



Welcome to the Bamberg State Library!

The Bamberg State Library is a research library with tradition, rising to the challenges of the times. These web pages are meant to give an idea of the tasks and services, the collections and history of a research and regional library of international rank. For a virtual tour of our showrooms, manuscripts and early printed books click here! If you want to visit us in person please consult our opening hours.

[Catalogue](#)

Facts and figures

Staff:	16 positions with 19 staff members
Total area:	3,842 square metres
Seats in the reading room: 24	
Holdings:	515,000 volumes
	80,000 graphics and photographs
	3,500 incunabula (15th century prints)
	6,200 manuscripts in total
	1,000 medieval manuscripts
	1,700 current journals

Using the Library and Services

Our aim is to find answers to all your questions in a competent and friendly way. During our opening hours we will be happy to help you in person or by telephone. Your comments and suggestions are important to us: please contact us directly or via email (info@staatsbibliothek-bamberg.de). With the exception of additional services, the use of our library and its facilities is free of charge. As most of our books are kept in storage, only the open access collections of approximately 10,000 volumes in the reading room are directly accessible to you. The majority of our holdings must be ordered prior to use.

Special Collections

Before consulting manuscripts, early printed books/incunabula and graphic materials, you must submit a written application by letter or email (info@staatsbibliothek-bamberg.de), and provide evidence that you seek access for research purposes only. Permission to use this material is granted by the Director or Head Librarian. You are also requested to speak in person to a member of the Head Office about the purpose and background of your visit.

[Information on using Special Collections](#)

Reproductions of manuscripts, early-printed books/incunabula and graphic materials can only be made by our staff after completing a request form. If you wish to do so, please contact our staff who will be happy to explain the different technical possibilities and different degrees of quality of our Digitising Service to you. Reproductions of our manuscripts, early-printed books/incunabula and graphic materials may not be published without prior consultation and permission.

[List of reproduction and copying fees](#)

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[Short index of the shelfmarks Msc.Add.](#)

Recent acquisitions of manuscripts, bequests and "Stammbücher" (= alba amicorum/autograph books from the 16th to the 19th century) since 1966; not recorded in printed manuscript catalogues.

[Short index of the shelfmarks Msc.sim.](#)

Facsimile editions, subject index.

[Short index of the shelfmarks Msc.sim.](#)

Facsimile editions, shelf index.

Incunabula catalogue INKA

Bibliographic details of most of the incunabula kept at Bamberg State Library and at numerous other German libraries.

About us



The Bamberg State Library, since 1965 housed in the New Residence, the former prince-bishop's new palace (built by Johann Leonhard Dientzenhofer, 1697-1703), has been called one of the "great libraries" (Anthony Hobson, 1970). This high esteem is based on its rich manuscripts holdings. The nucleus of the collection may be traced back to the emperor Henry II, who founded the bishopric of Bamberg in 1007. Among his gifts to the cathedral were many precious manuscripts, which he and his predecessors had collected or commissioned. Manuscripts from various spiritual centres of the West were brought to Bamberg as a result. In the ensuing period many books were written and illuminated in the town, notably in the 12th century by the Benedictine monks of Mount St. Michael.

Bamberg was the first place where printed books in the German language were illustrated with woodcuts. Although only fragments of the very first period of printing in Bamberg can be found in the library, the collection of 3,500 incunabula documents the wide range of book production in the 15th century.

All that remained of these manuscripts and books in the monasteries of the town and bishopric up to 1802/1803 was incorporated into one library (now the State Library) during the period of secularisation and merged with the library of the university, which had been founded in 1648 as a Jesuit academy and was closed at that time. Bamberg became part of Bavaria. In the course of the 19th century the library was enriched by gifts such as Joseph Heller's collection, which today comprises 80,000 prints and drawings. The E. T. A. Hoffmann material became a special collection in our times, as did, more recently, the "Stammbücher" (= alba amicorum/autograph books). In addition, the Bamberg State Library also provides space for book collections belonging to Bamberg institutions such as the Historische Verein (= Bamberg Historical Society) and the Naturforschende Gesellschaft (= Bamberg Society of Naturalists). These valuable holdings are made available to the public by regular exhibitions on a particular topic.

The Bamberg State Library is a combined universal, regional and research library with priority given to the humanities. It supplies the town and the region with literature for research and study purposes, professional work and advanced training. The holdings of about 500,000 volumes are continuously supplemented and enlarged by acquisitions in all general fields, and in specialised areas such as the history and geography of (Upper) Franconia, art history and appreciation, manuscripts and the printed book.

The Bamberg State Library receives a copy of every book published in Upper Franconia and continues to compile a complete bibliography of the region. It cooperates in all areas of librarianship with the University Library of Bamberg, which was re-opened in 1972.

