



Dear Expats,

It's summer in Karlsruhe which would normally mean lots of outdoor festivals, concerts and other happenings. However, as you all know, COVID-19 has turned everything topsy turvy. Just about all outdoor events have been cancelled (e.g. Das Fest, Durlacher Altstadtfest) or altered to accommodate the circumstances ([EFFEKTE](#) is online for now and hopefully analog soon, [Zeltival](#) has changed to "Oh how nice Zeltival would have been" with live performances for a maximum of 250 guests, the fabulous [Schlosslichtspiele](#) normally projected on the Karlsruhe castle are to be strictly digital in the form of a live virtual show every night starting August 5th). The [What's Up](#) page of our website normally lists events in the area but is now being used to cover updates related to COVID-19.

If you can, please try to support local businesses, restaurants and cultural establishments.

What to do?

It's difficult to be spontaneous these days!

- For entertainment, think small. Gatherings with a few friends is the alternative to large parties. Indoor or outdoor public or private meetings for up to 20 people are allowed at the moment. While it is not explicitly stated, physical distancing should still be maintained.
- Most restaurants are open for business, but especially popular ones require reservations because seating is reduced to accommodate physical distancing. Expect to wear a community mask upon entering, leaving or if you need to use the toilets. Expect to fill out a form with your name, address and telephone number so that in case there is/was an infected person in the area, you can be quickly contacted and informed of the potential risk.
- Many museums and the zoo offer online tickets with a fixed time slot. The amount of visitors is reduced in order to maintain physical distancing. Otherwise at certain popular times or if the weather is bad (museums) or good (Zoo), expect lines.
- The indoor swimming pools in the area are closed. The outdoor swimming pools in the region are open, but with a reduced number of visitors. The website for the outdoor pools is [here](#) where you can see the real time visitor situation shown as a traffic light of green, yellow and red. In many of the pools, the changing rooms are closed as are many of the sports areas. The local quarry lakes are a good alternative. In the mornings it is usually less crowded than in the afternoons. For a listing see here: <http://www.expat-karlsruhe.com/living/sports/sports-h-z.html> under swimming.
- The [Karlsruhe English-Speaking Meet-Up](#) group continues to offer loosely organized events, but the amount of events or the number of participants is starkly reduced.
- The [Schauburg](#) movie theater is open from Thursday through Sunday. The number of available tickets is reduced to accommodate physical distancing. Online ticket reservations are recommended. Expect to wear a community mask on entering and leaving the theater or to use the toilets. With the reduction in service, the number of original version films is also reduced. Expect to fill out a form with your name, address and telephone number so that in case there is/was an infected person in the area, you can be quickly contacted and informed of the potential risk. Other movie theaters have a similar system.
- [Autokino!](#) The Festplatz in Karlsruhe has been transformed into a performance space for comedy shows, movies (including afternoon films for kids) and music all from the comfort of your own car. Tickets can only be purchased online. The sound comes through your car radio or smartphone. All in German.
- The largest theater in Karlsruhe ([Badisches Staatstheater](#)) is allowing entry to rehearsals for (hopefully) upcoming shows as well as lunchtime concerts – tickets required and available through the website.



How to cope?

As of 09.07.2020 an average of 420 people tested positive for the COVID-19 virus daily in all of Germany. In most cases the symptoms are mild or even asymptomatic. The goal of the government restrictions is to prevent chaos in the local hospitals — luckily this region has been spared so far — and to prevent a complete shutdown as experienced in other countries. With summer, warmer temperatures and vacations, it is easy to forget that things are not yet back to normal.

The main thing is not to panic but to remain diligent!

The German government suggests maintaining the AHA approach:

- A is for Abstand or maintain a distance of 1.5 to 2 meters from others, especially in enclosed rooms.
- H is for Hygiene or wash your hands often and with soap and water for at least 20 or 30 seconds and correctly cough and sneeze in your elbow. Also avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth especially with unwashed hands.
- A is for Alltagsmaske or community mask covering your nose and mouth in any situation where many people are gathered. This is required in stores in Baden-Württemberg as well as in public transportation.

Great ways to cope are to maintain social contacts — just not as many at the same time as you may be used to — and to get plenty of fresh air and exercise. The local parks and woods are great for this or a short drive, for example to the Schwarzwald, can work wonders.

Local seasonal food

The local outdoor food markets are open and a listing can be found [here](#). There is no need to wear a mask at the market, but it is important to keep physical distancing. Strawberries (Erdbeeren), red currants (Johannisbeeren), apricots (Aprikosen), blueberries (Blaubeeren or Heidelbeeren), raspberries (Himbeeren), cherries (Kirchen) and gooseberries (Stachelbeeren) are all ripe now. German (and EU) law requires that the land of origin be clearly stated along with the price – if you see Eigene Ernte it means the produce is from the farm/home of the seller.

Summer holidays for public schools

For those of you with school-aged children, the school closings due to COVID-19 have probably caused some disturbances in daily life. The government is planning a return to a normal school schedule in September with some adjustments. Fingers crossed that it can happen. The six week long school holidays in Germany are staggered so that the whole country isn't on holiday at the same time – they fall within the time period June 22nd through September 12th. In Baden-Württemberg school holidays are from July 30th through September 12th, although some of you may have felt they already started in March.

Regular English-language Events

Karlsruhe's [English-Speaking Meetup Group](#) (sponsored by expat-karlsruhe.com) is a way for anyone to organize events and activities or plan adventures. The amount of activities is reduced, but it's worth a look or maybe you want to organize something yourself?

The [American Library](#) has regular events in English for kids and adults: LitNite (July 21), Poetry, Please! (July 28), MovieTalk (—), Storytime for kids 3-5 (—), Teen Time (—) and Storytime for kids 6 and up (July 17 – virtual – please call the library for information). The American Library is closed for the summer break from August 9th through September 7th.

The [Karlsruhe Toastmasters](#) have occasional meetings online and these are announced on the page of the [English-Speaking Meetup Group](#).

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