

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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General questions

How do I get to the library?

Public transportation: Take the U9 or U14 to "Friedrichsbau (Börse)" or all S-Bahn lines to "Stadtmitte".

By car: There are two car parks immediately adjacent to the library.

The library is located in building 2 (Bau 2) of the HFT, between a ministry building (Ministerium für Arbeit und Soziales) and the car park "Hofdienergarage".

How can I learn and work in the library?

The library provides numerous desks for you to work at with books and laptops. A WLAN hotspot covers all areas within the library. There are two PCs for database research on the ground floor, as well as one PC with flatbed scanner and a copier on the second floor. Book scanners can be found on the ground floor and on the second floor.

Can I print documents at the library?

It is not possible to print digital data in the library. However, there are PC rooms in the building where printing is possible.

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Conditions for using the library

How do I become a library user?

If you are a student at HFT, library membership is automatically established through your student ID card.

Please note: The library account contains the same information that was registered for your university enrolment.

If something changes about that data, please inform the admissions office as soon as possible so no messages sent to you will get lost.

If you are not a member of HFT, you will have to fill out a registration form. If your address data changes, please contact us as soon as possible so no messages sent to you will get lost.

What are the conditions for non-university members to get a library card?

You can only apply for library membership if you have a place of residence within Baden-Württemberg or are a student at a university in Baden-Württemberg. When contacting us for a membership application, please bring a valid passport and a certificate containing a contact address in Baden-Württemberg for us to reach you at.

If you cannot provide any such certification, you can still use the library collection and databases on-site. However, you cannot check out or place a hold on any materials.

What happens when I am about to leave the university?

Before you are about to be exmatriculated, you will get a process slip from the admissions office. You can only officially leave the university if you have proof that there are no library materials in your possession and there are no outstanding fees. Please bring the process slip to the library during opening hours. Our staff will mark the document accordingly and delete your library account.

If you would like to stay a library user, please ask the staff for an external user card for you.

I have lost my library card. What do I do?

Please contact the library staff immediately upon losing your card. That is the only way we can make certain no third person checks out books in your name, possibly leaving you with fees for overdue books you do not have.

If you are an external user, we will issue you a replacement card. However, we will have to charge a 5 Euro administrative fee.

What do I do if my address or name changes?

Please notify the university's admissions office and the library staff, respectively, of any changes so we can reach you. If messages get lost due to invalid address data, arising fees still have to be paid.

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Using the library

Why can't the staff make change for the lockers?

The change in the library's cash register is reserved for paying fees and related matters only. If we made change for every locker, we would run out of one-Euro-coins very fast.

Can I bring my dog to the library?

No, please don't bring dogs (or any other pets) to the library.

I have a walking impairment/a pram with me. How can I move through the library?

There is an elevator in the library building. However, it can only be operated by library staff.

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Checking out and renewing materials

What does checking out materials cost?

All library services (with the exception of using the copying machine) are free.
The only costs you might encounter are fees for overdue, damaged or lost books or if you have to order a replacement library card.

Do you charge fines if my books become overdue?

Yes we do. The following fees apply for late returns and are cumulative:
1st reminder: €1,50 per item
2nd reminder: €5,00 per item
Each further reminder: €10,00 per item
Fees are due as soon as the library system automatically charges them to your account, regardless of the arrival of the reminder at your address.

How many materials can I check out at once?

HFT students can check out up to 30 items at once.
The limit for external users is 20 items at once.

How long can I keep the materials I have checked out?

After checking out materials, the first due date is four weeks afterwards (for materials from the professors' reserved reading shelves: two weeks).
Every renewal adds another four (or two, respectively) weeks.

How can I check if there are still items charged to my account and when they are due?

Our catalogue features a menu item called "My account". After logging in with your library user number and the respective password, the site will show you a summary of checked-out and reserved materials. Click the link "Display or renew checked out items" to view the due dates.
If for any reason you cannot access the catalogue, please contact the library staff.

Do I get a reminder when checked-out materials are due?

The system automatically sends an e-mail reminding you of due dates when they draw close. However, this additional service may be subject to maintenance issues or technical difficulties, so please do not rely on it and keep an eye on due dates yourself.

Can I check out or return materials outside of the library's opening hours?

Checking out materials is only possible within opening hours.
To return books, you may use the return box in front of the library outside of the opening hours as long as the university building is open (7 a.m. to 9 p. m.).
Please note that materials returned this way will not be discharged from your account until the next regular opening day. Keep this in mind with respect to overdue fees.
If the box is full, please don't place any more books inside or on top of it! The library cannot be held responsible for stolen books that are still charged to your account.

How do I renew checked out materials?

Using the catalogue, you can renew any checked out item yourself. Please log in using the menu item "My account" and click the link "Display or renew checked out item". A list will show up, enabling you to choose items to renew by clicking the respective checkbox. Please note that materials can only be renewed as soon as three days before their due date.
When you click the button "Renew", the list will display the new due date or, respectively, if and why the renewal didn't work (i.e. because another user has placed a hold on the item, the original due date is more than three days in the future, you have already renewed the item three times or your library card isn't valid for some reason).
If for any reason you cannot access the catalogue or the function "My account", please contact our library staff and ask them to fix the technical issue or renew items for you if there are no reasons against it (see above).

How many times can I renew materials?

Checked out materials can be renewed up to three times under the aforementioned conditions.

If you have already renewed an item three times but would like to keep it even longer, please take the item to the library staff with this request. If nobody has put a hold on it, the staff will re-charge it to your account and you will again be able to renew it three more times yourself.

Can I renew materials after the due date has passed?

If there are no reasons to prevent it (see above), you can renew it even after the due date has passed - even after an overdue fee has already been issued. Please note that fees you had already been informed about will still have to be paid.

Can I send someone else to check out books for me?

If you give your library card to that person, they can check out books for you. Please note, though, that you are still responsible for the card and any materials charged to your account this way.

What does the spine label "Nicht entleihbar" on some books mean?

Books labeled this way are part of the reference collection. They are supposed to remain on the library premises at all times.

Usually, these books are directories, dictionaries, encyclopedias, (bound) periodicals or a reference copy of an especially popular textbook for those users not fortunate enough to be able to check out one of the lendable copies.

Books labeled as reference items can in some cases be checked out as soon as one hour before the library closes on that day. They have to be back no later than 10 a.m. the next day to avoid special increased fees.

Periodicals and loose leaf collections are exempt from any lending services and have to remain in the library at all times.

There is a PC with flatbed scanner, a book scanner and a copier on the second floor of the library. On the ground floor you can find another book scanner. Please feel free to make copies of any reference works that cannot be checked out.

Why can't I check out periodicals?

We cannot purchase more than one copy of any journal issue. Therefore we would like to make the contained information available to all our users at all times.

A book I'd like to borrow is damaged. What do I do?

Please don't use the self-service counter to check the item out but present it to the library staff. We will mark the book accordingly. This is the only way we can guarantee you won't be held responsible for the damage done to the book upon returning it.

I have damaged a book. What do I do?

Please contact the library staff. We assess the damage and issue an invoice for repairs or replacement.

If you return the damaged book by using the return box, we will determine your contact data from your library account.

I have lost a book. What do I do?

Please contact the library staff immediately, even if you think you can find the book again (i.e. if you have left it at a friend's place) to avoid overdue fees.

If you are certain that you cannot find the book again, your options are to purchase an equivalent copy for the library or pay the purchase price, including an administrative charge.

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Library collection

How can I find a book in the shelves?

Use the catalog to search for a specific item. The detailed display contains a table listing all copies available from the library. You will find a combination of letters and numbers in the column "Call Number". You can find the same number on the spine of the respective book.

On the face side of the library shelves, you will find the letters at the start of the number along with the subjects they are allocated to. Within the respective part of a shelf, the books are sorted numerically (exceptions: see below).

How do I find newspapers or periodicals in the shelves?

Newspapers can be found on the second floor.

Journals can be found at each end within the classification group (AZ, GZ etc.). The borrowable journals are sorted by group signature plus number. They are followed by the non-circulation journals, sorted alphabetically by the journal title. The current year of each journal can be found in a box, in certain circumstances followed by bound volumes.

I can't find an item I found in the catalogue in the shelves. Where could it be?

Does the item's call number start with **AB**, **AC** or **NG**? These materials are sorted by the person or location they are about. They are labeled accordingly on the book spines. Does the item's call number start with **Z**? If it does, you are looking for a periodical (see above). If none of the above applies, take a look at the column "Location" in the catalogue entry of the item. The information "Archive" means you have to order the item from the front desk. Another possible places to find the item you're looking for might be on the trolleys for returned books next to the front desk or the new acquisitions shelf ("Neuerwerbungen").

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Catalogue and account administration

The item I'm interested in is currently unavailable. What do I do?

You can place a hold on currently checked out books using the catalogue. This is a free service.

Open the item's catalogue entry, click the button labeled "Request/Hold" and, if you haven't done so before, log in. You will get an affirmation notice if the process was successful.

Once the item is returned to the library, you will receive an e-mail (please make sure your contact information is up to date). You can then fetch it from the front desk.

Items you have placed a hold on will be reserved for you for one week.

What does "Über-Nacht-Ausleihe" mean?

Materials labeled this way are part of the reference collection. In general, you cannot check out these materials. There are, however exceptions (see above: "What does the label "Nicht entleihbar" on the back of some books mean?")

When I start a new search, why do I sometimes get the same results as before?

This error occurs sometimes when you use your browser's navigation buttons instead of the catalogue's.

The catalogue was programmed according to a web accessibility policy. Therefore, it only works right when using the implemented navigation. That is also why, if you access it from the library website, it opens in a new window without the browser navigation.

What is my library user number?

For students: your matriculation number.

For other university members and external users: The number on your employee ID / library card.

I've forgotten the password for my library account. What do I do?

Please contact the library staff. We can reset your password, enabling you to choose a new personal password upon your next login.

I can't log in on the catalogue website. What do I do?

If you are certain that the problem isn't a wrong password, please copy the error message you get when trying to log in and send it to the library staff.

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Digital Library

What do databases licensed by the library contain?

The databases provided by the library record scientific technical information on numerous subjects that are relevant for your studies.

Our databases contain, above all, articles from books and periodicals, but also theses and dissertations, surveys, written conference material, legal texts and standards. In short: a large amount of documents to use for your assignments, papers and theses.

There are two types of databases: Full-text databases that enable you to access articles directly online, and bibliographies where you can find information on the (printed) book or journal containing the information you are looking for.

How do I use these databases?

For full access to databases the library has purchased licenses for, you need to be authenticated as a member of the university, either by using a [VPN](#) connection or logging into Shibboleth (see below) or simply by using one of the university/library computers.

To get to the databases, use the database information system (DBIS) which can be found on the library website; click the menu item "Digital Library". You can either enter the database's name in the search box or have the system list all databases relevant for a specific subject using the menu items "Fachübersicht" (subject list) or "Sammlungen" (collections).

The database's entry in DBIS provides a link to the database's interface while automatically authenticating you as a university member, enabling you to fully access the database according to the respective license agreement.

You can find detailed tutorials for the most important databases in DBIS and on the library website.

What do I do if the database doesn't contain the full-text I am looking for?

Using the bibliographic data (such as ISBN/ISSN, author, issue and page number etc.) you can search for (printed) materials containing the article you are looking for in other library and bookselling catalogues or full-text databases.

How do I use the e-book collection?

You can only access the e-book collection if you are on a university computer or logged into the campus network via [VPN](#) or Shibboleth (see below).

Full-texts of e-books purchased by the library can be accessed using the catalogue. Use the advanced search form and choose "E-Book" from the drop-down menu labeled "Type of item". Once you have found an e-book you are interested in, use the link in the table row "URL".

The library also provides a special e-book catalogue that enables you to browse e-books by subjects and other criteria. This catalogue, however, does not include the whole collection.

How do I access electronic periodicals?

You can only access the e-journal collection if you are on a university computer or logged into the campus network via [VPN](#) or Shibboleth (see below).

The electronic periodicals library (EZB) provides access to full-texts purchased by the library. You can find the link on the page "Digital Library" on the library website.

How can I use the digital collections from home?

Outside of the library building, only members of the university may use our digital collections from home. There are two options: A VPN connection or Shibboleth.

Please follow the instructions on [this site](#) on how to establish a VPN connection:

A login mask to authenticate as a university member via Shibboleth will automatically pop up when you try to access a database from the DBIS interface. Please use the login data provided to you by the university computer centre, not the library data.

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Additional services

How do I use the copying machine?

You can pay for copies either with your student ID or change.

Please note that the machine has no automatic feeder. Each document you wish to copy has to be put in manually one at a time.

If the paper tray is empty, you can refill it yourself. You can find new paper on the opposite side of the room on the shelf by the windows. Instructions on how to refill the paper tray will show up on the copier's display.

How do I use the scanner PC?

Log in using the data issued by the university computer center.

Scanned documents can be saved directly to your shared folder on the network drive.

There is also a guest account for external users; however, you need to bring a memory device (flash drive, CD-ROM) of your own.

How do I use the research computers?

The database research computers on the ground floor can be accessed by using the data issued by the university computer center. For external users there is a guest login; if the computer is off or nobody is authenticated at the moment, please contact the library staff.

You can send downloaded full-texts to yourself using a webmail account or you can bring a memory device (flash drive, CD-ROM) to save them onto.

How do I purchase print credit?

At the beginning of the semester your print credits will be automatically increased to 12.50 euros. In case you need more print credit you can use the payment function of your student ID card to purchase vouchers to the value of 2.50 euros, 5.00 euros or 10.00 euros in the library. To purchase you need money on your student ID card. To recharge your student card you have to go to building 1 (Bau 1), ground floor. In the library you purchase the print credit at the payment machine close to the lockers. Then present the receipt to the library staff (circulation desk) where you will receive a print credit voucher ("Gutschein für Druckguthaben"). The instructions on how to redeem the voucher number can be found on the voucher itself (in German only). Credit that you do not consume in the current semester will be transferred to the next semester. Remaining print credit on your student ID card at the end of study is not refundable.

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