



**WELCOME
TO SPAIN!**

DE
RODAS

PRE-DEPARTURE MEETING



Welcome to Educatius and SPAIN

We are Educatius.

The largest high school provider in the world and have been welcoming students for over **20 years** on experiences just like yours.

Before you arrive we have worked with your Sending Organization on:

- Your **program application**
- Your **school placement**
- Your **host family placement**
- Your **arrival details**

Once you are in SPAIN, Educatius are responsible for:

- Your **welfare and keeping you safe** – We are here for you!
- **Support and advice**
- Assisting with **host family or school issues**
- Day-to-day **running of your program**

Don't forget to bring:



For the Exchange Experience:

- **Clothes for all seasons.**
It will be very *hot* when you arrive in Spain, but it also gets *quite cold* in the winter. Don't forget to pack summer clothes, but also a warm coat, fleece, and proper winter shoes.
- **Outlet adapter (European plug type C or F).**
- All your personal medication — especially if you have allergies.
- Emergency cash (in EUR).
- **Important documents in your carry-on bag:**
Flight tickets and itinerary, passport (preferred over ID), visa documents, a printed copy of the Parental Authorization form, (European) Health Insurance Card, a printed copy of your host family's address and contact information, including our emergency phone number.
- **A fully charged mobile phone** with an active SIM card working in Spain (Let us know if the number listed in your application has changed!)
- **Studies validation documentations** (if they have been requested to you: grades and passport attested by Spanish Embassy / The Hague Apostille)

For Students Attending the Camp in Barcelona:

- Large suitcases will be stored outside the rooms and won't be accessible during the Camp.
- **Make sure to pack everything you'll need in Barcelona in your carry-on suitcase!**

What to expect:

At the Airport

Your **Host Family / Local Staff** will be waiting for you at the arrivals area – you'll need to collect your luggage first and exit.

At the Welcome Camp (if you have booked this)

If you have booked our wonderful **Welcome Camp** you will be met by our staff and transported to the camp location. We have a packed agenda during these days, you'll get to **meet our staff**, ask any **last minute questions** (big or small), enjoy a **wonderful city** and become **better equipped** for your experience.

When you arrive to the Host Family

1. Your Host Family may be just as nervous as you! They will want to make a **great first impression** too.
2. Ask open-ended questions '**How/When/Why/What?**'
3. You'll have time to unpack but try not to spend so long doing this right away – **spend some time in family areas.**
4. Bring a **small gift** from your home – this is always a perfect ice-breaker.



Your Host Family



- **Recruited for their experience and understanding** — they come in all shapes and sizes.
- They'll give you an authentic insight into your **host country** — but they're not expected to be **tour guides**.
- They've always lived this way. Even if they support you, **you** are the one who needs to adapt.
- In the first few days, ask **key questions**:
 - Will I get a **house key**?
 - Are there **off-limits areas**?
 - How does **laundry** work?
 - What **chores** am I expected to help with?
- **Reach out and say hello** as soon as you get your **placement details**! They are very excited to hear from you, even if they might currently be on holidays and their replies can take a while. **WhatsApp** is always faster!
- Find **common ground** and **shared interests** early on.
- They'll become a vital part of your **support network**.
- Most Spanish **host parents** speak only Spanish — start brushing up **now**!
- Some families may expect you to help occasionally by speaking **English** or your own **language** — like helping younger siblings with homework or chatting.
- **Double placements** are common — living with another **exchange student** will let you experience two cultures at once!



Your Local Coordinator

Your relationship with your Local Coordinator is really important.

They will support and assist you with:

- Settling in with your Host Family
- Settling into school
- How to get around your local area
- Help when you feel homesick / need support adjusting

You will receive their contact information with your placement.

Remember: not all LCs speak English and they are not FRIENDS with your host family. They keep a casual relationship, but you are their and our priority — feel free to trust your LC completely.

You will meet your Local Coordinator in person at the local orientation but you should be in touch before this

The Office Staff

Behind all the Local Coordinators, Schools and Host Families are us... the **Office Staff!**

We have been working for many months **with your Sending Organisation** to prepare your High School experience.

We will be **behind the scenes** throughout your program but can always be contacted if you cannot talk to your Host Family or Local Coordinator.

From time to time we will also contact you regarding extra activities, trips and competitions that you can participate on!

You'll meet us in person at the Welcome Camp and all our optional trips!



Settling in... The Important first 30 days

We know that coming to a new country, living in a new Host Family and attending a new school can be strange. We are here to help...



Compared to your life in your home country your new Host Family may:

- have a **different routine** and **different hobbies/interests**
- **different expectations** on you regarding chores and household rules
- prepare **meals differently**
- have a house that is different in **size** and feel
- **interact differently** to each other
- live **further away** from your school
- follow a **Spanish schedule** that may make the day feel longer — with **later and more scattered meal times**
- live in a **warmer climate**, which might make you feel **more tired**

You may feel **overwhelmed** and **emotional** with some of these differences.

These are **perfectly normal feelings** but it's so important to make a good faith effort to work to overcome these, especially in these first 30 days. We, as your placement organisation, are there to support you through this and step-in if something becomes too serious.

Settling in... The Important first 30 days



Educatus Spain is here to assist with the settling in process – you are not alone!

- You will be **contacted** by your Local Coordinator / Educatus **within 48 hours of arrival** to the Host Family – if something is already not right, this will be the perfect time to express this.
- Following this we will **check-in** with you every week for the first month to see how you are getting on, if there are any outstanding worries let us know during these check-ins. We will provide guidance and advice to support you during this period.
- You will have an **Orientation Meeting** soon after arrival – at this we'll run through some more details of the program, make sure that you've got everything you need for a successful High School experience. This is also a chance for you to meet other Exchange students who are living this experience.

Key reminders on the first weeks



We're always there to support you!



One thing at a time

The first days can feel overwhelming: new school, new people, new family, new everything! Remember you don't need to solve it all at once. It's like eating an elephant: you do it one bite at a time! Each day, focus on one small step: learn a new word, chat with your host sibling, or try raising your hand in class. Little by little, you'll build your confidence.

Take Spanish seriously from day one

Language is your superpower! Start a note file on your phone to jot down phrases you hear often. Highlight unfamiliar words in class materials. The more you engage with the language, the faster you'll feel part of everything.

Stay physically active

Join a local sports club, gym, or extracurricular activity. Moving your body helps clear your mind, fight homesickness, and meet new people. You don't have to be an athlete, just find something fun that gets you moving

Don't isolate yourself

Whenever you're invited to join an activity — even if you're tired, unsure, or nervous — say yes. Go to that birthday lunch, walk the dog with your host sibling, or jump into a group chat. Being open creates connections you'll be thankful for later



What to expect at school

First days at school

Your Host Family or Local Coordinator will give you details about **where and when to start school**. Don't worry if you don't have this information before you arrive — it may be finalized once you get here, as schools sometimes hold **different induction days** for exchange students.

Subjects

The subjects available, the number of study hours, and the topics covered may be different from what you're used to. If there are any important subjects you need, it is essential that you communicate this **before your arrival**. While we cannot guarantee these subjects, it is important information to take into account when arranging your placement.

Language

If you find it difficult to express yourself, talk to your Local Coordinator, Head Office, or Host Family. They might decide that **extra Spanish lessons after school** will be helpful for you.

Attendance

Attendance is **compulsory**. You must attend all classes on time, with any homework completed, and sit all tests and exams. You are also responsible for being aware of and understanding the school rules.

School in SPAIN



- School days usually consist of 6 hours of lessons, typically from around **8:00 AM to 2:00 PM**.
There's a break mid-morning when students usually have a sandwich. **Lunch is eaten at home** after school ends.
- **All lessons are taught in Spanish** at public schools.
Don't expect teachers to provide support in English. They will be welcoming, but will **treat you like any other student**.
- **School books & materials:**
With the help of your class tutor, host family, or local coordinator, find out if your school offers a **second-hand book plan**.
Otherwise, expect to spend around **€300** on books and materials.
- **Lessons are mostly lecture-based:** the teacher talks, and students take notes.
There are also **projects, homework, and regular exams** — typically every 2–3 units.
The **most important exams** take place right before **Christmas, Easter, and Summer breaks**.
- **Public schools don't require uniforms.**
There's no strict dress code, but we recommend being discreet and observing how your classmates dress during the first days.
Girls: heavy makeup is uncommon in Spanish high schools.
- **No extracurricular activities are offered by schools.**
Ask your LC or host family to help you find a **public or private option** nearby where you can continue practising your favorite sport or hobby.
- Once enrolled, **your grade level and subjects are very unlikely to change**. Please **do not pressure school staff** about it. If needed, speak to your LC first.

Tips for Making Friends

There is no perfect 'science' to making friends.

Here are some of our suggestions.

Our staff & your Local Coordinator are always available to provide alternative suggestions & support!

Smile and Stay Open

A smile is universal - you don't need to have a Hollywood smile but introducing yourself with a simple smile will go a long way.

Don't forget – **avoid** speaking your native tongue with other exchange students! You may be talking about something that someone else may be interested in!

Join Clubs and Say 'Yes'

It might be difficult to find time in class to speak to new people, so we recommend joining clubs in or out of school, sports, arts and so much more. Try new things too and say 'yes' to any (safe) invitations you may be given – even if it's not something you'd usually like! You might be surprised at how much you enjoy it!

Go 'Cold Turkey'

Your friendship group back home can hinder your integration in your new country. Try to silence any Group Chats you may have going on. If you absolutely need to stay in contact just try and send them twice-weekly updates at the most! Trust us, it'll be fine...

DURING YOUR FIRST 3 DAYS AT SCHOOL



SPEAK TO:

1 new person on Day 1

3 new people on Day 2

5 new people on Day 3

REMEMBER THE NUMBER '135'

Program Rules - Here to protect everyone

When you completed your application you were asked to read and sign the Program Rules. These are important - we remind you to view them again before arrival.

We will also go through them at the Arrival Orientation!

They are here to protect everyone on the program.



10 Golden Rules to Remember!

1. Follow the laws of your host country – including strict rules against alcohol, drugs, smoking, snussing and vaping, regardless of your age.

2. Stay Safe Online

Never share or engage with illegal or inappropriate content. Report anything unsafe immediately.

3. Respect Your Host Family

Follow house rules, participate in family life, and always inform them of your whereabouts.

4. Take School Seriously

Attend all classes, follow school rules, and maintain good academic standing. Expulsion = dismissal from the program.

5. Be Honest and Open

Disclose any medical or mental health issues before the program. Let Educatius know about major family situations back home.

6. Avoid Major Life Changes

This is not the time for big changes like body modifications or switching religions/diets. Focus on your exchange experience.

7. Travel and Stayovers Need Permission

Always get written approval for day trips or overnight stays. No independent travel without prior authorization.

8. Keep Contact in Balance

Limit frequent contact with home in the early weeks to avoid homesickness. Communicate with Educatius through the proper channels.

9. Be Respectful

Treat your host family, school staff, and Educatius representatives with kindness. Disrespect or threats may lead to dismissal.

10. Follow the Support Process

If you face challenges, Educatius will guide you — but repeated or serious rule-breaking can lead to dismissal. Take support plans seriously.

Europe Student Trips

● Student Trips 2025 –2026

Oslo, Copenhagen, Hamburg, Naples, Bavaria & Munich, Sardinia, San Sebastian, Portugal, South of France
Student Trips are exciting supervised adventures that students can add on to their programs to explore more of Europe and create unforgettable memories.

● Euro Trip – June 2026

Paris - Amsterdam - Cologne - Munich - Salzburg - Venice - Rome

The Euro Trip taking place at the end of the Academic Year in June is the perfect ending to a high school program in Europe. Visit some incredible cities, make new friends and say goodbye to your high school program in style.

📍 Welcome Camp Locations

Paris, Berlin, Barcelona, Milan, Stockholm

Welcome Camps are an essential orientation at the beginning of the program for students to acclimatize to their new environment, bond with other exchange students and have an exciting start to their program.

Important Notes

- Trip bookings open after arrival and operate on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Inclusions/exclusions vary by trip.
- Prices typically exclude onward/return travel to the meeting point.
- All trips are subject to change and prices/dates are indicative only.

High School Programs

France / Spain / Germany / Italy / Austria / Sweden / Denmark / Norway / Finland / Netherlands

Norway – April Estimated cost: €450

Modern meets nature—art, fjords, and fun in Norway's capital.



Copenhagen – November Estimated cost: €350

Cycle-friendly, full of design and cool spots—plus Tivoli theme park!



Hamburg – November Estimated cost: €350

A creative port city with riverside views, cool shops, and music history.



Naples & Pompeii – November Estimated cost: €350

Explore Italy's most energetic city and walk the ancient streets of Pompeii.



Bavaria & Munich – April Estimated cost: €550

See fairytale landscapes, mountain views, and Germany's coolest southern city.



Sardinia – May Estimated cost: €550

Discover crystal-clear beaches, local food, and a unique island culture.



San Sebastian – December Estimated cost: €600

See a different Celtic side to Spain – 4 days in the Basque country, culture, food and more



Portugal Surf Camp – May Estimated cost: €600

Learn to surf on the Atlantic coast, enjoy laidback surf culture and explore Lisbon.



South of France – April Estimated cost: €550

From beaches to hilltop towns, enjoy sunshine, style, and that famous French flair.





Barcelona Welcome Camp

- **2nd-6th of September 2025**
- **More than 100 participants**
- **New friends from all over the world** starting the same awesome adventure **together!**

For Barcelona Welcome Camp participants only:
Please scan the code and **complete the Form** in the next days:





Spanish Online Preparation Course

The Spanish you bring with you will be one of the most powerful tools to help you adapt during your first weeks. The more you invest in getting ready now, the better prepared you'll be — making everything easier at home with your host family, at school, and when making new friends!

- *Spanish Preparation Course **Online** — live on Zoom*
- **August 4th-22nd, 2025** (mornings, Spain time)
- Live classes with **native teachers** and **other exchange students**
- **Several groups sorted by level**
- **Not just a language course! You'll also join fun cultural webinars about:** Spanish celebrations & special occasions, How to make friends in Spain, Colloquial expressions & slang, Traditional festivities, Spanish food & gastronomy, Geography & cities, Spanish history. Politics & current topics

Optional enrollment — ask us for all the details!

Our trips: San Sebastian & Portugal



Don't miss the chance to explore more of the Iberian Peninsula and create unforgettable memories with friends from all over the world!

✦ **San Sebastian trip in December** — discover one of the most unique cultures in Europe, with amazing food and coastal scenery.

✦ **Portugal Surf Camp in May** — enjoy sun, waves, and good vibes while meeting new international friends.

These trips could become **true highlights** of your exchange year! Spots fill up quickly, so stay tuned.

They are optional and cost around €500–600 — maybe the perfect Christmas or birthday gift! (prices are indicative and can vary)





Local Customs! Don't forget!

👂 Spanish Communication

- We speak **loud**, and often **interrupt** each other — but it's not rude *It may sound like a heated argument... but it's probably just lunch plans. Interruptions? They're enthusiasm, not disrespect.*
- **Direct communication:** People here can be very **straightforward**. It doesn't mean they're rude — it's just part of the culture. *Better to say things clear than tiptoe around!*
- **Physical contact** is normal: kisses, hugs, short distance *Personal space is more... collective here. Expect pats, closeness, and a lot of eye contact.*
- You may be asked lots of **personal questions** *It's not an interrogation — we're just curious, caring, and chatty.*
- People **greet everyone** when entering a room or shop *A quick "¡Hola!" or "¡Buenas!" is the local way to say: "I exist, and I see you."*



Local Customs! Don't forget!

Family Life

- **Doors often stay open** — privacy looks different
A closed door might raise eyebrows... or get opened to "let air in."
- **Host moms may enter your room** to tidy up or ventilate
It's not spying, it's maternal instinct plus airflow priorities.
- **Expect noise and shared space** at home
People shout between rooms, the TV is always on, and silence is optional.
- **Rules might not be written** — just assumed
No handbook here. When in doubt, just ask — they'll appreciate it.
- **Cousins, neighbors or friends may pop in unannounced**
Households are lively hubs. Think less "Do Not Disturb," more "The more, the merrier."
- **Laundry is often dried outside** — including your underwear
Seeing your boxers on the balcony? Totally normal.
- **It does get cold in Spain** — be prepared!
Houses are built for hot summers, not harsh winters. Only common areas might be heated — layer up!



Local Customs! Don't forget!

🍷 Social Life & Schedules

- **Meal times are late — and long**
Lunch at 2–3 pm, dinner after 9 pm. Meals are sacred, social, and come with conversation.
- **Teenagers go out late and stay out even later**
Parents often allow it — as long as you say where you're going (and answer your phone).
- **Plans may change last minute**
Don't panic — flexibility is part of the culture.
- **Punctuality is flexible**
"6 pm" may really mean 6:15... or whenever everyone shows up.
- **Family comes first — always**
You might get invited to grandma's birthday after two days. It's not weird, it's love.



Local Customs! Don't forget!

Daily Life

- **Shops may close at midday** — siesta is real
Especially in small towns: 2–5 pm is “slow mode” time. Plan your snacks accordingly. If you wonder why, just try stepping outside in the heat around that time — it’s not laziness, it’s survival!
- **Siesta isn’t always a nap — but it is sacred**
Quiet time after lunch is respected, especially by grandparents and tired dogs.
- **Resources are valuable**
Showers shouldn’t go beyond 15 minutes due to water shortage, and remember to turn off lights or devices you’re not using. Being aware of your energy and water use shows respect for the environment — and for your host community!



Local Customs! Don't forget!

🇪🇸 School & Relationships

- **Teachers are informal and friendly — no “Sir” or “Ma’am”**
*You can call them “Profe”, and they’ll call you by your name. **They expect respect but not distance***
They’re approachable, but you still need to follow their instructions
- **Spanish teenagers might not introduce themselves unless prompted**
It’s not rudeness — just shyness or chill. Ask questions and pretend you don’t know where restrooms are just to break the ice.
- **Classrooms might feel noisy**
Students can be lively — that’s not disrespect, it’s Spanish energy!
- **Bathrooms might feel basic**
Soap or hand dryers aren’t guaranteed — many students carry their own wipes.

Top tips! How best to prepare for the best program!



Spanish is Important!

- Dedicate at least **2-3 hours per week** from now on, whether online or in class — it will make your experience much richer!
- You are accepted **without previous Spanish**, although **two years of study are recommended**. Learning Spanish is *essential* to adapt to school, connect with your **host family**, and make the most of the program.
- You are expected to **make a real effort to communicate in Spanish from day one**, even if you make mistakes. You are responsible for preparing before arrival and staying committed throughout your exchange.
- Spain is diverse, with different **accents, dialects**, and even **co-official languages**. If you are placed in a bilingual area, you may have some (easy) subjects taught in a second local language.

How to get ready?

- Join our **Online Spanish Prep Course** (4–22 August)
- Practice with **Duolingo, Babbel, or SpanishDict**
- Watch **Netflix/TV** in Spanish with subtitles
- Listen to local music on **Spotify or Apple Music**
- Follow Spanish content on **TikTok** so the algorithm adapts
- Check these inspiring **Instagram profiles**:
 - @spanishccae (language tips)
 - @spanishalterego (language learning)
 - @spainsqs (cultural insights)
 - @espana_es_fascinante (culture & lifestyle)



So what
happens now?

If you have not yet received your Placement:

Don't panic! It's fine, we are super busy finalising your Host Family and School Placements. This isn't a speedy process as there are lots of elements we need to bring together. Don't worry though, there will be plenty of time before you arrive to get in contact with your new Host Family, find out more about them and the placement area you will be living in.

Closer to your start date you will also receive the login to the first Resilience Training e-learning module



Questions?