
INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' **SURVIVAL GUIDE**

to life in Denmark

A

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WELCOME TO DENMARK

WELCOME! You have decided to study in Denmark, and for that we salute you. We hope that you will enjoy your stay. We know that acclimatising to a new country and a new city can be complicated – and we know that the Danes can be a little weird at times, so this book will give you tips, insights and background information on how to experience the best possible student life in Denmark.

In each chapter you will find useful information, tips and tricks, fun (and not so fun) facts about Denmark, and a variety of links and places to get even more information.

This book is a guide to many different aspects of Danish





CULTURE SHOCK

ARRIVING IN A NEW COUNTRY can result in both practical and personal issues. Some people even talk about experiencing an actual “culture shock.” Here are some tips on how to make your first time in a new culture easier and more enjoyable.

Although Denmark is a well-organised country and people here are eager to make you feel comfortable, you will need some time to settle in. There may be times when you question why you left home, which is likely similar to what your fellow students are feeling.

When this happens, it is important for you to remember that you are going through a learning process. By accepting this brief adaptation period as a learning experience, you will ultimately return home with greater self-confidence and the skillset to succeed in a multicultural environment.

So keep active, engage in social opportunities, talk to people and try to learn Danish.

Remember: you are not alone in experiencing this. Talking about your feelings and worries is the best way to deal with loneliness or homesickness.

Tip!

Here are some tips on easing yourself into a new culture from Study in Denmark (www.studyindenmark.dk)

- › Accept that you cannot know everything about your new country and language
- › Keep an open mind
- › Try to do things that you did at home
- › Stay in touch with family and friends at home
- › Talk to other students about how you feel
- › Stay active by getting involved in nearby clubs (foreninger), or by joining a sports team



You're not alone!

(Even if you feel like it)

Moving to a new city can be tough. Moving to a different country and culture altogether can be even tougher.

Surveys indicate that about one in four of the international students in Denmark have experienced loneliness during their stay. However, this is not only a problem for international students – similar surveys from 2015, amongst Danish students, show that about one in six of them also feel lonely at university.

Students' loneliness may be caused by the fragmented university structure and the lack of centrally located social activities. If you want to counter this, there are many ways to get involved both at your university and in your city, and through the local Student House (Studentterhus). See chapter 6 for more ideas.



DENMARK AT A GLANCE!





TRANSPORTATION AND GETTING AROUND TOWN

WITHIN THE CITIES, biking, walking, and taking public transportation are more than enough to get you around town.

Bikes can be quite cheap, often the fastest solution (no waiting for the bus), and most Danes will bike regardless of rain or snow. If you have only just learned how to ride a bike upon coming to Denmark, do be careful so that you don't hurt yourself. In some Danish cities, Red Cross occasionally organises "bike schools" for foreigners who would like to learn.

If you know how to ride a bike, find an affordable yet reliable one (ask your classmates where they bought theirs, or check various Facebook groups where you can buy a used one), and remember to be safe while using it.

Signal when you turn and when you stop, stop for red lights and you should always (always) stay in the bike lane or as far right on the road as is safely possible. Remember to get lights for your bike (white for the front, red for the back) to use at night, and to not bike on sidewalks or through pedestrian crossings.

It is not mandatory to wear a helmet in Denmark, but keep your brain safe and get a proper one that fits you and has the CE certificate (a sticker inside the helmet with CE, stating that it's approved). It can save your life. For safety reasons, we recommend that you do not listen to loud music, and know that the use of your

mobile phone while biking is illegal.

E-scooters have also become quite a thing in major Danish cities. These are great for a quick trip, but can add up and be a bit expensive. Use the various e-scooters with caution as they can be tricky to handle.

In the bigger cities, busses, metros, and local trains are all good reliable options for transportation. In Aarhus, you also have the Light Rail, which is a great alternative to other means of transportation.

Across Denmark, there are trains (check out DSB's "Orange" tickets), ferries, and coach services that you can take. Train lines run between the different regions.

You must have a valid ticket or commuter card when using public transportation, as the fines for riding without one are high in all cities.

Outside the cities people often travel by car, and most families have at least one. It is expensive to own a car in Denmark due to high car taxes, high fuel prices, and high insurance costs, so few students own one. But there are services which allow cheap car rental and car-pooling like GoMore.

The app "Rejseplanen" is a great tool to plan your trip, and provide you with an overview of public transport options.

THINGS TO SEE AND DO IN YOUR UNIVERSITY CITY



AARHUS

AROS The huge museum of modern art in Aarhus has both permanent and visiting exhibitions. It is famous for Ron Mueck's statue "Boy" and Olafur Eliasson's "Your Rainbow Panorama," from which you can see Aarhus from above, tinted by all colours of the rainbow.

AARHUS FESTUGE For 10 days in August/September all of Aarhus is bustling with art, theatre, dance, music, and too many events to mention in the cultural melting pot that is known as the "Aarhus week of festivities."

NORTHSIDE A prominent "city festival" (so no camping) with major international rock and pop acts with an emphasis on sustainability and good food.

BAZAR VEST If you venture out to the Western Aarhus suburb Gellerupparken, you'll come across Bazar Vest. Here you can find food, spices and groceries from all over the world in the market hall, showcasing the multicultural Aarhus at its nest.

www.visitaarhus.com

LGBTQ

Denmark legalised same-sex civil marriage in 1989 and same-sex church marriages in 2012. Overall, the majority of people in bigger Danish cities are open-minded, tolerant and inclusive towards the LGBTQ community. Copenhagen in particular has a big and diverse social scene. Both Copenhagen and Aarhus host big pride parades and celebrations, and many smaller cities follow suit.

If you are looking for (y)]]TJ 0 w8llow sui

GETTING STARTED IN DENMARK

THIS CHAPTER

WHERE TO GO IN AALBORG AARHUS ODENSE ROSKILDE AND COPENHAGEN

A blue circular icon with a scalloped edge containing the text "Info!".

Info!

RULES AND REQUIREMENTS FOR GETTING A CPR-NUMBER

For EU students

(including EEA and Swiss citizens)

You need:

- › First you need a EU Residence document (also known as a registration certificate)
- › The Danish Agency for Labour Retention and International Recruitment (SIRI) will issue your registration certificate.
- › YAgency for Labour Retention and



VISA/residence permit for NON-EU/EAA citizens

Before coming to Denmark you need to find out whether

SU IS THE DANISH STUDENT'S GRANT. All Danish students at a recognised educational institution are eligible to apply for SU.

Besides Danish students, it is only possible for EU/EEA and Nordic citizens to receive SU. As an EU or Nordic citizen receiving SU, you are required to fulfil a list of criteria. One requirement, for example, is that you have to have a paid (legal) job for 10-12 hours per week.

If you fulfil the criteria, you still need to apply for the SU to get it. Go to the SU office at your school or check SU.dk.

If you receive SU, there is a limit to how much you can earn per year while getting the grant. If you earn more

Info!

Read more about getting mobile phone plans here:

www.forbrugseksperten.dk/english/mobile/exchange-student

www.justlanded.com/english/Denmark/Denmark-Guide/Telephone-Internet/Mobile-phone

www.lonelyplanet.com/denmark/telephone

PHONES

Denmark uses these frequencies for mobile signals:

GSM/GPRS/EDGE (2G)

UMTS and HSDPA (3G and Turbo 3G)

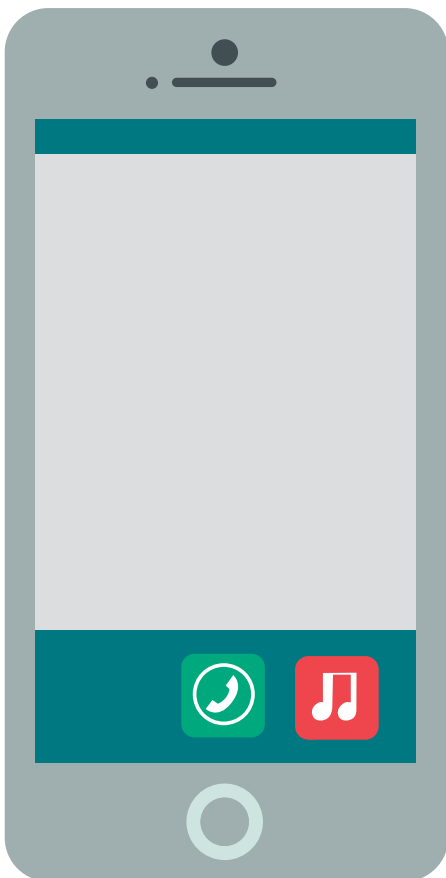
LTE (4G)

The frequencies are the same standard as in the rest of Europe:

GSM/GPRS/EDGE: 900/1800 MHz

UMTS/HSPA+: 900/2100 MHz

LTE: 800/1800/2600 MHz



NOW YOU HAVE a CPR-number and a bank account, which will make it easier to get practical issues like your phone plan and Internet sorted.

Mobile phones

It is very common for Danish students to use mobile phones in their everyday lives.

Most of the cheapest options will be online-based phone plans, where you pay either a fixed amount per month or pay-as-you-go for the services. Sim cards are very cheap in Denmark compared to all other countries, but the price will vary depending on how much you talk and how much traffic and data you want on your phone.

If you come from a European country, your phone will most likely work here. The majority of phones that are sold around the world will also work in Denmark.

How to get a mobile phone

If you need a new phone, most companies has discounted phone deals when you sign up.

This is a great topic to ask the Danish students from your classes about. Ask them what company they use, and if they would recommend it. It is a good idea to ask a local Dane about their phone coverage, especially since their answer will be a lot more honest than that of a phone sales person. Choose according to your needs and budget.

A good tip is to get a plan that comes with affordable international use. Though we would recommend Skype or similar online communication platforms for long distance calls and daily communication with people back home, the mobile plans with free roaming and data (in EU countries) are useful for when you explore countries outside of Denmark.

If you have to make a lot of international calls, it is also worth looking into the phone companies that specialise in this.

The country calling code for Denmark is +45. Remember this when calling Danish numbers from a non-Danish phone provider or network.

MOST UNIVERSITIES, libraries, and residential halls/dorms already have free Internet for students and/or residents. As a student, you will have access to the Eduroam network if this is provided at your school.

Read more about Eduroam here:
www.eduroam.org/index.php?p=faq

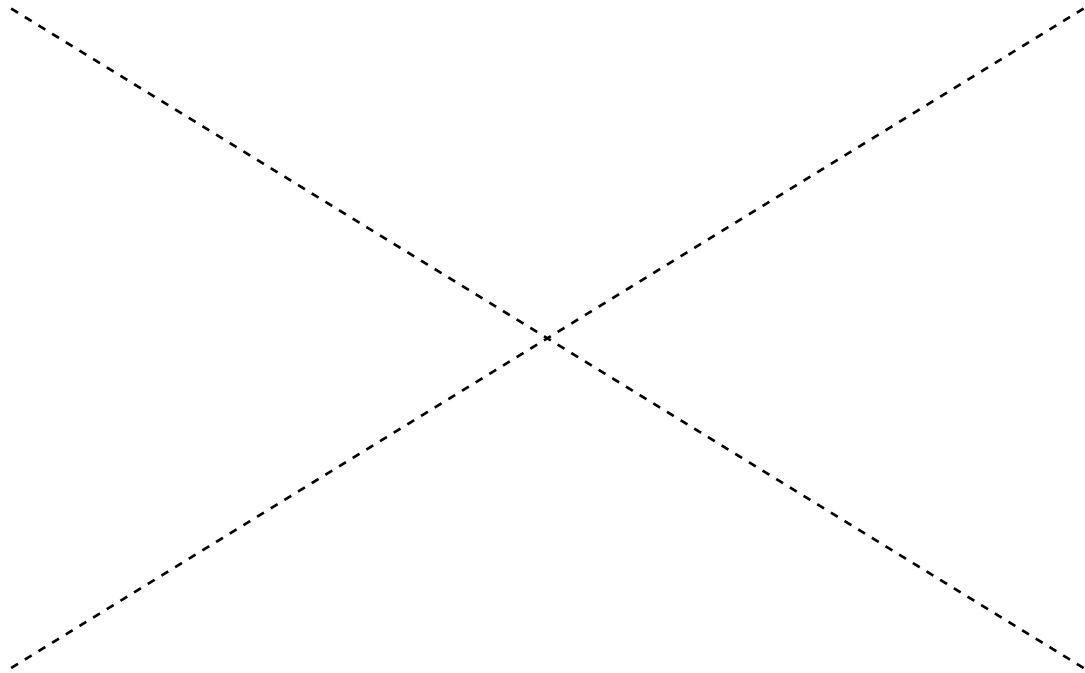
If you need another Wi-Fi option, there are many phone and internet suppliers that sell USB-modems, which are a cheap and portable solution.

If you are living in a private at without Internet, talk to your landlord before ordering a cable line. The building might have a deal with a provider, and you don't want to

spend more money on this than you should.

If in doubt, the personal USB-modem is a cheap and easy solution and you are normally not bound for a long period of time. You might even be able to get a combined deal when you order your phone plan.

Read more about good Internet solutions here:



THE EASIEST WAY to get around most Danish cities is on bike, by foot or by public transportation. Cars can be expensive to buy, insure, fuel, and park in the bigger cities, so consider whether or not you really need one, especially if you're on a budget.

Cabs are expensive, but it is a good idea to have the number of a local reliable taxi-service saved in your phone in the event that you should need it. Ask other students what taxi-service they prefer.

Public transportation works well throughout Denmark. If you have a longer commute, and fulfill some specific requirements, you might be eligible for a student commuter card (ungdomskort).

Go to your nearest DSB station, bring documentation proving that you are a student (especially if you receive SU) and talk to the DSB staff about the cheapest options for your transportation needs. They are normally very helpful.

DSB: www.dsb.dk/en

Ungdomskort: www.ungdomskort.dk/ungdomskort

If you use bus, local trains or metro, check out how the

EMERGENCY

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

The two phone numbers you need to remember are:

Emergency

Police

Should you need emergency assistance immediately dial 112. If you need police assistance or have to report something dial 114.

Emergency services

If you have an emergency situation call 112 for ambulance, police, and fire service. The emergency call centre will ask for your name, address, and the phone number you are calling from. They will then make sure that the appropriate help is sent immediately.

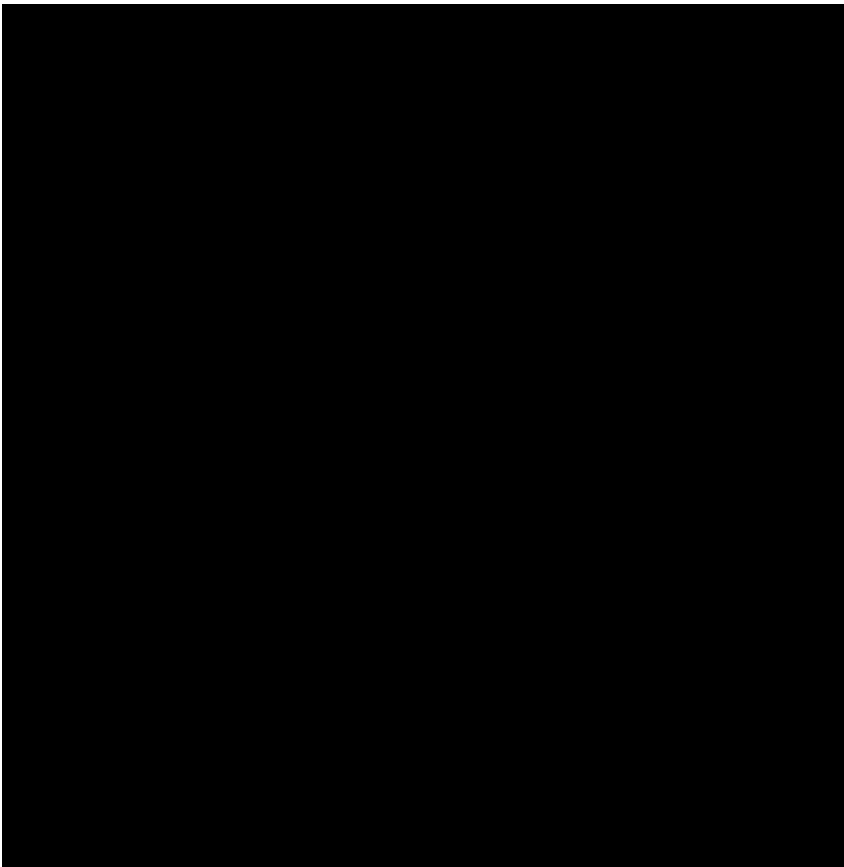
Do not use this number unless it is an emergency and you need the aforementioned services, cluttering the line prevents a quick response to people in real need.

However, if it is an emergency; dial 112

Police

Danish culture and everyday life is based on a high degree of mutual trust and tolerance. The crime rates in Denmark are low, but it is of course still wise to use common sense to stay safe and to look after your valuables. The Danish police are normally helpful and service-minded, so do not be afraid to contact them if needed.







DENTISTS AND EXTRA HEALTHCARE SERVICES

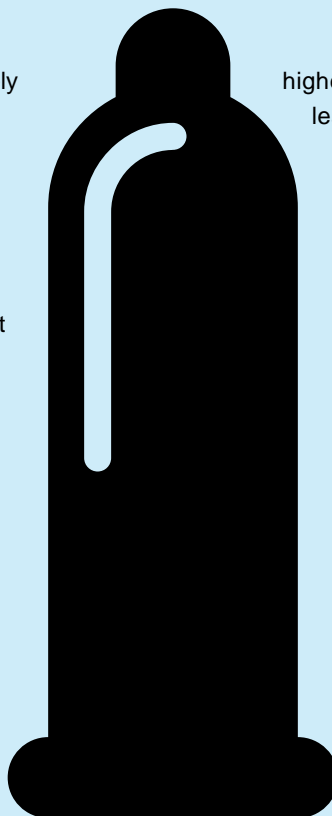
DENTISTRY IN DENMARK is unfortunately not covered by the free health care system, nor is physiotherapy or psychological help.

Dentists are private practitioners. Adults over the age of 18 must find their own private dentist. Dental care in Denmark comes at a subsidised rate and the amount paid by the state will be automatically deducted from your bill. Ask your fellow students for a good dependable dentist and remember to ask about the price as well. Most dentists have websites where you can see their rates.

For physiotherapy, psychological help and specialist doctors, you can get a referral from your GP. This might lower the cost, so it is advisable to take this route.

Sexual health

More than 90% of all students in



higher education in Denmark have had sex at least once in their life.

Birth control and sexual health are not taboo topics (though not exactly dinner table conversation either), and you're considered to be responsible for your own health and safety.

Condoms are widely available and should always be used to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

If you need to talk to a doctor about your sexual health, and don't want to go to your GP, several hospitals in the bigger cities have clinics specifically designated for this purpose. However, your GP interactions are covered by professional confidentiality and the common Danish GP will never judge you for being sexually active. It is, after all, the normal thing in Denmark.



YOU ARE STRONGLY ADVISED to make sure that you have proper insurance while studying in Denmark. Some insurances are required by law, if you own a car for instance, but for the average student, the following are the recommended insurance coverage:

Third-party liability insurance

FAMILY, CHILDREN, AND PETS



IF YOU HAVE A RESIDENCE PERMIT as a student at a higher educational programme or at a PhD programme in Denmark, you will normally be able to bring your family with you to Denmark. Family in this context means spouse or partner plus kids.

Your spouse, registered partner, or cohabiting partner can get a residence permit, as can your children under 18, if they are living with you. To be accepted as cohabiting partners, you must have lived together for a period of at least 18-24 months before moving to Denmark.

www.nyidanmark.dk/en-GB/You-want-to-apply/Family/Accompanying-family-members/Accompanying-family---study-and-PhD

Citizen Service can help you if you have questions regarding daycare for your kids, choosing schools, and general registration of these things. It is worth contacting them

early in the process, if you plan to move to Denmark with kids, since you don't want to have to rush these things when you arrive.

Pets

Remember that there are rules for bringing your pet or service animal into Denmark. It normally requires permission before travelling here, so make sure to get this in order.

You can read more about it here:

www.foedevarestyrelsen.dk/english/ImportExport/Travelling_with_pet_animals

Remember to check with your housing contract, landlord, and potential atmates whether you are allowed to have a pet in your new Danish home. It is better to be prepared than to have any problems with your accommodation once you have already brought your pet.

NemID ("EASY ID") is

INFORMATION REGARDING YOUR POSSIBILITIES and rights as an international student with a disability may be difficult to find. The Danish support system for mentally and physically impaired students is called SPS.

What is SPS?

OKAY. YOU HAVE ARRIVED, you have conquered the paperwork and braved the weather, and now you are ready to start your studies.

Even though you're probably already aware that there are great differences between your home country's education system and the Danish one, you might still find yourself surprised by how Danish student life works.

Though the Danish universities and bigger educational institutions often have a campus area actual university campuses do not exist.

Rather than be confined to a "campus", the universities function as part of the city they are placed in. As a student you will get to utilise the surrounding city as part of your university and overall educational experience.

The universities are mainly concerned with the academic part of your student life. They aim to ensure your academic development, but generally don't interfere with your life outside of class. This means that you might not be offered the same non-academic services that you're used to back home. Don't worry!

The services are still there; only they're not necessarily run by the universities or institutions themselves, but

by governmental or non-profit organisations, or by student-run communities.

Being a student is generally seen as a job in Denmark. It is something you do for a living (full time), and not as a bubble shielded from the things you have to deal with in a "normal" adult life.

As a student, you will normally live in residential halls (called kollegiums), shared flats, or maybe even your own flat. You will cook, clean, pay your bills, and do everything else yourself, and then commute (by bike or public transportation) to the university where you have your classes. You will study, prepare, read, and agonise over exams, but what you do in your free time is not based on what you study.

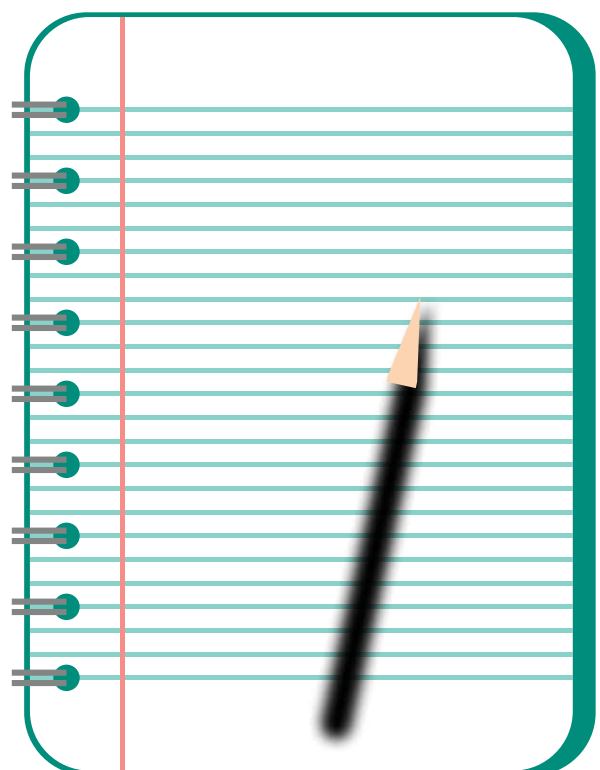
While a lot of Danish students are very social with their fellow students, the basis of social life and activities for students are not organised through their studies as such.

BEING A STUDENT

MOST DANISH UNIVERSITIES use a mix of lectures and smaller classroom-based sessions. The larger lectures mainly consist of the professor discussing a subject, often using slides or examples, whereas the smaller classroom sessions are more interactive and place a greater emphasis on student participation and discussion.

The ethos of Danish education is to “take responsibility for your own education,” meaning that you are rarely tested on the reading or having your attendance checked. Do not take this as a reason to skip class or not do the reading. You will still have exams and assignments that you need to pass and many subjects might include group work with other students, who are depending on you to show up prepared.

As a rule, the Danish education system requires the students to be independent, inquiring, and responsible. It is rare to encounter a professor who will tell you exactly how you should complete an assignment, or what to write in an exam, and this can be a big adjust-



Semesters

The Danish academic year starts by September 1st of each year. Some universities will hold

National Union of
Students in Denmark

LIFE OUTSIDE UNI



Student jobs

A lot of Danish students have jobs alongside their studies. These can be either part-time jobs in the service sector or private childcare. It can also be jobs relevant to their studies; either at the university as student employees or in the field of employment that they wish to work in after graduating.

Getting a student job is of course a great way to fund your life as a student, and it can be a wonderful way to meet people, make friends, and learn about the Danish work culture. It can however be complicated for international students to find a student job, which is why we have written an entire chapter about this later in this book.

Social life and student-run initiatives

Not having a campus life as such means that your social life as a student will depend on how much you choose to engage in social activities.

Though not run directly by the university, there are a bunch of social activities at the universities, often run by students either from your own field of study or from the university as a whole.

Some of the most common social initiatives at the Danish universities are the SU-friendly Friday bars. This is where you can go to hang out with your fellow students each Friday, wind down with a drink and have fun. Some of the bars function as volunteer cafés during the week, which can give you a social meeting point Monday to Friday. Often there will be a party committee related to the Friday bar as well, that will organise bigger parties for either their own field of study or the entire institute or faculty. If you want to meet students from other programs than your own, doing a “Friday bar pubcrawl” can be a fun way to do so.

Student Houses

All of the big university cities have a student house, all of which are called Studenterhus, Studenterhuset or something similar. These are volunteer-run student organisations with a café/bar/concert venue that host a lot of social and student-related activities. You can either join their events or sign up as volunteer.

Copenhagen:

www.studenterhuset.com/en

www.facebook.com/studenterhusetkbh

www.studenthouse.dk

www.facebook.com/StudentandInnovationHouse

Roskilde:

www.studenterhusetruc.dk

www.facebook.com/StudenterhusetRUC

Odense:

www.studenterhus.dk

www.facebook.com/StudenterhusOdense

Aarhus:

www.studenterhusaarhus.dk

www.facebook.com/StudenterhusAarhus

Aalborg:

www.studenterhuset.dk

www.facebook.com/studenterhuset.aalborg

Meeting people

Most universities have social immersion programs designed specifically for international students. These can be referred to as mentor, tutor, or buddy programs, the names can differ a bit.

They are essentially programs pairing Danish (or already established international students) with newly arrived students in order to give them a fun and safe introduction to their new life as a student in Denmark. They'll also be able to help with social activities and advice about jobs.

In most cases, you can sign up as soon as you have been admitted, so remember to check if this is a possibility for you once you have received your admittance letter.

A lot of the activities that you are used to having offered at your home institution might also be available here. There are student or university-run sport clubs, choirs, societies for various interests, and charities. Often you just have to ask around and keep an eye out for the posters hanging around campus, or check relevant international Facebook groups to see what activities are available.

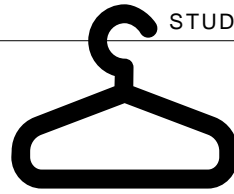
Most universities also have a yearly party or event for all of their students.

Hobbies & interests

Since Danish students often have social lives that take place outside of their studies, you should also try to find activities off campus. Get involved in the city – enjoy the cultural opportunities or the outdoors, volunteer for an organisation that is not necessarily related to the university or seek out your own interests. Most of Danish civil life is organised in the form known as “foreninger” and there is something for almost every interest on the planet, so if you are looking for something specific in terms of sports or hobbies, just Google it. Chances are that your new city will have a forening for whatever it is that you are looking for, and joining that club or activity will be a great way of meeting new people.

For more tips on how to get involved socially and meet new friends – see the chapter “Meeting the Danes”





Clothes

If you would like to buy new, affordable clothing, one of the high street larger chain shops would normally be your best bet. The big supermarkets in Denmark also often have special offers on well-known sports brands and other apparel, so

Volunteer for experiences

One way to experience fun and interesting things while being a

student is to volunteer for a wide

Free events

There are usually a wide and interesting variety of free cultural and social events in all of the big cities in Denmark. Keep an eye on your local newspaper, posters and flyers at the university and local student house, and follow the various groups that share and post links to free events in your area.

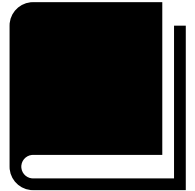
A MORE SUSTAINABLE STUDENT LIFE

- Be a sustainable role model on campus

As a student in Denmark, there are a lot of options to choose from if you want to minimise the negative effect your study-life

Books are \$\$ and CO₂ heavy

One of the first things you will need to pay for as a student in Denmark is academic books. As mentioned, these are often a nasty expense and they have a large effect on your carbon footprint. This is why we recommend you to buy your books second hand or as an e-book. There are many Facebook groups relevant for nearly every Danish university. If you're studying at CBS, there are also platforms like www.unibazaar.dk.



Info!

www.studyindenmark.dk/live-in-denmark/housing-1/how-to-nd-housing

no one in their right mind would call living in a Danish university town cheap.

If you are okay with living outside the city centre/right next to the university, you can save on rent. Remember to check bus/train access, commute time and “bike-to-city-and-university” times before signing a contract, so that you are sure it is possible to get to university on time in the morning.

Student housing is somewhat different in Denmark than it is in other countries. Rather than applying through the university, you must apply directly to the residence hall (kollegium) or sign up on a waiting list. It can be difficult to get a room in a Danish kollegium due to the high levels of competition, so we advise you to start applying before you arrive in Denmark.

As this kind of housing is not always readily available in Denmark, we encourage you to look at other housing options as well. By living off-campus, you will be exposed to more of the city and be more likely to experience life in Denmark outside of the university bubble.

Good luck with your house hunting!

Make a budget

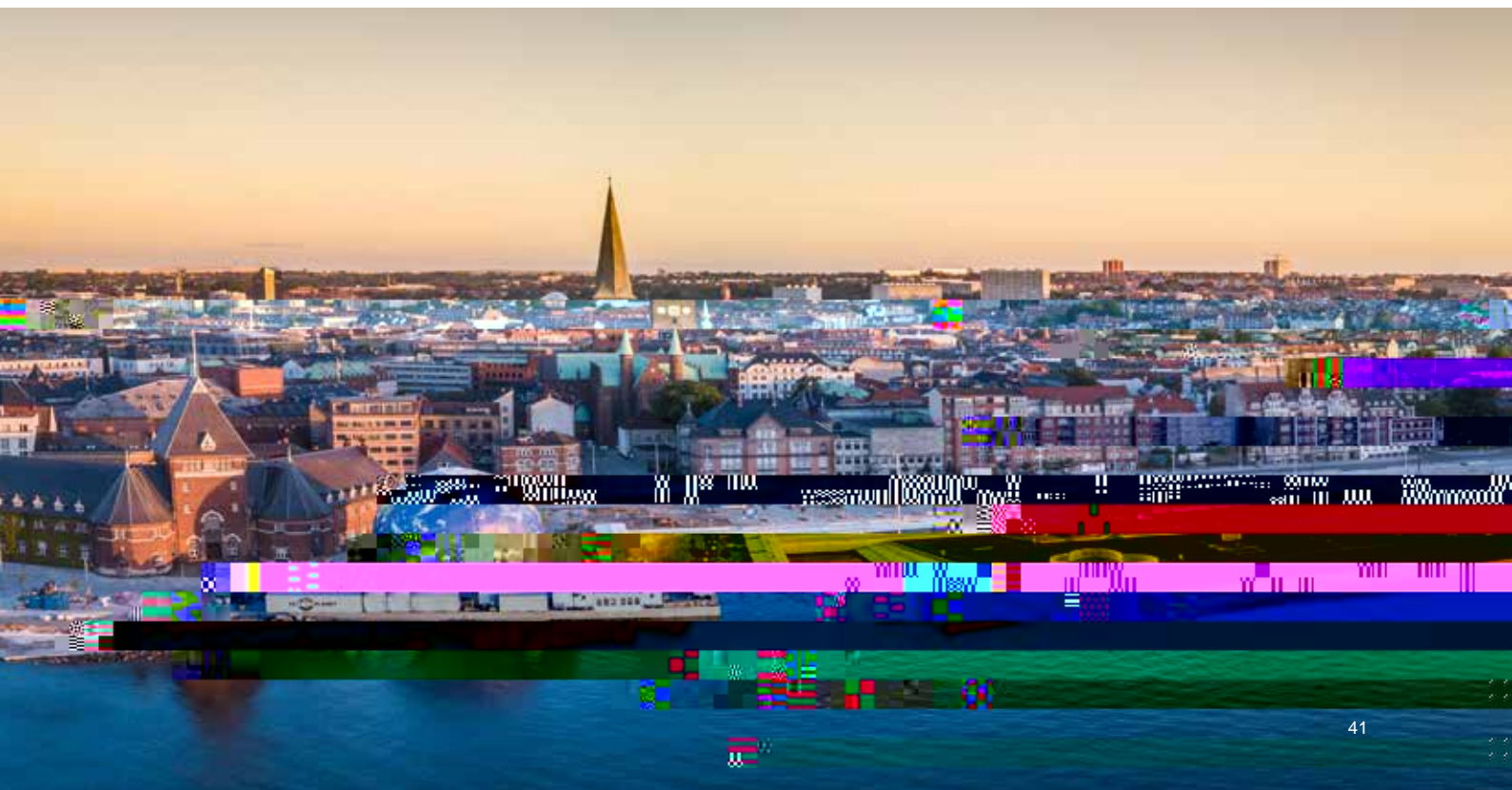
12 3

Here are a few links with information on suggested budgets so as to give you an idea about living expenses in Denmark, including rent:

www.international.au.dk/life/lifeindenmark/costofiving

www.studyindenmark.dk/live-in-denmark/bank-budget

There are also various apps that can help you budget and keep track of your expenses - ask your Danish classmates!



Official channels

This is where most people start. It is not good for short-term solutions, but if you get

University services

All of the major universities in Denmark offers advice on housing. What they can offer differs from city to city, but it is worth contacting them.

Some of the big universities are listed here - otherwise ask at your school's international office:

Copenhagen:

HOUSING OPTIONS

Kollegium (Residential halls and dorms)

Kollegiums are the Danish form of student residences. The kollegiums in Denmark house students from a variety of different universities and education levels and are often located throughout the city. Many of the kollegiums have their own traditions, and will encourage an active social participation. This is a good way to meet students outside your own field of studies.

Here, students stay in a single room and usually share a big kitchen with 3-25 other people. The kitchens have common areas where students hang out with other residents. Living in this type of kollegium is often a very social experience and a great way to meet new people. Some kollegiums are designed as apartments, either with your own kitchen and bathroom, or as big apartments where you share a kitchen, bathroom, and common area with 2-5 other people. These kollegiums offer a bit more privacy, but don't have the same social environment as the kollegiums with large, shared kitchens.

Danish students living in kollegiums often sublet their rooms to other students when they go abroad for a semester. Ask people living in kollegiums if they know of anyone who will be subletting their room, or keep an eye out for relevant Facebook posts in the kollegium groups.

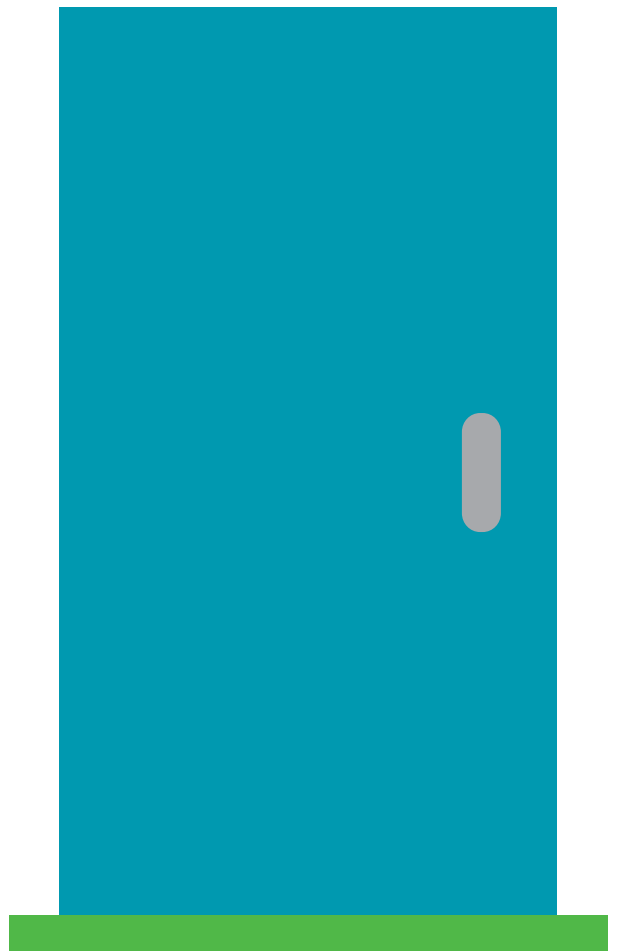
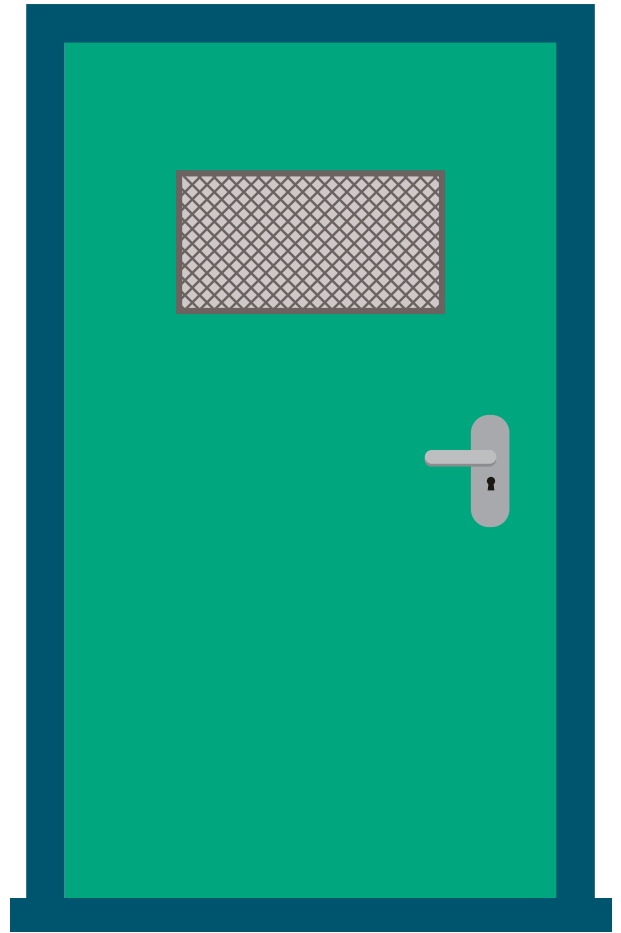
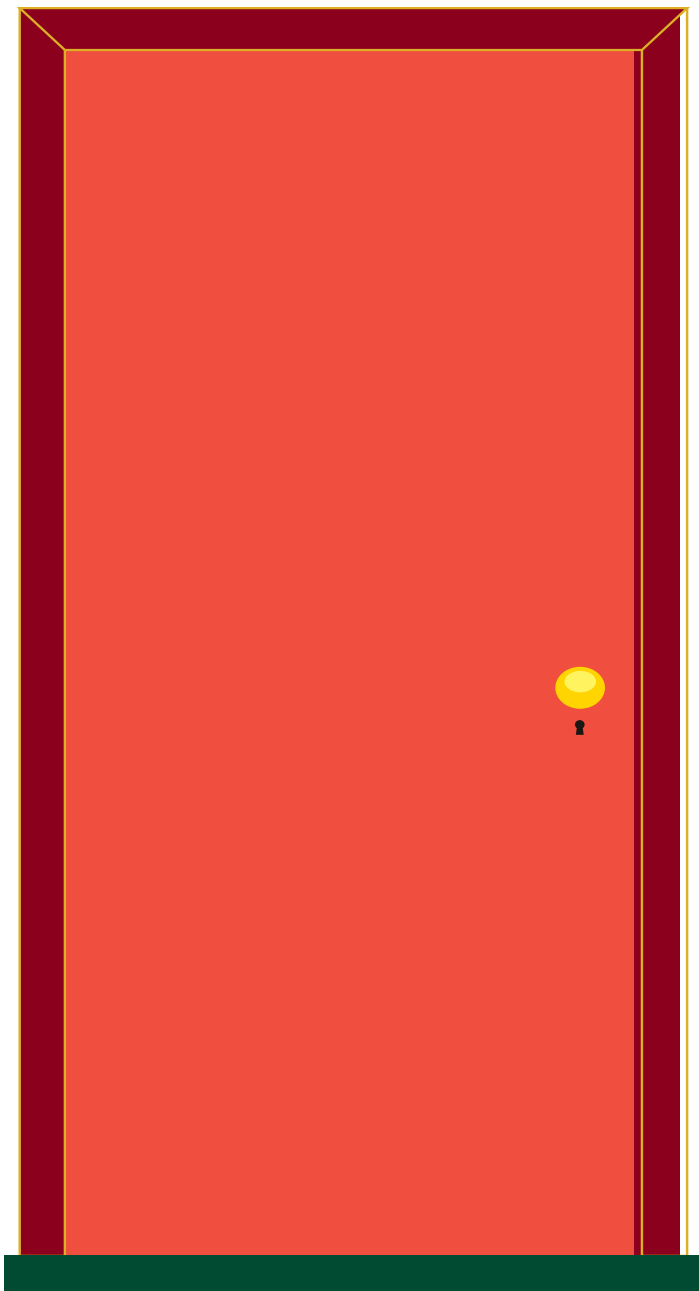
Admittance to a kollegium is usually determined by a waiting list, but some kollegiums accept new residents based on motivated or creative personal applications.

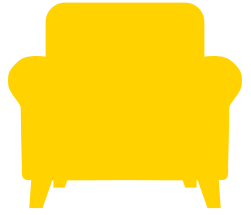
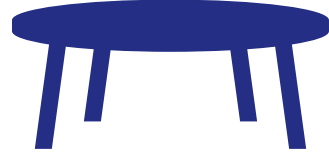
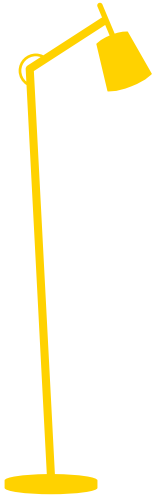
Finally, it is worth mentioning that many kollegiums were built in the 50's and 60's, which are now showing signs of wear and tear. Obviously, you get what you pay for, so instead of expecting luxury, enjoy the experience and the fact that kollegiums are a great way to meet new people and fellow students.

CIU – the centralised Kollegium and Student Flat Service:
www.ndbolig.nu/Common/Help/English.aspx

Housing Anywhere (subletting)







DANISH APARTMENTS AND ADDRESSES...

Danish housing calls the ground floor 0 (or st. for stuen), the floor above that is the 1st floor and so forth.

In Denmark, the number of “rooms” determines the apartment size. This number is created by combining the bedrooms and living room – but does not include the kitchen, bathroom, or hallways.

In regards to apartment blocks, apartment addresses are written as street name, house number, floor number (st., 1st, 2nd, etc) followed by apartment placement – th., mf., and tv. This means “to the right,” “the middle” and “to the left”

Remember to include your postal code and city name (as in 1608 København V) when writing your address.

PRACTICAL INFO

Tap water is drinkable all over Denmark and often of a better quality than expensive bottled water.

Danish houses are normally very well insulated – double (or even triple) glazed windows and double walls will keep the cold out during the winter.

Most Danish apartments are heated with radiators that use hot water. Turn them on when it starts to get cold. Normally the “3” setting will ensure a nice and cosy room. As the radiators run via thermostats, remember to turn off the radiator when you have opened windows - that way you’ll avoid expensive heating bills.

It’s normal for kollegiums and apartment buildings to have a common laundry room for all of the tenants, so don’t be surprised if there isn’t a washing machine in your apartment. Ask for info about the “vaskekælder” when moving in.

LET THE HOUSE HUNTING BEGIN – here are some links to get you started

www.boligsurf.dk: Flats, shared apartments, and rooms for rent

www.boligdeal.dk: Site coordinating communication between tenants, buyers, and landlords of private housing.

www.ndroommate.dk: Students and others looking for roommates.

www.lejerbo.dk: Lejerbo manages apartments across Denmark, including youth housing.

www.dba.dk: Similar to Ebay. List of flats and rooms for rent. Some ads are free to view.

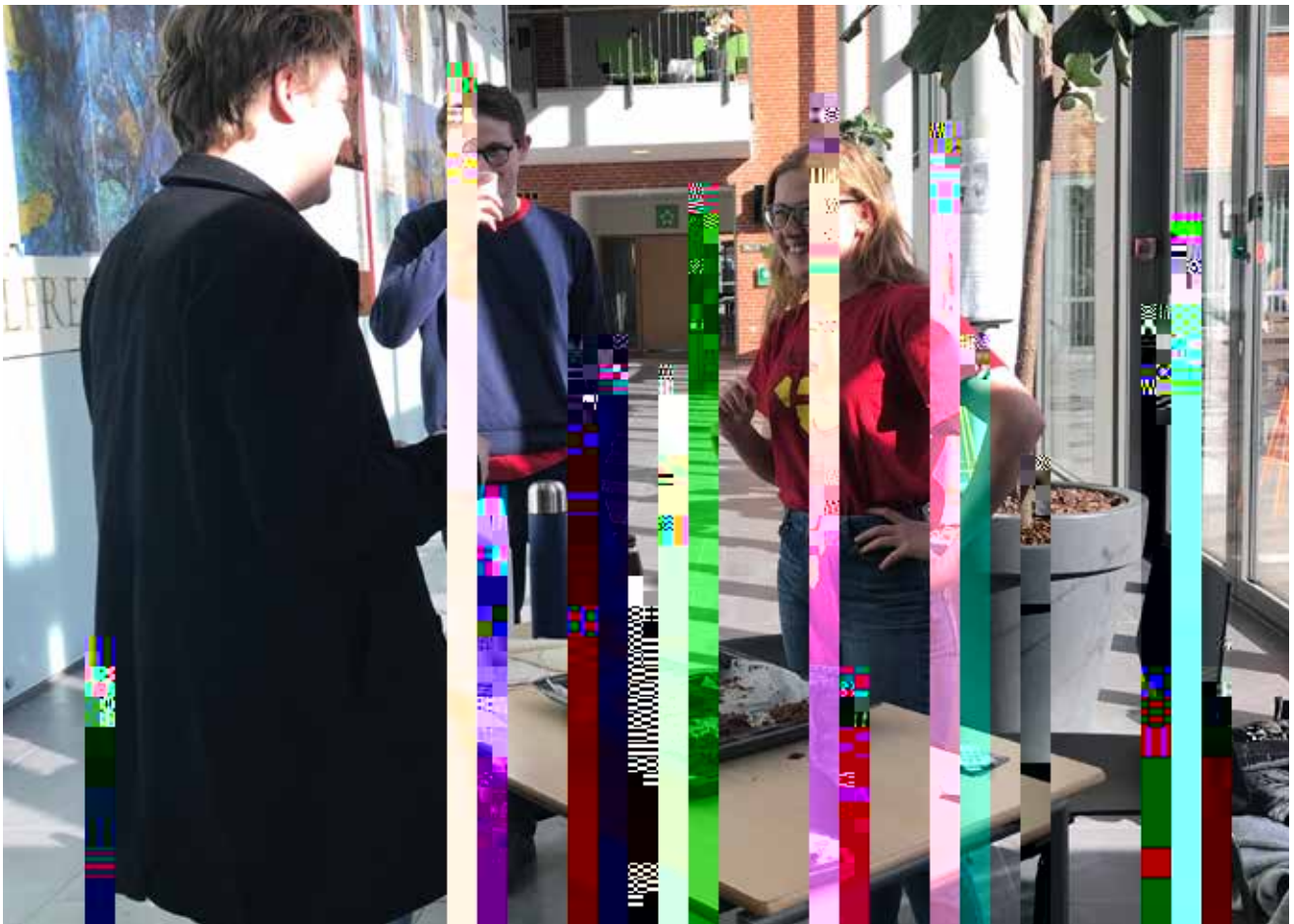
<https://en.lejebolig.dk>: Flats, shared apartments, and rooms for rent.

www.ndbolig.nu: Flats and youth housing. See relevant English guides on the site.

www.boligportalen.dk/en: Rooms and apartments for rent all over Denmark.

www.studyindenmark.dk/live-in-denmark/housing-1/how-to-nd-housing





MEETING THE DANES

DANES. They're everywhere and yet they can seem like an elusive rarity in your life as an international student.

Naturally, they are there physically, but how do you meet them? Let alone, how do you get to know or befriend them and maybe even (drumroll) date them?

It can seem like an insurmountable task, and maybe it's easier to just hang out with the other international students and joke about the antisocial Danes, but if you want a local network as a student (the shortcut to jobs, housing, and an all-around fun time in Denmark), befriending the Danes is a must.



MEETING PEOPLE

The first step to finding new Danish friends is knowing where to meet your fellow students. Certain circumstances make for excellent time windows during which you can meet and make Danish friends, even if you don't know anyone yet.

Some of the ones you'll encounter as a student are:

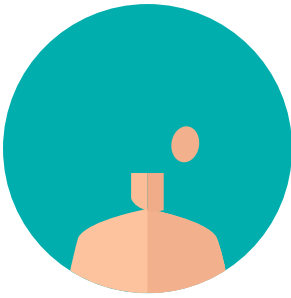
Mentor/buddy programs

Most places have various mentor and buddy programs that provide a safety net, practical contacts, and a social network for new international students. If you get a chance to join one, it's a great way to meet other people from both Denmark and the rest of the world, and the people signing up to be mentors or buddies are most likely interested in getting an international network.

Even if you haven't been in one of the programs yourself, and are a long-term international student in Denmark, ask your local international office if it's possible for you to become a mentor or buddy in the future. This is a great way to use your experiences to help new international students and to meet new people in the process. Please note that CBS does not have an actual mentor/buddy programme but have international ambassadors available.

Clubs and activities

Most schools have a wide variety of clubs, activities, and foreninger (see explanation on the following pages) that you can join as a student. Are you interested in music? Join the choir, the glee club, or the yearly revue. Like your local SU-friendly Friday bar? Join the group organising it! Do you like sports? Most departments or institutes have their own sports team. If not, the universities should have bigger central sports organisations that you can join. Each department or institute will often have academic clubs and an alumni organisation, both of which have members who will plan social and academic events for their members.



SU-friendly Friday bars and parties at your course/institute:

They're cheap, local, and jam-packed with other students from your own area of education. This means, that you will definitely have something to talk about while drinking cheap beer, drinks or soda, playing board games and complaining about exams together.

Often, the institutes or the universities have a cheap student-run café, where you can hangout after classes and chat to fellow students.

If you have any initiatives like this at your school, go there! It is a great way to meet Danish students, especially at the beginning of the semester, when everyone will be looking for new friends and are very social and more open-minded.

Studenterhuset aka the Student House

All the major university cities in Denmark have their own Studenterhus aka Student house. They are volunteer-run non-profit organisations that organise social activities for the entire university (or all the universities if there are more than one in the city), and provide a social space for all students.

The prices are student friendly and the student houses function as cafés, bars, concert venues, and event spaces, while providing a host of activities for the student community.

Additionally, the student houses often offer valuable activities for students besides the cheap beers – it could be job fairs, housing events, networking events, and current affairs debates.

Since the student houses are mainly volunteer-run, you can either participate in the activities offered as a guest or sign up to help as a volunteer. The latter will definitely ensure that you meet a lot of new friends and maybe even get some useful job experience on top of that.

Become a volunteer

Student volunteers run most of these aforementioned activities either partly or completely. Getting involved in a volunteer activity is a great way to meet Danes and provides an opportunity to bond over mutual interests and projects. People will usually be happy to hire you or have you join their organisation if you offer your time and dedication as a volunteer, so ask around if you are interested in joining an activity at your university or local student house.

There are many other ways to volunteer and these are covered in the specific volunteering section in this chapter



“Foreningskultur”

A thing that is unique to Danish culture and socialising is the emphasis on foreninger. This is relatively complicated to translate, as it is a Danish/Scandinavian concept that has been a pillar in these countries' civil societies for almost 150 years. A “forening” is a democratic, membership-based organisation with a common theme, goal, or activity. A board, consisting of members from the organisation, runs the forening and every member has the right to vote and participate in the activities, given that you

Volunteer organisations

A lot of students in Denmark do volunteer work, either on a regular basis or for special events in their city, community, or within their fields of interest.

If you're interested in regular (weekly or monthly) volunteer work, your local Studenterhus or Student Council is a great place to start. Both Tw

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DANISH FRIENDS...

(IT IS A PROCESS, NOT A MAGIC FIX)

MANY DANES ARE still friends with people they go far back with; they might have friends from their primary school, high school, or from their junior football team and scout patrols back when they were 10. Even though they might not tell you, many Danes think forming new friendships as grown-ups is just as complicated as you might find it. This is because we are primarily used to forming friendships in certain ways.

It's worth remembering that Danes often distinguish between friends, who are understood to be the few you're really close to, and then friends/acquaintances/classmates/colleagues, who are the people whom they know and are social with, but don't hang out with just the two of them/don't plan things exclusively with. The Danish word for friends "venner" tends to be used in a

more exclusive way than the English term and you might even hear a Dane say, "yeah, we hang out and it's fun, but we're not venner (yet)" about people they know. This does not mean that the person doesn't appreciate hanging out with you, but that they aren't close enough to qualify you as one of their exclusive venner.

So how to befriend the Danes? (Like a Dane...)

Most Danish students have met their friends through school, work, volunteering, sports, and hobbies.

Even though they have met through a common activity, it is however rare to consider yourself friends right from the start. You do that activity "alongside" each other for a while; probably chatting casually and realising you click and have fun together.



Friendship tips

- › Be patient. Social relations with Danes tend to take a little more time to form
- › Join some clubs/projects/hobbies that you find fun and engaging. Activities with others is a great way to meet people
- › Talk to people and go to the social gatherings of the things you're involved with
- › If the Danes seem closed off, remember that they might be trying to respect your private space or simply are shy or unsure. Approach them and see what happens
- › Danes can also be shy and might find it just as hard to make friends as you do
- › Don't expect to jump straight to best friend territory immediately
- › Take initiative and suggest doing stuff together

Maybe that leads to casual socialising, which still relates to the thing you do together, talking while biking home from sports, eating lunch together at school, etc.



IN ALL HONESTY,

BIKE CULTURE

WHEN IT COMES

Secure locks will be sold with this mark:



STUDENTS GO OUT. It is one of the fundamental facts of life, and it's no different in Denmark.

Whether you drink alcohol or not, a lot of the social life of a student is focused around going out to bars and cafés or attending parties.

The concept of going out to dinner is not as widely used in Denmark as it is in many other cultures – probably given the price tag on restaurant food. Bigger cities will also have cheaper options lik



Be aware that it is normally expected for all dinner guests to chip in and cover some of the cost for the meal you have cooked together. This way no one is stuck with the main part of the costs.

When you go out there are of course the various bars, cafés and pubs. For the student community, the local *Studentarhus* is a great place to start, and the same goes for the various student bars at the university. A lot of students will probably also favour the local “bodega” (Danish equivalent of the old-school British pub for locals), where the drinks will be substantially cheaper than at the fancy bars in the area.

Alcohol is normally served to everyone who is over the age of 18, but you should be aware that some clubs might have a 21+ rule and maybe even a dress code. In general, the Danes dress stylishly but casually when they go out. There are a lot of places that will let you in if you're wearing sneakers and jeans, but again, be sure to check before you go out.

Another social option is the party at someone's home. Please be aware that if you get invited to one of these by a friend or classmate, it's considered a must to RSVP and to avoid arriving too fashionably late. It is normal and often expected that you bring your own drink, be it alcoholic or non-alcoholic, unless specified otherwise in the event description.

Many clubs and bars in Denmark tend to be open late (until 4 or 5 in the morning) and as a result of these late hours and the “eat at home before we go out” concept, your Danish friends might go out a tad later than you're used to.

We cannot talk about parties and bars without talking alcohol culture. And yes, the Danish student life can sometimes look like it's revolving solely around alcohol. This doesn't mean you can't go out with your Danish friends if you choose not to consume alcohol. All bars and cafés will normally have non-alcoholic alternatives and though they might offer you a beer at first, your individual choice should and will be respected.

And if you do drink alcohol, remember how to get home and that driving a car while intoxicated is illegal in Denmark.

In general, it's a good thing to know your alcohol limits and have your bus route and the number for a cab service written down alongside your address (if you haven't gotten your national health insurance card yet). This way you can always make your way home safely. Denmark is a very safe country but please do use common sense and exert caution when going out in a new city while under the influence of alcohol. Keep an eye on your belongings and your drink, and let your friends know when you are leaving the party and with whom. This way no one has to worry. Also, be aware of “pirate” taxis (illegal taxis) and never walk too close to water after a night out, as you might not be able to get out of the water while intoxicated.





WHAT KIND OF JOBS CAN YOU GET AS A STUDENT?

RESTAURANTS, CAFÉS, BARS, AND HOTELS will often be open to employing international students who don't speak Danish. Some retail stores will also employ international students.

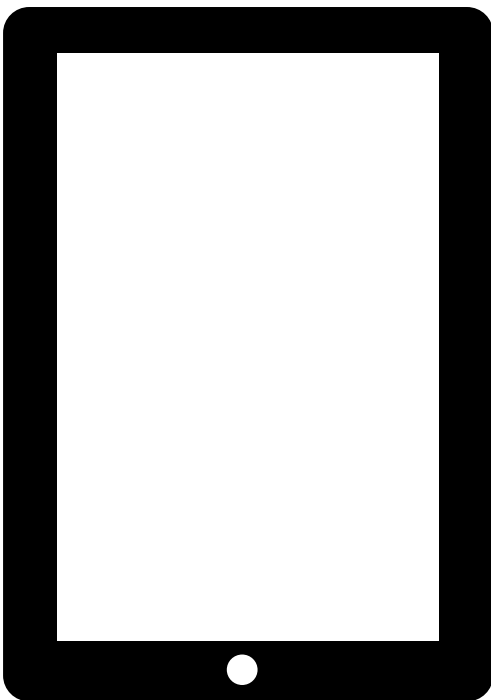
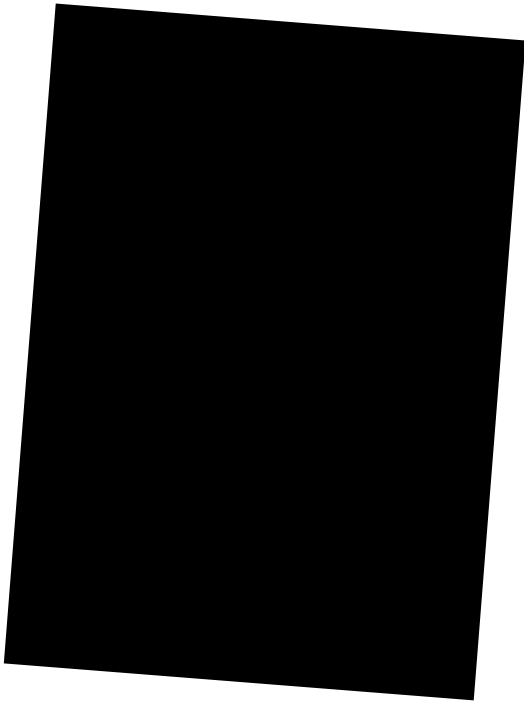
You might be able to find a job with a company that needs someone with your native language skills or insider knowledge of your home culture. This could be a job in the tourist industry, or with a company that caters to people from your background. It could also be with a Danish company conducting business with companies from your country or someone about to launch a product in your home country. Translating assignments can also be a good option for employment.

If you like to write, you might be able to get a job at an English speaking newspaper or online media outlet.

We know that you would probably prefer to find a job related to your field of study or previous experiences, but please remember that this can be difficult even for Danish students. Getting Danish work experience in other fields first might make it easier to get the more attractive student jobs in the future.

Campus jobs are difficult to find and many of them require Danish language skills. You could be lucky and find a position as a research assistant, instructor, or administrative assistant within an international program. The universities will post job openings on their online job banks or job and internship portals.

WHERE DO YOU FIND A JOB?



For all kinds of job applications

You need a CV (aka a résumé) and a cover letter.

Whatever job you apply to, remember to read and supply the info they want, in the form they want it. If they request that you send your application to a specific email address, do this and only this. If there's an online form, use that one and don't send an email.

This is the first step to ensure that your application actually gets considered.

CV

It is common to add a photo to your CV in Denmark. Choose one that's neutral, recognisable, and not a blurry Facebook selfie.

Keep the CV short and relevant – 2 pages is plenty. Organise your CV in chronological order, with the most recent work experience at the top. You can separate school achievements, work experience, and other credentials to make it easier to read.

Modify your CV so that it is relevant for the job that you are applying for. For example, rather than mention your first prize in a high school math competition in your application for a job at a café, highlight your past experience as a barista for a non-profit café.

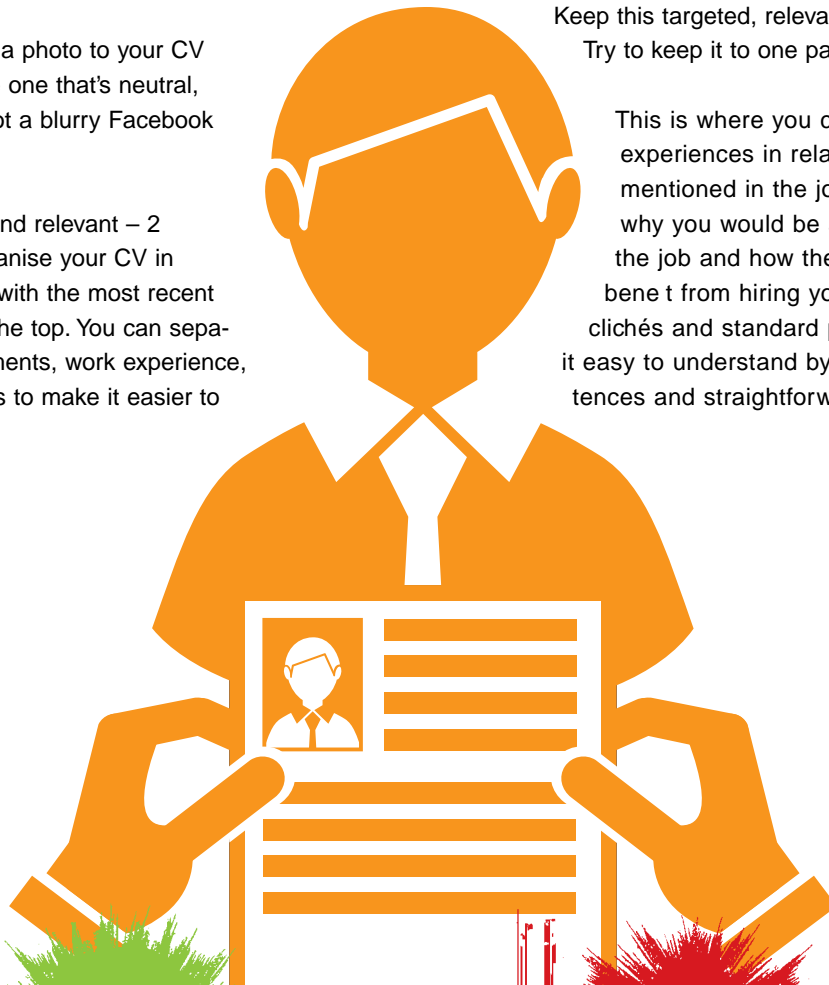
When it comes to your CV, you don't need to reinvent the wheel. You can find templates online that will give you a great head start:

www.greatercph.com/careers/work/cv

Cover letter

Keep this targeted, relevant, and easy to read. Try to keep it to one page if possible.

This is where you contextualise your CV experiences in relation to the criteria mentioned in the job posting. Explain why you would be a good match for the job and how the company could benefit from hiring you. Stay away from clichés and standard phrases, but keep it easy to understand by using short sentences and straightforward wording.



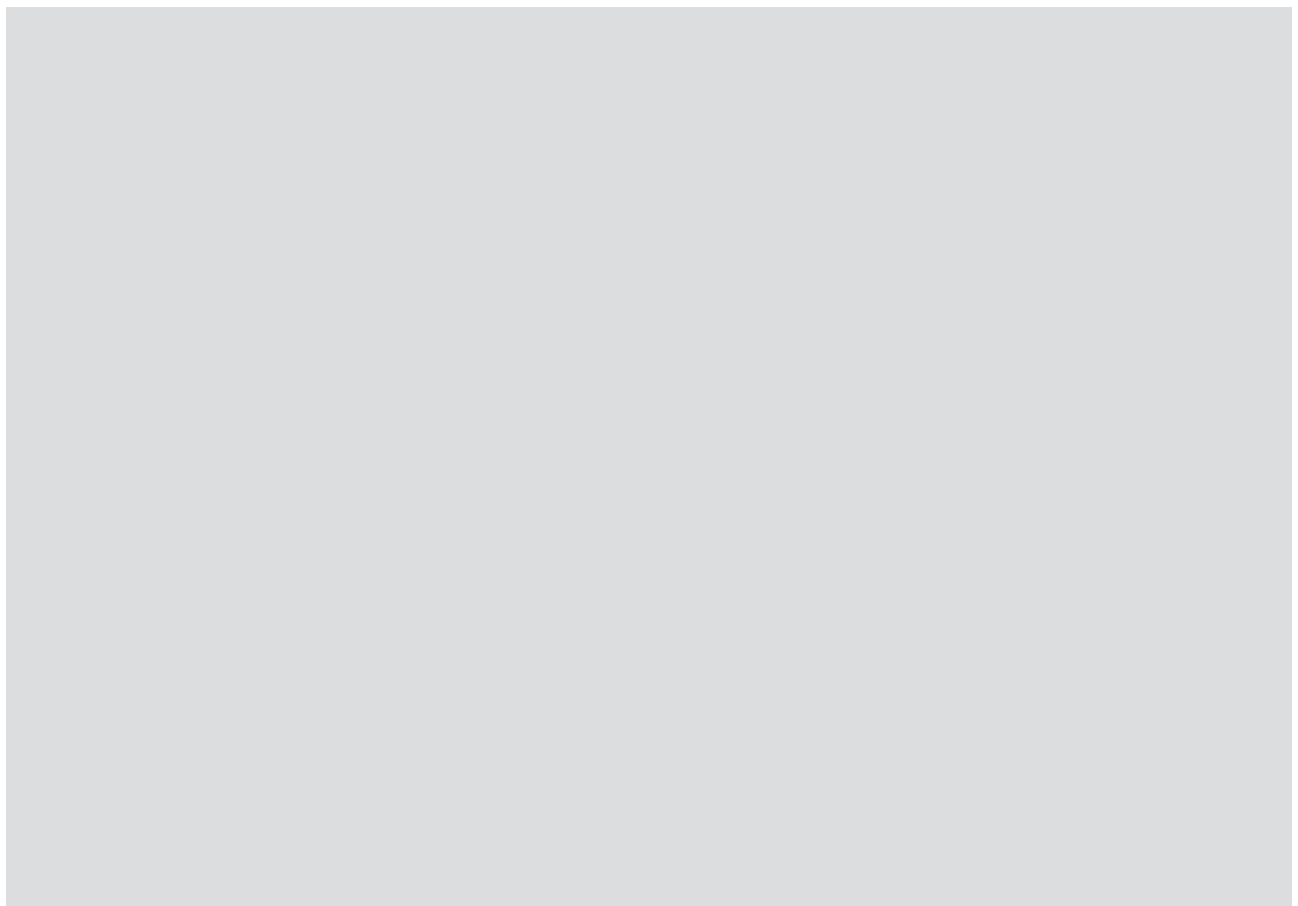
DOs

- › Figure out how the workplace could benefit from hiring you - focus on that
- › Remember to do a spell check or get someone to read and correct your CV and cover letter for you
- › Make it personal so that they remember you

DON'Ts

- › Send out the same letter to everyone
- › Talk about how awesome you are without relating it to the job you're applying for
- › Write several pages
- › Write about your personal life too much
- › Forget to put in contact details

DANISH WORK CULTURE is often pretty relaxed and informal. It's normal to call your superiors by first name,



UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUNDS (A-KASSE)



Info!

A TRADE UNION provides you with the support and guidance you may need – and negotiates collectively to secure the best possible working conditions. This means that being a member of a trade union is common in Denmark and they can help you with any needed services.

TAXES

(SKAT)

IF YOU HAVE a paid job, you have to pay taxes. Simple as that. It is a crime not to pay your taxes, both for you and for your work place.

Most work places report the salary directly to SKAT, so it will be automatically deducted from your salary each month. Most jobs in Denmark will pay you by the end of each month, but it might vary. Remember to ask how it works at your job and if they report the taxes automatically.

If they don't, you have to report it yourself and pay what SKAT has calculated that you owe them. You do this online via skat.dk in the form called "årsopgørelse"

You pay around 40-45% in various taxes even as a student, so remember to include the taxes in your budget – DKK 100 per hour is not DKK 100 for you to spend.

The taxes go towards paying for free education, health-care, etc. in Denmark, so it's considered a very good thing, even though it can feel annoying to see your pay cheque cut in half.

If you have any questions regarding your taxes, you can find the address of your nearest tax office at www.skat.dk.

What is a tax card?

If you have a salaried job in Denmark you must apply for a tax card from your local tax office. A tax card is the official document that tells you how much tax you have to pay.

Once you have gotten your CPR-number you can contact SKAT and inform them how much you expect to earn in the coming year. Then they'll help you to get a tax card, although you won't actually get a physical "card," but you will be able to find it online in your tax file. Your employer will get your tax card digitally from SKAT once they have reported your income.

Read more here:

www.studyindenmark.dk/live-in-denmark/working-in-denmark/taxes



DENMARK'S HISTORY

THE KINGDOM OF DENMARK is one of the oldest unified countries in the world. The word 'Denmark' dates back to the Viking age and is carved on the famous Jelling Stone from around 900 AD.

In 1849, the Danish Constitution was enacted, hereby moving away from an absolute monarchy towards a parliamentary democracy.

Important years in recent Danish history:

- › 2011: Helle Thorning-Schmidt is the first female PM
- › 2015: Andreas Mogensen is the first Dane in space
- › 2019: Denmark are World Champions in handball



Info!

Read more about the history of Denmark here:

www.denmark.dk/people-and-culture/history
www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17930409

THE DANISH SOCIETY

DENMARK IS KNOWN internationally for our welfare state and the social system built around this.

The basic principle of the Danish welfare system, often also referred to as the Scandinavian welfare model, is that all citizens have equal right to social security. Within the Danish welfare system a number of services are available to citizens free of charge. The Danish welfare model is subsidised by the state, and as a result, Denmark has high tax rates compared

to many other countries. However, if you factor in that most healthcare, education, and social security services are free, it somewhat levels out the costs related to this.

The equal access to health and social security services as well as both primary and secondary education has resulted in an equal and relatively socially mobile society, where the majority of the population can be defined as middle class.

DANISH MODEL AND FLEXICURITY

WHEN PEOPLE TALK about the Danish labour market they often use the term "flexicurity" to describe the model. Flexicurity is a word made out of flexibility and security, describing the compounds of the concept.

One side is flexible rules in regards to hiring and firing staff, which make it easier for the employers to scale down during slow times and hire new staff when things improve. The second part is the unemployment security. As mentioned previously, this is in the form of guaranteed unemployment benefits, as long as you belong to an a-kasse.

The aim of this system is to promote employment security over job security, which means that in Denmark, people are less afraid of losing their jobs and are not constantly looking for new or other employment, as is the case in many other countries.

The Danish model for the labour market is built on a century-long tradition of negotiations between the various partners. The trade unions and the employers' associations negotiate the collective agreements for each field of work, ensuring workers' rights while also taking production and market conditions into account.




Info!

Read more about the topics at
www.denmark.dk/en/society



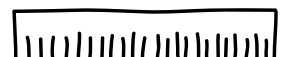
Folketinget
www.thedanishparliament.dk

EDUCATION



School culture

Students at Danish institutions are encouraged to play an active role in their learning process and take responsibility for carrying out projects independently or in small groups. In addition to attending classes, students are expected to participate in discussions and continuously develop their critical and analytical skills.



The Danish work culture heralds the concept popularly known as the “work/life balance” and having a life “outside” your work or studies is seen as a commendable thing. Most Danes are members of various volunteer organisations (foreninger) and time off, whether being after the work day, work week or as vacation time, is secured in most employment contracts. Working way more than the standard 37 hours per week might be perceived as ‘dedicated’ in other work cultures, but will in most Danish work places be seen as unhealthy or even unproductive, due to the lack of time to rest and wind down.

One of the aspects of this cultural value is seen in how Danes think about taking sick leave. Yes, of course you should not call in sick for silly reasons (hangovers being one of those), but if you have the flu or are sick in any other way, you are supposed to call in sick and stay home if possible. No one will praise you for passing on the flu to the rest of the class or your entire office. Trust us on this one.

A last cultural aspect that is worth mentioning is that the Danish society is a very individualistically oriented one. The concept of the welfare state might make you think

otherwise, but in general the Danes primarily identify as individuals and mainly feel responsible for their own and closest family's matters. You might notice that people don't talk much about belonging to a certain ethnicity, religion or region, or that they are mainly concerned with their own schedules and calendars when planning activities. This cultural aspect can also help you to understand why your Danish classmates don't approach you if they see you on the bus or in a supermarket. Your (and their) individual privacy will be considered important and many Danes would rather not impose on people in public if they don't know them very well.

The lack of formal hierarchy combined with the individualistic worldview often makes the Danes communicate in a very direct way. They don't feel the need to include titles or polite introductions when addressing people, and the respect for people's individual time and privacy will lead to most Danes not engaging in small talk with people they don't already know.

If you're curious about how to actually talk to your Danish classmates, jump to “Meeting the Danes in chapter 6”



www.denmark.dk/people-and-culture
www.denmark.dk/people-and-culture/history
www.commisceo-global.com/country-guides/denmark-guide
www.studyindenmark.dk/why-denmark/quality-of-life-1

Jantelov

Jantelov, known in English as The Law of Jante, is a cultural concept and a literary reference from Aksel Sandemose's 1933 novel *A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks*.

Jantelov is used to describe the mentality of the small village people in the novel, but is often also used to explain the anti-elitist Danish mentality as a whole.

It is primarily used as a negative descriptor of the national mentality, often by people feeling martyred by Danish societal values, i.e. "Don't think that you're better than us..."

While it might hold certain amounts of truth (few Danes will praise bragging as an attractive personal trait for instance), it is important to remember that it is not a codex for behaviour in Denmark.

It is a cultural phenomenon from the past that pops its head up every now and then – and that most younger Danes rarely think about or adhere to.

Things created by Danes:

LEGO

ARTIFICIAL INSULIN

THE LOUDSPEAKER

CARLSBERG YEAST

SKYPE

Almost all Danes speak a functional English and are willing to do so, so if in need, just ask.

Strangely enough, the Danish reluctance to speak with strangers does not include helping someone asking for directions or information. Just don't try to chat them up or talk about personal matters as well...

www.facebook.com/kbhsprogcenter

<https://www.kbh-sprogcenter.dk/en/blog/danish-expressions-and-phrases/>

www.uniavisen.dk/en/strange-danish-expressions/

www.theculturetrip.com/europe/denmark/articles/10-danish-phrases-you-need-to-know/

New Year's Day – January 1st

(Nytårsdag)

Everything is grey and quiet. Shops are closed.

Do it like a Dane: Eat takeout and watch the ski jumping competition on TV.

Easter: Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Monday

(Påske: Skærtorsdag, Langfredag, Påskedag)

Do it like a Dane: Many people take the entire week leading up to Easter off. By taking those three days off from work, you end up having a whole week free for vacation.

General Prayer Day

(Store Bededag)

A Friday between Easter and Ascension Day.

Do it like a Dane: Eat “hot wheat buns” (varme hveder) on the Thursday evening and enjoy the long weekend. Traditionally the buns were made to be warmed on the prayer day, since you were not supposed to work or cook on this day.

Ascension Day

(Kristi Himmelfartsdag)

Falls on a Thursday – dates vary depending on Easter.

Do it like a Dane: Take the Friday off too, and enjoy a long weekend before the exams kick in.

Constitution Day – 5th of June

(Grundlovsdag)

Not everyone celebrates this day, which is the date the first constitution was signed. Some political groups celebrate with gatherings and speeches.

Do it like a Dane: This is when the race towards the exam kicks in, so you probably won't notice.

Whit Monday

(Pinsedag)

A Monday in May/June (again depending on Easter).

Do it like a Dane: Either read up for your exams – or have a party on the Sunday before, stay up late and hope to see “the Whit Monday sun dance”

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day

In Denmark we celebrate Christmas on the 24th of December in the evening and the two following days are public holidays, normally spent with family and good food.

Do it like a Dane: Get a Christmas tree, eat roast pork or duck, rice and almond pudding called Risalamande, and drink Gløgg (Danish mulled wine).

Learn to make Danish paper decorations like braided hearts and paper stars and remember to set aside almost all weekends from late November for the long line of big traditional Danish “Christmas lunches.” The Christmas lunch (julefrokost) is the traditional work/school celebration at the end of the year and is more of an evening party with buffet-style food and plenty of alcohol than a “lunch” in the actual sense of the word.

Other dates to remember:

The Danish version of Mardi Gras is called Fastelavn and falls on a Sunday in February. Kids celebrate by dressing up and playing a bunch of holiday specific games and by going trick-or-treating.

Do it like a Dane: Dress up (think silly, not sexy or scary) and “beat the cat off the barrel” (slå katten af tønden) with your friends.

This is an old tradition where you fill a wooden barrel with sweets and tape a paper cat on in. Whoever breaks out the goods inside the barrel is the “king/queen of the cats.”

May 1st: Labour Day

(Arbejdernes Kampdag)

Do it like a Dane: Most Danish students either don't celebrate it as a political holiday or use it as an excuse for daytime drinking. If you're politically active, there's big meetings and parades in all the larger Danish cities.

Midsummer's eve

(St. Hans Aften)

Do it like a Dane: Celebrate with bonfires, singing and the old-fashioned and somewhat politically incorrect burning of a “witch” made of rags and sticks in the form of a woman.

Danish primary schools and high schools have two major weeklong breaks during the year.

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Expatriate blogs and fun sites about Danish culture:

www.howtoliveindenmark.com

www.thelocal.dk/20180412/ten-signs-youve-been-in-denmark-too-long
&
www.thelocal.dk/galleries/lifestyle/top-10-signs-youve-been-in-denmark-too-long

www.uniavisen.dk/en/41-reasons-why-danes-are-so-strange/

www.satwcomic.com

www.oregongirlaroundtheworld.com/denmark/65-things-need-know-life-denmark/

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We hope that you found the information you needed in the book. If you didn't or if you have additional info, tips, or updates that can help make this book even better – don't hesitate to contact us via www.danskestuderende.com.

If you want to contribute to making other international students' introduction to Denmark easier get involved in your local student environment or contact us via www.danskestuderende.com for more ideas.

Best of luck, take care, and have fun during your stay here.
We hope you will enjoy it!

