

Apartment Hunting: The Neighborhood

When you look—or *search*—for an apartment, we say you're **apartment hunting**. Normally, 'hunting' is the word we use for trying to find and kill animals for food. But, because the perfect apartment is so hard to find, it can feel like you're hunting!

Christine and I have been apartment hunting for a while. And the first step for us, is finding **neighborhoods** where we want to live. Dresden is a huge city—a half a million people—and there are many different, smaller parts of the city that have their own 'feel.' These smaller parts are the different neighborhoods in Dresden, and we wanted a neighborhood that is **close to** my work, with a lot of parks, trees, and grass **nearby**.

When I say I want it 'close to' my work, I mean I don't want to drive for a long time to go to work. I want to be able to go to work in twenty minutes or so. The opposite of 'close to' is 'far from,' and if I lived far from my work, I'd spend a lot of time in the tram. And I prefer spending a lot of time with my family!

I said I want parks, trees, and grass nearby. Another way to say that is that we want a **green** neighborhood. Green is the color of plants—usually—and to say that a neighborhood or city is green means that there are a lot of plants there!

Our dream apartment will be 'close to' my work—that means that the distance between my work and the apartment will not be very far. But the parks should be 'nearby' my apartment. 'Nearby' means that almost the same thing as 'close to.' If I draw a circle on the map around my apartment of how far I can walk in five minutes, everything inside that circle is nearby my apartment. I want to have more than parks nearby. I want to have shopping nearby. I want to have **public transportation**—buses, trams, and subways—nearby.

There are other things that are important about a neighborhood, too. The people who live near me—my **neighbors**—have to be friendly. The neighborhood shouldn't be too loud. I don't want a lot of cars driving in front of my house, or I don't want a lot of **traffic**. And, of course, I want the neighborhood to be **safe**! So, you can see why looking for the perfect apartment is like hunting! Not many neighborhoods have everything that I want!

How would you describe the neighborhood where you live? What do you think is missing? What kind of neighborhood is your dream neighborhood? Are you like me and want a quiet neighborhood? Or do you want a more active, exciting neighborhood, with parties and bars all the time?