part anywhere where many children gather (school, Kita, refugee accommodation). For those already in such an institution, the information needs to be received by July 31, 2021. The same goes for all those working in such institutions. A penalty of up to €2000 may apply if the parents/guardians do not comply. The logistics are still being worked out, but it seems that simply showing an "Impfpass" is not enough – you will need a letter from a doctor.



Schengen Visa

Starting February 2, 2020, if you need a Schengen visa (a 90-day visa allowing you to travel within and to all those countries in the Schengen zone) it will be more expensive, and the procedure will be slightly different. More information from the EU is available [here](#).

Snow & Ice

You might correctly ask, what snow and ice? In the past few years there has been little of either. However, that doesn't mean it never snows in Karlsruhe.

Few if any ski lifts in the area are open for business. Check the websites before leaving.

If you own a car, be sure you have winter tires or all-weather tires. If you are in an accident and don't have tires appropriate for the situation, your insurance may not pay.

Depending on where you live and your house arrangements, you may be responsible for snow removal from in front of the building. This should be stated in your lease.

What to do in Karlsruhe in February

Regular English-language Events

Karlsruhe's very own [English-Speaking Meetup Group](#) (sponsored by expat-karlsruhe.com) is a way for anyone to organize events and activities or plan adventures. The most popular regular event is the monthly Stammtisch where you can meet nice people who speak English in a relaxed atmosphere. Start is 6:30 p.m. until around 11:30 p.m. It's a mix of young and old and all those in-between, who come and go throughout the evening. The next one is February 11th.

The [American Library](#) has regular events in English for kids and adults: LitNite (February 4 & 18), Poetry, Please! (February 25), MovieTalk (February 12), Storytime for kids 3-5 (February 12 & 26), Teen Time (February 7 & 21) and Storytime for kids 6 and up (February 7 & 21).

The [Karlsruhe Toastmasters](#) meet every 1st, 3rd and 5th Monday of the month from 7:15 to 9:15 p.m. to practice public speaking in English with friendly, relaxed support from speakers from around the world.

Improve your German!

Sprecht miteinander!

Practice your spoken German in a relaxed atmosphere. People of similar language ability form groups moderated by a native speaker volunteer. Free and no registration required.

Wednesdays and Fridays from 6:30 to 8:00 pm. Just stop by!

Bürgerzentrum Mühlburg (BZM)

Hardtstr. 37 A/2

76185 Karlsruhe

The [IBZ \(Internationales Begegnungszentrum Karlsruhe - International Meeting Center Karlsruhe\)](#) offers a number of projects to help with integration. A listing in English is available [here](#).

Calendar of Events (non-Carnival)

February 4 - 8 – Silent Film Festival in Karlsruhe. The main theme this year is "Revolution! Kino in deutscher Umbruchzeit/100 Jahre "Das Kabinett des Dr. Caligari." Films shown at Stephanssaal and the Kinemathek. More information (in German) about the Stummfilm Festival [here](#).

February 8 – Just Books! Sale at the [American Library](#). Stop by between 10 am and 2 pm for gently used books and DVDs at great prices. Proceeds go to the library to buy new books.

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February 8 – [Collegium Musicum](#) perform at KIT South Campus - Gerthsen Hörsaal starting at 8 pm. Come early - seats fill up fast. Free - but donations gratefully accepted upon leaving the concert.

February 9 - 26 – **43rd International Händel Festspiele** at the [Badisches Staatstheater](#). Baroque music in Karlsruhe.

February 11 – [Stammtisch](#) organized by the Karlsruhe English-Speaking Meet-Up group at Old Chapel Pub starting around 6:30 p.m.

February 13 - 16 – [art Karlsruhe](#). A very popular art market - classic, to modern to contemporary at the Karlsruhe trade centre. Most of the art works are for sale. Tours available. Admission fee charged.

February 15 – **Tea Time** at the [American Library](#) from 3 to 5 pm. Sit down with a delicious cup of tea, scrumptious scones and other tasty pastries, and listen to a few fabulous poems being read aloud as we long for the first signs of spring. Feel free to bring your own favorite poem (in English) and share it with us. Tea, scones and poems are for free - donations welcome! To help prepare, please sign up by calling the library ((0721) 7 27 52).

February 22 – **Registration deadline for the 9th American Library Spelling Bee**. Open to all pupils 16 and under. Learn 200 English words, take a written test and if you make it to the final in April, win great prizes! More information: <https://www.american-library.de/spelling-bee>.

Relocation Service move-in

With 15+ years of experience in the region, [Relocation Service move-in](#) can help with your move to Karlsruhe, your move from Karlsruhe and with all those day-to-day problems expats experience.

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