



Newcomer's Guide To VOLKSMARCHING

Organized Leisure Walking for Fun, Fitness, and Awards

Distributed as a Volkssport Service
by the

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Dear Newcomer,

This short guide has been written especially for you. It answers your first questions about the International Federation of Popular Sports (abbreviated IVV in German) and its leisure sports programs. For more information please contact us, your local wandering club, the Ramstein Roadrunners.

IVV

Passport to Pleasant Walking

Relaxing, recreational activity can be as rewarding as competitive sports. That's what some farsighted Europeans believed back in 1968 when they created the IVV. Their program was simple: hold events where any person can participate and finishers earn awards. All participants win with good health and fitness.

Today, over 4000 clubs throughout Western Europe, the USA, and Canada sponsor IVV walking, swimming, bicycling, and cross country skiing events. You set your own pace. No special equipment or training is needed--just a reasonably healthy body and the desire to explore both town and country for the fun of it. Event Sponsors mark the route and offer free drinks along the way. At the finish they offer other refreshments at reasonable prices and often provide entertainment, too.

Getting some exercise should be fun, not drudgery. Get out and try an IVV event near you real soon. Brighten up your day--you'll be glad you did!

The Wandering (*Wanderung*)

IVV walks, the most popular type of event, are informal. Just put on comfortable walking clothes and shoes. You can usually find a list of walks in the Herald Union (online at <http://www.wiesbaden.army.mil/hunion> under "Take a Hike"), at the American Volkssport Association Web site (www.ava.org), the International Volkssport Association (IVV) Web site (www.ivv-web.org), the Roadrunner Web Site (www.avaclubs.org/ramsteinroadrunners), or the Roadrunner Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/RamsteinRoadrunners>). These sources and a good map of Germany are very helpful in planning your weekend adventures. Remember that a little trip planning on Friday can save you a lot of headaches on Saturday or Sunday morning. Many of the IVV events are held in small towns that can be difficult to find without some pre-planning. As you head for the event, follow the IVV arrows usually found at autobahn exits, intersections and in or near the town sponsoring the event.

The same rules apply for following these road signs as the trail signs – stay on the priority road until directed to turn by a sign. These signs are sometimes hard to see, so take your spouse, family member or a friend to help navigate and walk with. Once there, follow these instructions for a pleasant and enjoyable time.

The Start (Start)

Select the distance you want to walk. Usually several trail lengths are offered: 5-6, 10-12, 20 and 42 km. If you are new to volkssports and/or have small children along you might want to do the short ones at first.

Buy one Start Card (**Startkarte**) for each member of the family that walks for IVV credit. You should print your name and German address on each card. Carry the card with you on the trail. There are usually two types of Start Cards for sale: one is just the Start Card with IVV stamp (**Stempel**) and the other also includes IVV stamp and the award ("**mit Medaille**") when available.

If you are a member of a walking club (e.g., The Ramstein Roadrunners) and that club has pre-registered, your start card will cost about €4.50, for an award and IVV credit or about €2 for only the IVV credit. Please support the clubs by purchasing at least a Start Card. Remember, they have had to hire the Red Cross (hopefully they won't be needed, but they are there), pay fees to use the forest, rent the Start Hall, chairs, tables, dishes, and often entertainment, too. Sometimes there will be a separate start table for Foreign/American Groups (**Auslander** or **Gruppenmedlung**) so look for the START KARTE signs.

Often the award will be offered only "while supplies last", so if it's one you really want, you can pay for it in advance. The bank account information is in the brochure (**Werbung**) about how to do this. Contact the Roadrunners via email to help you if you need assistance.

After you buy your start card(s), look for the Werber (advertisers) sign. There, you will find brochures from clubs advertising their IVV events coming up in the next few months. Pick up their free brochures so that you can plan where to participate in the future. Most Werbers include a map to help you find the town and many will offer a section of the information in English.

The Trail (Strecke)

Follow the trail markers for the distance you select. Trails are marked in different ways, but all try to make the trails easy to follow. The most common method is an arrow drawn on the ground, put on a tree or post, etc. To

distinguish between different distances, arrows may be in different colors (in which case a trail map and color key will usually be posted near the exit of the Start Hall) or may have the distance noted on them. Most often, a different color of tape will be used on the trails to designate the distance of the walk.

A new twist to meet the new century is that many clubs now post the cell phone numbers for the Start Hall and, sometimes, the Control Points. You might want to write them down if you are in the habit of carrying your phone on the trail. However, please try not to disturb the peacefulness and tranquility of the walk for the people around you by doing business or phone socializing on the trail. Use them for EMERGENCIES only!!!

To show which trails or roads NOT to use, a painted, chalked or sawdust line, or possibly fallen tree branches, will be placed across them. Stay on the trail – it's too easy to get lost if you don't! A good rule of thumb is to stay on a trail until you find markings that direct you to another trail.

Control Points (Kontrollstelle)

These are set up about every 3-4 km along the trails. At each one, personally present your start card to get it validated or stamped. You will find a free drink available (usually tea) and possibly light refreshments on sale at reasonable prices.

The Finish (Ziel)

When you return to the start/finish area you're done. But there are still two important things to do right away:

First, if you have IVV record books (**Wertungsheftehefte**), personally present them and show your validated start card at the IVV Stamp (**Stempel**) table. Here, official IVV credit will be stamped into your IVV books. If you purchased a start card for an award, your card will be returned to you along with your IVV books.

Then, if you have a start card for an award, go to the Awards Table (**Medallenausgabe**) to pick it up.

Usually, the clubs will pre-count the number of awards available and only sell that many Start Cards. Therefore, if you purchased a Start Card (**mit medaille** or **with medal**) when you start, they will be holding your award for you when you finish. If for some reason they don't have your award and you paid for it, PRINT your name, German address, phone number, and your CLUB NAME on your start card and give it to the person at the Awards

Table. Keep a copy of the Werber for your records in case you need to write to the club. Allow a little time for the club to re-order the awards, and then watch for them to be displayed near the Werber tables at future walks in the immediate area. Also watch the Ramstein Roadrunners' newsletter for information. If you haven't received your award after eight weeks, the club can help you.

Now find something to eat and drink, and share the friendship found at every walk.

IVV Volkssport Achievement Awards (IVV Volkssportabzeichen) The Awards Program

The IVV volkssport achievement awards program provides an incentive for regular participation in IVV events. It is separate from the awards (medaille) offered at each walk. You are presented a hat pin and a certificate (**Urkunde**) indicating the level of achievement on completion of the first three event books and first distance book. On completion of subsequent books, you receive only the certificate but may purchase the appropriate pin from the DVV Awards Officer (**Abzeichenwart**) who is present at many events for a small fee. Awards are given for two different categories of participation: events or **Teilnahmewertung** and kilometer distance completed or **Kilometerwertung**.

You participate in the awards program simply by purchasing an IVV record book (**IVV Wertungsheftehefte**). The current list of award books, their colors and levels of achievement as of 1 Nov 2014 are (source: <http://www.dvv-wandern.de/internationales-volkssportabzeichen.html>):

EVENTS (**Teilnahmewertung**):

Events	Book Color
1-10	Green (free)
11-30, 31-50 (in intervals of 20)	Purple
51-75, 76-100, 101-125, etc. up to 600 (in intervals of 25)	

Events	Book Color
601-650, 651-700 701-750, etc. in intervals of 50 ----- or -----	Red
601-700, 701-800 801-900, etc. in intervals of 100	

KILOMETERS (**Kilometerwertung**):

Kilometers	Book Color
Up to 500 (1 st award level). Balance carried to Blue book	Green (free)
1 - 500 500 - 1,000 1,001 - 1,500 1,501 - 2,000 2,001 - 2,500 2,501 - 3,000 etc. up to 10,000 km	Blue

Kilometers	Book Color
10,001 - 11,000, 11,001 - 12,000, 12,001 - 13,000, etc. in intervals of 1,000 ----- or -----	Yellow
10,001 - 15,000, 15,001 - 20,000, 20,001 - 25,000, etc. in intervals of 5000	

Each book costs €3.50, except for [the first book \(Green book\) which is free](#). Subsequent books can be purchased from the DVV Awards Officer (**Abzeichenwart**) or from the organizing club at an event. Patches and other IVV memorabilia (book covers, pins, stickers, and embroidered patches) can be purchased from the DVV **Abzeichenwart** at most walks. The IVV books never expire and are accepted world-wide. They can be redeemed in either Germany or the USA.

Additionally, a special [Young Wanderer's program](#) (JWT) is available for children and young adults (up to age 16). The book to record their walks and distance is [free](#) from the DVV **Abzeichenwart** or the sponsoring club should have some. An award is presented at the 10, 30, and 50 event levels. Kilometer distance is recorded in the book and the accumulated total is transferred to an official blue book once reaching the 50th event.

Each person wishing to collect the IVV awards will need their OWN set of books. The award scheme is an individual program and not set up for couples, groups or families to use the same set of books. It's EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to write your name & German address on each IVV book, so in case they are lost, they can be returned to you.

Earning Credit

At the completion of each event, you get your event and kilometer books, stamped with the official IVV rubber stamp. All you need for this is the regular Start card (typically €2), but remember if you purchased a Start Card

with the award (typically €4.50) you must be sure the person stamping your IVV books gives the card back to you so you can collect your prize.

This first event book is completed quickly---after only 10 stamps (one stamp at 10 different walks). At that point you will need to purchase another event book (walks #11-30) and a distance book, if you want to keep track of your distance. The distances for the first ten walks will be transferred into this book by the *Abzeichenwart*. It usually takes longer to complete the distance books (500 km). Beginning in 2011 in Germany, if you do the same walk on both Saturday and Sunday, you can get a stamp in both your event book and your distance book for each day. When a distance book is turned in, any kilometers recorded in that book over what is needed to complete that book are transferred into the next distance level that you purchase.

Getting Your IVV Awards

To redeem your first complete book, either 10 events or 500 km, take it to the DVV Officer (***Abzeichenwart***), the German award representative. They will review it, validate it, and return it to you along with your IVV pin, certificate and a DVV log book (***Abzeichen-Pass***) all at no additional charge to you. Keep track of this log book! Make a note of the number on the book and write it on your event and distance books. This is considered an "official" document so take care not to lose or misplace it. Be sure to keep your canceled books and the ***Abzeichen-Pass*** because you will need them the next time you complete a book.

If you don't want to redeem your future books at the walks, you can do it through the DVV business office. Pick up a pre-addressed envelope from the DVV Officer (***Abzeichenwart***) or use your own.

- Make sure your current German address is on everything: your just completed book, your previous book in that category, and your log book (***Abzeichen-Pass***).
- Make a Xerox copy of your *Abzeichen-Pass* and your event/kilometer book and keep in a safe place until your originals are returned. Mail all of these to the DVV.

Your pin, certificate, all IVV books, and the *Abzeichen-Pass* will be returned to you through the mail in six to ten weeks.

Or, if you prefer certificates in English, send the same items to the AVA National Office, American Volkssport Association Inc., Awards & Records, 1001 Pal Booker Road Suite 101, Universal City, TX 78148.

Simple Rules for Happy Wanderings

Dress for the weather. Wear layers of clothing, which you can remove as you warm up. Be prepared for rain with an umbrella or waterproof rain gear.

Don't leave valuables visible in your car.

Buy one start card per person. Remember the card for an award includes getting the IVV credit too.

Try to have small change (5/10 Euro notes or coins) to pay for your cards and purchases. Most clubs don't have change for 50/100 Euro notes early in the morning.

Print your name and residence address on your start card before starting out. This helps you get it back if lost.

Stay on the marked trail. Unknown dangers may lurk beyond.

Keep pets on a leash. Rabies abounds in the woods; don't endanger your pet.

Step over markers on the ground. Others after you need to use them.

Set your own pace. Don't rush. Stop whenever you wish to look around or rest.

Present your own start card at each control point.

Help yourself to the free drink provided at each control point. You need it to replenish the fluids you sweat away and to prevent dehydration.

Put trash in the receptacles provided. Nobody likes a litterbug!

If you must smoke, don't do it in the woods.

Don't take shortcuts along the trail. You could miss a key marker.

Pay close attention where the trails split. Otherwise, you may find yourself on the longer route.

Move aside to let faster walkers and runners pass. You'd expect the same courtesy.

Get IVV event and distance book stamped before picking up your award.