Vocational Training in Retail and Sales in Germany

Would you like to learn a profession which is connected to a lot of customer contact and selling products? That is just what vocational training ("Ausbildung") in retail and sales offers!

On this page

- Trading and sales: a sector with a future
- In-demand vocational training professions in trading and sales
- Where can I complete vocational training?
- How much will I earn during my vocational training?
- Which requirements do I have to meet?
- Prospects after vocational training

Vocational training in trading and sales offers you the opportunity to work directly with customers, present products and get to know the processes within a company. Learn about the professions in this sector and find a suitable vocational training position!

Trading and sales: a sector with a future

Trading is one of the biggest sectors in Germany. About 14 percent of all employed persons in Germany work in the trading industry. Regardless of whether you work in the supermarket, in fashion stores or in specialist shops, as sales assistant or management assistant for retail services, you are the face of the company and are in direct contact with customers. This type of work requires friendliness, clever communication and a good understanding of products and services.

6,4 million

people worked in trading and sales in Germany in 2026.

119,367

people were in vocational training in the sector (in 2025).

537,521

companies existed in the sector (in 2025).

In-demand vocational training professions in trading and sales

The following professions are in high demand:

- Sales assistant: advising customers, working at the checkout, presentation of merchandise
- Salesperson specialising in foodstuffs:
  - Selling of baked goods,
  - Selling of meat,
  - Patisserie
- Management assistant for retail services: planning and organisation of sales processes, warehouse storing and ordering goods.

If you are interested in a different field within trading and sales, there are many more options for vocational training! Depending on the profession, vocational training takes 2 to 3 years to complete.

Video: vocational training in trading and sales

Where can I complete vocational training?

Vocational training in trading takes place within the **dual system**: you work in a company and simultaneously go to **vocational school**. Here is a list of common employers:

- Supermarkets and discouters
- Clothing shops
- Electronics and furniture shops
- Bakeries and butchers
- Chemist's shops and pharmacies

How much will I earn during my vocational training?

In Germany, you will receive a monthly allowance from your training company during your vocational training. The amount of this allowance depends on your chosen profession, the region, the company in question and the year of your vocational training.

You can find information on the amount of training allowance in **trading and sales** on the Federal Employment Agency's **BERUFENET** website. Enter your chosen vocational training profession here and then select the relevant profile.

Here is what else you should know about the training allowance:

- You must pay **social security contributions** from your gross allowance, e.g., for statutory health insurance, pension insurance, and unemployment insurance. These contributions are automatically deducted before your net income is paid into your bank account.
- You will usually not have to pay income tax during your vocational training, as your income is likely to be below the **tax-free basic allowance**.

Your rights during your vocational training

As an apprentice, you have clear rights, such as the right to suitable equipment and to tasks that are genuinely part of your vocational training.

Any questions? '**Faire Integration**' offers free advice. You can also find a comprehensive overview of all the key regulations in the guide '**Information on vocational training in Germany**'.

What are determining factors for the training allowance?

The training allowance may depend on...

- ...the region in Germany, where you are trained.
- ...the company in which you are trained.
- ...the training year you are currently in. The allowance increases with each training year.

Which requirements do I have to meet?

For vocational training, you generally require a school-leaving certificate. For vocational training in the **dual system**, you do not need to have it recognised for the **visa**. Good German skills are very important for vocational training, for example for vocational school and working with customers. There is also the option of completing a language course in Germany to prepare for vocational training. Learn more details on the general requirements for vocational training **here**.

Especially the following **soft skills** are important in trading and sales:

- **Friendliness and communicativeness** to help customers and present the products.
- **Reliability and team spirit** because, more likely than not, you will be working in a team.

- **Flexibility** because many shops are open during the evenings and on the weekends

Prospects after vocational training

After successfully completing vocational training, you have a good chance of concluding a work contract with your training company because professionally qualified skilled workers are especially sought after by companies in Germany.

Additionally, there are a lot of opportunities for further development. The retail sector offers good career prospects, for example, as a department leader or branch manager. You can also acquire additional qualifications, for example, in the field of European commodity and commercial law via the additional qualification of "Europe Assistant" or via the expertise knowledge examination (*Sachkundeprüfung*) for over-the-counter medicine. The individual opportunities depend on the concrete vocational training profession.

To learn more about the general options after vocational training, please refer to the "**Prospects after vocational training**". On **BERUFENET**, you will find information on the job-specific options, depending on the vocational training.

Salary after vocational training

The salary after vocational training depends on the experience, the sector and the region. With work experience and continuing education, for example, as a commercial specialist or branch manager, the salary can increase further.

Have you already learned or worked in a profession, or do you have an academic degree? No problem! You can additionally complete vocational training. It can even be an advantage if your previous experience is related to trading and sales. Foreign language skills can also be useful, since communication is very important in these professions.

Gross or net? What you should know

The salaries are indicated as gross amounts. This means that taxes and social security contributions still have to be deducted, before knowing the net salary. You will find more information on that in the "**Salary, taxes and social security**" section.

Further information on the web

NETZWERK Unternehmen integrieren Flüchtlinge

Vocabulary pamphlet for employees in trading (in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese)
Vocabulary pamphlets for other professions and languages

Print page

URL: https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/study-vocational-training/training-in-germany/in-demand/retail-sales
Date: 2026-11-05 05:14:54 GMT