

## Apartment Hunting: My Home Is My Castle

Christine and I are going to **move** in May. We've found our dream apartment.

First, it's in a **neighborhood** I wanted, or, *we* wanted. In Dresden, there is something of the Dresden equivalent to central park in New York. We call it “The Big Garden” or “The Great Garden,” in Dresden. It's one kilometer by two kilometers, and it's well-landscaped, it's attractive, it's green. And it's in the middle of the city.

Because we have a dog and will have a child, we wanted to live somewhere where we could go outside for long walks and not always next to roads. Walking next to roads is not fun and so it was important to us that we have a **green** neighborhood. Living **close to** the great garden means of course, we have a green neighborhood.

The next thing that was important to us was to have shopping **nearby**. I don't like the idea of getting in the car and driving to the store for simple, everyday shopping. I want to walk to the store. I want to be able to carry my shopping home. I want to have a simple grocery store in the neighborhood. And we have that, too, because we're close to the Great Garden and many things locate close to the Great Garden.

And the last thing we wanted was to have a **quiet** neighborhood. Because we're expecting a child, and because we like to relax when we're at home we didn't want a lot of traffic in front of our house. And we didn't want a lot of **noise** from the trams or from buses. And so, I think our house has the perfect location. It's on a dead-end street—that's a street that you can't drive through, it ends—so there's not traffic driving in front of our house except traffic coming *to* our house. And second, it's about two hundred meters from the tram, which is just far enough that there's a different building between our house and the tram. And that blocks a lot of the noise. Or, we hope that will block a lot of the noise.

The apartment itself is three rooms. Or, in American, we would say it's a **two bedroom** apartment. It has a living room and two other rooms. And it has a very big kitchen. Our apartment now has a very small kitchen and we really wanted to eat in our kitchen in the next apartment. And we can do that here.

And it has a **balcony**. I am not a very big balcony person. But, Christine, my wife, is: in the summer, she wants to sit on the balcony, she wants to enjoy the sun, she wants to relax. And I am a good husband: in the summer, I want my wife to be happy. So, it has a balcony.

Another important thing for us is that it's on the **second floor** in America—on the first floor in Germany. That means that we will only walk up one **flight of stairs** to our apartment, which is less than we're walking now. Now we're walking up six flights of stairs and, when the baby comes,

it could be a lot of walking.

There are a lot of other nice things about the apartment. It has **high ceilings**. The rooms seems to have perfect sizes: there's not one room that's too big or one room that's too small. There's an extra room for the child when the child comes. And it has one more interesting thing I'll tell you more about in the future: our **heat** will be provided with coal. We have coal heating. I've never done this before. It's something left over from the 1930s in Germany, or 20s, maybe. But it does meant that we can make the apartment very warm—which is important to Christine and the baby—for not a lot of money—which is important to me.

So, in May we are moving. Which means that, in May, you can expect to learn some vocabulary for moving here.