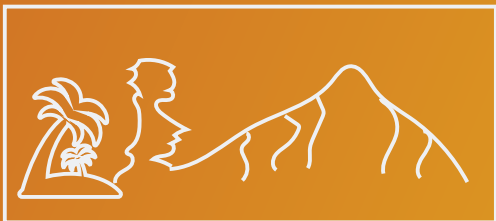




Your guide to
a succesful
intercultural
experience



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Everybody at AFS INTERCULTURA bids you a warm welcome!

We are pleased to host you and are looking forward to getting to know you. Soon we will be able to talk with you about your expectations, hopes and fears regarding your stay in this country and we hope to provide you with

information and suggestions that will be useful to help you have an interesting, enriching and rewarding experience.

You may not know yet what exactly to expect of your stay, that is completely normal but be careful not to expect too much as you could easily become disappointed. You will live with a family, go to school, make new friends and share their everyday life. Your effort to interact with your family, community and school life is what will make your experience special and unique. If you are ready to show concern for other people, to be open to new ideas and different customs, to be tolerant, eager to learn, look, listen and make yourself understood, then you are halfway there.

Still, many things will be different and new. Try to be patient and understanding and always ask when there is something that is not clear to you. This booklet tries to give a first introduction to our country and some helpful hints about how to deal with various matters. Read it very carefully and do not stop here! Find other sources of information – investigate! The more you get to know about our culture, the more you'll enjoy it. Through this booklet, you will find some links that will take you to interesting websites. You can directly click on the link if you are using the pdf version, or write the url in any browser.

As you may know, Spain is a multilingual country. As an AFS exchange student you may be placed in a Family, Community and School where Spanish is not the main or only language spoken. This is an opportunity for you to get a deep insight into our culture and the variety of our language communities. The geographic areas where Spanish is not the main language include: Catalonia, the Basque Country, Valencian Region and Galicia.

Everybody in AFS INTERCULTURA will be ready to help you whenever you need advice or guidance.

Make your experience a lifetime memory!



2. Spain at a glance

A bit of history

Spain is situated in the south of Europe and together with Portugal it builds "The Iberic Peninsula". The Balearic Islands, in the Mediterranean, the Canary Islands in front of the Morocco coast in the Atlantic Sea, and the cities of Ceuta and Melilla in the north of Africa are also part of the Spanish territory.

Due to its situation between two continents and two seas, it has been the crossroad for various influences, physical as well as human; for this reason it has been compared to a miniature continent. This explains the contrasts in its land (high mountain areas, an immense central plateau over 200,000 square meters), forests and steppes, abrupt coasts and gentle coasts; in its climate (humid in the North, continental in the Center, Mediterranean in the South and East) and its population - different races, cultures and languages. Since prehistoric times, the influence from Europe on the one hand and Africa on the other, together with the contacts through the sea, has given Spain a "special" character.

Spain has been invaded and inhabited by an assortment of peoples through its history. The Greeks and Phoenicians settled in the Eastern and Southern coasts and the Carthaginians, in the Southeast. The Romans arrived in the 3rd century B.C. and were capable of conquering almost the whole Peninsula, also achieving a deep Romanization in every sense (language, culture, architecture, and politics...). After the fall of the Roman Empire, the Germanic peoples - Suevian, Vandals and Alans - occupied the Peninsula and the Visigoths established a reign which would last from the 5th to the 7th century. At the beginning of the 7th century the Arabs invaded the Peninsula and they stayed until 1492, when Isabel and Fernando (Catholic Kings) expelled them. **Eight centuries of Arabic colonization, together with the Roman colonization, left a deep and permanent mark on the Spanish population.**

During the XX century Spain faced an important period of political instability. There was monarchy, two republics and two dictatorships (the last one for almost 40 years). After 1975 when dictator Franco died, Juan Carlos I was named King and started a transition period where a new Constitution was born and a parliamentary monarchy was instituted.

Now Felipe VI is our King after his father Juan Carlos I abdicated in 2014. He has the command of the Army and he represents Spain internationally.

The Government is formed by the political party which obtains a parliamentary majority and performs the tasks of executing internal and external policies, national defense and of preparing legislation which is then submitted to Parliament for discussion.

Administratively, Spain is divided into Municipalities (municipios), Provinces (provincias) and 17 Autonomous Communities (comunidades autónomas) and 2 autonomous cities (ciudades autónomas) Ceuta and Melilla in the north of Africa.

Surprise your family and friends with some knowledge about the history and political situation of Spain. You can click the link if you are using a pdf or access through the URL.

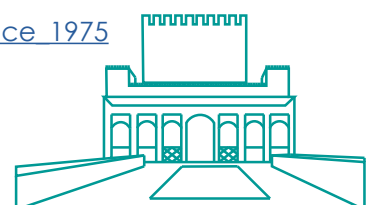
Spain profile – Timeline: www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-17955805

History of Spain (1975–present): en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Spain#Spain_since_1975

Spain, main facts: www.factmonster.com/country/spain.html?pageno=1



Some of these icons you will find through the booklet are symbols of our cultures. Maybe they look strange to you now. But try to find out what they mean!



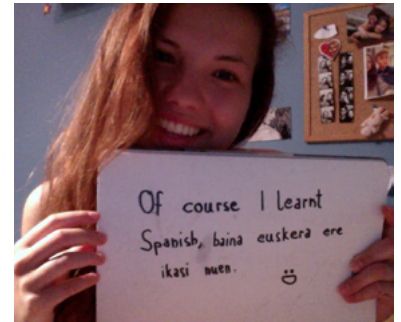
Languages

Spanish or Castilian is only one of the 4 official languages in Spain. It is spoken throughout the country and is the language used by the Central Administration. But there are other 3 co-official languages: Catalan in Catalonia, Galician in Galicia, Euskera (Basque language) in the Basque Country. The use of the Spanish or the other languages will vary from people to people. You have to be aware that your host family and school could have one of these 4 languages as the main language spoken. For instance, in Catalonia the classes at school are in Catalan.

The 1978 Constitution reflects the right of every region to speak and teach its own language. People all over Spain are usually very sensitive about their own regional language. You should keep this in mind and be respectful in order to avoid hurting someone's feeling.

The fact that you go to one of these regions should not be an excuse for not learning Spanish before arriving as nearly everybody understands it. Try to get at least some basic knowledge as the majority of Spaniards speak Spanish. The positive fact is that you will be exposed, in those regions, to two different languages and will take advantage of learning both of them.

See appendix 1: How to learn Spanish, Catalan, etc..

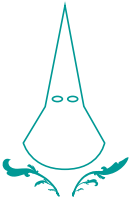


Of course they learnt Spanish, but they also learnt other languages!

Religion

Though right now Spain is a non-religious country, for many years the Catholic Church has had a lot of influence and still lots of traditions have to do with it. Maybe you have heard of the "Procesiones de Semana Santa" in Andalusia or the "Peregrinación de la Virgen del Rocío".

It is quite normal that children are baptized and celebrate the First Holy Communion. Most of the families are catholic but it is not rare that they don't go to the church on Sundays. But if your family does, and this is not your religion, you can go with them and see the cultural aspect of the celebration. Even not religious people may get married following the catholic rite as a tradition more than a religious matter.



Climate and Geography

The climate varies a lot from north to south. While it can be mild during all the year in Andalusia or the Canary Island it can be very cold in the north or center of Spain

Spain occupies the 85% of the Iberian Peninsula, which shares with Portugal. Africa, in the south, is less than 16 km far, separated by the Strait of Gibraltar. In the north, the Pyrenees Mountains separate Spain of France. A broad central plateau slopes to the south and east, crossed by a series of mountain ranges and river valleys. Principal rivers are the Ebro in the northeast, the Tago in the central region, and the Guadalquivir in the south. Off Spain's east coast in the Mediterranean are the Balearic Islands, the largest of which is Majorca. And in the Atlantic Sea, 97 km west of Africa are the Canary Islands.



3. Spain is more than what you think

We are glad that you have chosen Spain for your intercultural experience during this school year. As we want you to have a marvelous experience it is important for you to know the truth about some stereotypes you may heard of regarding our culture.

"In Spain there is a lot of sun and beach"

Being a peninsula here are many beaches of all types (note that not all are sandy ones or with warm water); areas with a beach not always have sun all the year (in the case of Galicia and the Basque Country for example where people go swimming only during summer time). In general Southern beaches are warmer, and when it's really hot it can get quite crowded. You will surely enjoy your program in a city with no beach too, so you should not count on it. If you feel like swimming you can ask your host family for rivers, pools or lakes that allow bathing.



If you have a beach near remember the color code of the flags: red (you cannot swim, it is prohibited), yellow (if you bathe, be careful), green (you can swim safely).

"Spaniards always take a nap"

This is not true. Our working or school day prevents this healthy practice. Some Spaniards take a nap on weekends, holidays and specially during summer time. A healthy nap never takes more than 30 minutes.

"The people in Spain are always partying..."

... and there is a bar on every corner". It is true that the Spanish culture includes hanging out with friends and co-workers often for coffee, beer, wine... and it is true that in Spain we consume alcohol frequently, but you have to bear in mind that the **legal drinking age is 18 years**. It is also true that there are many bars, restaurants and cafes and you can find one on nearly every street, although this depends on the city or town where you are going to live.

"The Spaniards are extremely affectionate...."

...and they embrace and touch each other constantly". We are a culture of contact, but we are not always touching, in fact there are people who feel uncomfortable if your intimate space (15 cm) is invaded. When greeting people who you don't know:

	Formal	Informal
Man and man	They shake hands	They shake hands, and there is more contact, such as touching the arm or shoulder. Sometimes they also give two kisses on the cheeks, but it not frequent
Man and woman	They shake hand or give two kisses on the cheeks.	Two kisses on the cheeks
woman and woman	They shake hand or give two kisses on the cheeks.	Two kisses on the cheeks

You should be familiar with the two kisses because it is the way your host family will welcome you (right cheek is kissed first). Later, when you get to know each other better, hugs will be added.



"The Spaniards like bulls and it's a national feast"

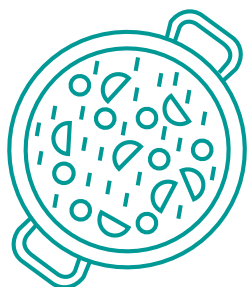
Some Spaniards like it, but it is not a widespread tradition. In fact, it is a controversial issue in Spain because some see bullfighting as part of our culture while others see this practice as a senseless atrocity for the animals. In some cities, after citizen's movements, bullfighting was banned.

"Spaniards eat paella and tortilla de patatas (Spanish omelet) all the time"

Actually, we eat more tortilla de patatas than paella, but not every day! In some regions it is quite common to have mid-morning a "pincho de tortilla" with a beer and coffee. And probably you will eat Tortilla de Patatas for dinner more than once.

See how to prepare a Spanish Omelet: www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5uYmDkTPyM

On the other hand, the paella is originally from Valencia. But you can eat it in all regions of Spain. There are almost as many ways to prepare a paella as cooks!!! Basically it is a rice dish with different kinds of things in it, like chicken, fish, vegetables, seafood, etc. It is not easy to prepare but it is delicious! Paella is a typical dish for Sundays.



"Spain is a sexist country"

No more than other countries or other cultures. It is true that the Spanish culture has relegated in the past women to a domestic level but today, although there are still many women who have no other job than being housewives, many other combine these duties with another job (it is likely that this will happen to your host mother or older sister). Salaries are somewhat lower for women in Spain and we have still a long way to go before true equality exists.

"The Spaniards speak very loudly"

Unfortunately we cannot deny this myth. It is true. You will see that when you're talking one to one the tone tends to be normal, but when joining a group of 3, 4, 7, 10 people... things change! Even sometimes, when you may still not understand everything what is said you could think people are angry: but most likely they are not and for sure you'll get used to it.



4. The three "pillars" of your experience

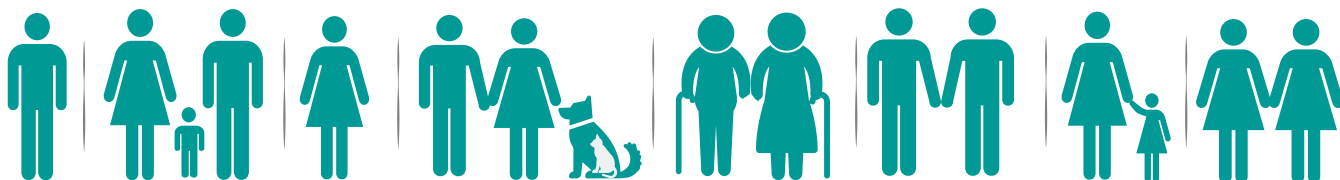
4.1 Family

4.2 Schools

4.3 AFS

4.1 Family

Never forget that your host family is a voluntary one. **They have invited you to live with them without getting any money.** They do so because they want to share with a young man or woman their lives, show their culture, know yours and help in learning a new language. And all kind of families are welcome to become AFS host families!



So, what do you have to do?

First of all **appreciate what they do.** Interact with them as much as you can although we know that it is hard at the beginning because you probably don't speak our language.

Show them that you are grateful, not by expensive gifts, but rather by saying "GRACIAS", by means of a smile, by helping out when it is needed, by showing enthusiasm and interest in what they have to offer.

Ask whatever you don't understand. In a polite manner, of course, but ask! This is also a way to participate, to get involve with the family and avoid misunderstandings.

What you don't have to do

Stay in your room. Avoid being alone in your bedroom. We understand that you need a place to relax and be on your own from time to time but try to be as much time with your family as possible, sharing common spaces as living room, kitchen, etc.

Don't get connected through Internet with the life you left temporarily behind. Avoid long conversations with friends in your country. It is better to start a blog that all of them can read and follow your adventure in Spain. Use your time to make new friends in Spain and do activities that maybe you can't do in your country. **What about learning to dance "Sevillanas"?**

It is quite possible that for the first few days you are treated more like a guest than like a sibling, even though we do warn families not to do this. It is up to you to protest any special treatment and to offer your help and cooperation whenever it can be easily accepted. Try to be part of the family from the beginning.

The idea of a typical Spanish family formed by a father, mother and a couple of children, has changed a lot and you can as well find families with three or more children, without or monoparental and even same sex couples with or without children. But a Spanish family still remains one of the cornerstones of our society. Family members tend to depend on one another quite a bit for both material and moral support in everyday life. Even after marriage, the ties between children and parents remain close and family likes to meet on weekends or to celebrate special festivities or events together.

Spanish houses

It can vary depending if your family lives in a city or in a village. In cities normally families live in flats, not very big and it is quite common that the student shares bedroom with a sibling. Outside of cities and especially in small villages families tend to live in houses with a small garden. Young people tend to continue to live at home for a long time, especially during these economically hard years. They often leave their families only when they get married or study abroad.

In Spain everyone locks doors and windows before leaving home. Sometimes, however, this does not happen in the case of small villages where everybody knows everyone else.



Family relationships

Both parents, especially among young couples, participate in raising their children and spend most of their free time with the family. It's very common that both parents have jobs which means that they will leave the house early in the morning and probably won't return home before 6 or 7 pm. Domestic chores are supposed to be divided among all family members - however many Spanish housewives do most of the house work. **Ask your family about how you can help.**

Brothers and sisters

It will be an important reference for you if you have a brother or sister of your age in the family. But remember that although they probably are excited about meeting you and have lots of plans to do with you, they also have to get used to the new member of the family: YOU. And it can take some time. **Don't expect to be the best friend** of your sister or brother. It can be or not. As it happens with your own brother or sister (if you have), sometimes you will spend time together and other times you will go out with different friends.

If you are placed in a house with small children you can say you are fortunate. They are normally affectionate and sociable which will help you to learn everything with lots of fun. Spend some time with them because they have for sure great expectations about your stay and they will be really disappointed if you ignore them. And they can be also good language teachers!!!

The rules in your family

Though we prepare and insist host families to be very clear regarding the rules or what they expect of the students, it is quite normal that in the beginning they are not comfortable asking the student to do some house chores like doing their own laundry, or asking the student to keep the room tidy, etc. And this can end in a problem.

So, **insist in knowing clearly what your family expects from you.** Ask about how you can help. Some Spanish mothers are afraid of asking but feel that the student "has to know" what to do. Ask for clarifications when you are not sure of what has been said or when you have the feeling of having done something wrong. Be certain to ask if there are particular house rules like meal times, curfews, and so on.

Food and manners

Although things are changing, lunch time is traditionally a space to meet with the family. If you will share lunch with your parents and siblings you will probably have a complete menu of 3 dishes: A soup, vegetables, pasta or salad, followed by meat or fish and ending with a desert (usually fruit).

Families that don't have lunch together usually have dinner together. They spend this time to talk about what they have done during the day.

Dinners can vary from family to family but you can also find three courses for dinner in many cases. Although lighter than lunch, it can be also a very complete food.

Always use the cutlery. Don't take the food with your fingers. Don't make noises while chewing and never burp. All this is considered completely impolite and your family won't accept it.

At the same time stay at the table while the rest of the family is seated. Don't finish your dish and leave. You have to stay until everybody has finished.

Taste everything before saying you don't like it even if it looks strange or you never have heard of it. Families are not supposed to buy special food for diets and only if you have been accepted as a vegetarian, you could ask your family for a vegetarian diet.



How a week and a weekend day looks like

Don't expect to do lots of things with your family. Some families like to be active, practice sports, go out to show new places to the student but some others just like to rest at home and relax from the week. For sure you will be allowed to go out with your friends but always remember to ask for permission to your family because they will like to know about your whereabouts.

Probably you will have to wake up around 7 am to start school at 8:30 am (in some cases you can also start at 8 am).

You will take a small breakfast before leaving the house and will take a sandwich or a more consistent "bocadillo" that you will eat around 11 when you will have a half an hour break.

Classes will end at 2 pm. Then you will go home and have lunch around 3 pm maybe with your host parents and siblings, maybe alone. Some Spanish working couples just eat at work so the student can be alone at home or with siblings if this is the case.

After lunch you can rest a bit because it is quite likely, especially the first weeks, that you will need it. Later you should do your homework and study.

We suggest that all the students do some activities in the afternoon-evenings. Sports, Spanish classes, music, or other activities - at least a couple of days per week. It is a good way to meet more people and know more about Spanish life. Your host family will suggest you the activities available for you.

On weekends some families go shopping, especially food for the coming week, prepare some food, relax, do some cleanings, and go out and visit relatives or friends.



Things that can be surprisingly different

- ◆ **Don't walk around on bare feet**, neither in the house nor outside. Normally Spanish people only walk barefooted on the beach or just before entering a swimming pool.
- ◆ **Don't put your feet on chairs**, couches or tables. Even if you see others doing it. It is considered impolite.
- ◆ **Don't lock yourself in your room**. If there's noise at home and you need to concentrate to study, explain clearly to your family that you need to close the door.

Room doors are normally open at Spanish houses. Privacy can be considered in a different way than in your culture. Although you have a bedroom for yourself, your host mother probably won't consider it as "your territory" and could go in and out without any notice.

- ◆ **Bathroom**. In some apartments you can find only a bathroom for the whole family. Though this could be not your case, don't spend much time using it. It is considered for the other people to use it too and you should bear in mind expenses of water and electricity. Leave it always clean after using it. Maybe you are used to take a shower in the morning and another one before sleeping. In Spain people usually only shower once per day. If you have never seen a "**Bidé**" (an extra element in the bathroom) ask what it is for. Some foreign students have thought it was for dogs to drink... here is a funny video from AFS Argentina about the way you should NOT use it: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6eN0Dqye5o

- ◆ **Don't keep food in the bedroom**. The kitchen or dining room is the place to keep food. If you buy special foods that you like, don't forget to offer them to the rest of the family. Keeping it only for yourself will be considered very impolite.

There are a few essentials you should bring with you and never forget to carry on you all year long. Bring initiative and enthusiasm, sensitivity and consideration, willingness to try openness and honesty. And, above all, bring humor.

If you are capable of laughing about the following things: never remembering the same silly word, making always the same mistake, not fitting in the old jeans any longer, arriving late because you got the address all wrong and felt incapable of asking someone, then everything will look brighter and you and the ones around you will feel a lot better. **Be positive!!!**

The three "pillars" of your experience

4.2 Schools

Schools around the world have a lot in common: teachers, desks, exams... but you will for sure find a lot of differences with your own school and you should be aware of that.

How is our school system?

The educational system in Spain is based on the Fundamental Law of Education (Ley Orgánica de Educación) which makes education compulsory and free for children between 6 and 16 years old. It includes **primary education** from ages 6 to 12 and a **compulsory secondary education** going up until the age of 16 in which students are required to complete the Spanish School with certification (ESO). Above the age of 16, students can choose whether or not to continue with post-compulsory schooling which involves taking the **Bachillerato** (high school degree). After completing the Bachillerato, students can take **entry exams** (selectividad) to the universities they wish to apply to.

Depending on your age and the course you have already done in your country, you will be enrolled in 4º ESO (last year of secondary education, 10th grade in the US), or 1st bachillerato (11th grade in US) or 2nd bachillerato (12th grade in US). Most of you will be in 1st bachillerato, some in 4th ESO and only a few in the last course, 2nd bachillerato because this is a very difficult course that ends mid-May. Students in this grade have to prepare the University access exams which means foreign students finish the course too early and could feel isolated.

There are three types of Bachillerato:

Sciences, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Arts. Each one consists of three types of subjects:

- **Comunes** (common ones), compulsory for all students whatever the specialization.
- **Materias propias de la modalidad** (sub-courses) These are specific for each of the specializations.
- **Optativas** (elective subjects) to complete the total number of subject.

Before coming to Spain you will be asked which type of Bachillerato you would prefer to be enrolled in.

Some quick facts about school

- ◆ The school year starts mid-September and ends around June 20th
- ◆ There are holidays for Christmas, (around Dec 22nd to January 8th), and between 8 to 10 days for Semana Santa (Easter holidays: around March or April). Some national or local holidays are spread over the school year and in some regions, schools may foresee a few other days of vacation.
- ◆ School days go from Monday to Friday, starting at 8 or 8:30 and finishing at 13:30 or 14. There's a 20-30 minutes break around 11.
- ◆ Lunch is not served in the Spanish schools. Some have a cafeteria.
- ◆ A class can be up to 35 students.
- ◆ Depending on the region, classes can be in a language different from Spanish. For instance in Catalonia all the subjects are in Catalan except Spanish language. In Valencia some subjects will be in Catalan and others in Valenciano (similar to Catalan).

In Galicia you can also have some classes in Galician and in the Basque Country you can attend a school whose classes are in Spanish or in Basque.



Homeworks and exams

Students are regularly given “**deberes**” (homeworks). You should do them although it can be hard at the beginning. Doing that is a way to participate in the class, to learn and also to be prepared for the exams that can be oral or written. From the very beginning you have to plan to study every afternoon as your friends and siblings do. If you have a particular difficult time with certain subject, talk to your host family or AFS tutor to see if they can help you.

School attendance

As you know this is a school program, so attendance to school is compulsory even if you find it difficult. If you miss one or more days of school, you must have a written justification from your host family. You must also be punctual and cannot leave the class before it ends. **Not attending school without a justified reason can end in an early return.**

Text books and other expenses

Though there are some schools that can provide text books for free, and some AFS chapter also provides the books to the students, normally the student has to buy them.

Some families buy the books before the school starts and the student has arrived, but some students also can use their siblings' books. In case you have to buy the books, AFS Intercultura will refund you the money according to the refund policy (you will receive this information and explanation upon arrival). But be aware that only text books will be reimbursed, not storybooks or dictionaries.

See page 15 for more info about reimbursements

Extra-curricular activities

Not many schools in Spain offer extra-curricular activities after classes. Some can offer you some kind of sports, usually *fútbol* (soccer) and *baloncesto* (basketball). But bear in mind that the extra-curricular activities a school may offer to you won't be for free.

AFS Intercultural recommends all the students to do some activities 2 or 3 days per week in the afternoon-evening. This is good to meet new people in a different environment.

Attending a gym, practicing a sport, learning Spanish dance or having extra Spanish classes are possibilities that for sure your host family will be happy to help you to find.

Some tips for your first days

- ◆ Don't be shy and introduce yourself to your mates
- ◆ If language is a barrier, use gestures and signs to communicate.
- ◆ Don't expect to be the center of the class. Depending of the school (big, small, the village, etc) your arrival can be something extraordinary and the pupils want to get to know you right away, but it can also be all the opposite.
- ◆ Try to join, at break time, small groups. Don't isolate yourself!
- ◆ Try not to sleep at class. We know it is difficult because you probably won't understand what the teacher explains but listening you will learn.
- ◆ **Try to learn Spanish if you haven't done it before, from the very moment you receive this booklet. It will help you for sure!!!**



The three "pillars" of your experience

4.3 AFS Intercultura

As you already know, AFS is a nonprofit intercultural education organization around the world. In Spain, we have existed since 1953 and all the experiences are possible thanks to a motivated network of more than 400 volunteers, families and staff.

How to contact AFS Intercultura

The office of AFS Intercultura is located in Madrid. The Staff in the office take care of general coordination of the various activities in the following areas: Sending and Hosting programs, Communication and Marketing, Administration, Development, Volunteers and Intercultural Training.

C/ Augusto Figueroa 3, planta 5
28004 Madrid
Tno: +34 915234595
Fax: +34 915235530
info-spain@afs.org

Office phone hours:
Monday - Thursday:
10:00 - 14:00
15:30 - 18:00
Friday:
10:00 - 14:00

There is also an emergency phone (24hours/365days) that can be used only in case of a true emergency and out of office hours

+34 629166322

The volunteers and tutor

Besides the staff in the office, around 400 volunteers throughout Spain help students and host families to live a valuable intercultural experience based on our core values of dignity, respect for differences, harmony, sensitivity and tolerance.

Each host family and foreign student has a volunteer with whom they can discuss questions and problems; this person is called **"tutor"** (counselor, liaison...) and his or her goal is to assist the family and the student in having a good open relationship to prevent and solve problems by facilitating the adjustment of each one to the new experience.

When you arrive in Madrid and before travelling to your host family, you will receive a card with the name, phone and email of your contact person: el "tutor". You can talk to this person about any problems or doubts you may have and about anything you find difficult to talk with your family, teacher or friends. If you can't reach your tutor please contact the office.



AFS Intercultura rules

In order to make the most of your experience, there are a few rules which you must respect. The legal responsibility for your actions falls on the AFS office which has the responsibility and duty of care for your safety and well being in Spain. So, since your actions may involve other persons, be fair to them. You are part of a group of students who are living the same experience; try not to ask for special allowances that cannot be granted to all members of the group.



While in Spain, you have agreed to follow:

The law of Spain

AFS students hosted in Spain are subject to Spanish law and are responsible for following the law. AFS is not able to protect a student from legal proceedings. Should your actions lead to a legal action, AFS will provide guidance.

Host family rules

You are not a guest at your host family's place, but a member of the family. If you are assigned tasks or told some house rules, you are expected to follow and respect them.

School rules

It is compulsory to attend all your classes and do your homework like other students.

AFS golden rules

Do not drive a car or other motor vehicles

Insurance does not cover medical care if you have an accident while driving and there are also many legal problems including jail.

Do not hitch-hike

The person who picks you up may not be trustworthy and you might be involved in an unpleasant incident.

Do not use or possess any illegal drugs

While in Spain you are subject to the Spanish law. If you violate it, neither your family, AFS Intercultura, nor your embassy can help you.

Mind that alcohol consumption under 18 is against the law.

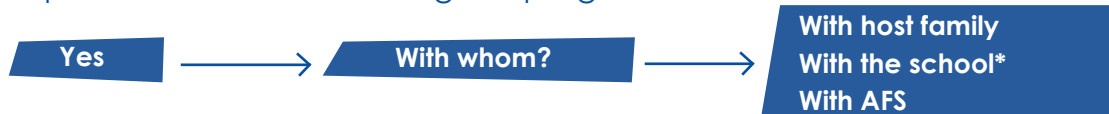
Violation of these rules can imply being sent back home immediately.



Rules for trips and visits

AFS understands that participants will want to see some other areas of Spain whilst you are here, but please be aware that this is not the purpose of your program. To ensure your safety, it is important that AFS knows where participants are at all times and that any proposed travel falls with the following AFS Travel Rules.

Are the participants able to travel during the program?



* AFS considers a school trip when it is organized by the school and a teacher travels with the student not an independent trip with school mates.

What if it is not with the host family, school nor AFS?

Then it is considered an **independent trip** and will only be authorized if...

... host family, tutor and AFS agree with it.

... you don't miss school classes.

... you have informed about the trip at least 10 days in advance.

... you have asked for a **"travel waiver" (permiso de viaje)**.



What is a Travel Waiver?

It is a document that AFS Spain sends to AFS in your country, specifying the place and the dates of the trip in order to your natural family sign it in agreement.

You need a Travel Waiver when traveling outside Spain and/or in case of an independent trip.

You, your host family or your tutor should send an email to the AFS Intercultura's office with all the information related to the trip you want to do.

If you need a Travel Waiver, you must inform AFS Intercultura at least 10 days in advance in order to have enough time to get you parental authorization, otherwise it will not be accepted.

To take into consideration...

- < For year program participants trips will only be authorized from February on. Semester program participants only during June. Trimester participants can't travel independently.
- < Hotel or hostels stays will only be authorized if an adult previously authorized by AFS accompany the student.
- < Trips outside Spain will be evaluated case by case.
- < Trip tickets should NOT be bought BEFORE getting the authorization.

Family or friends visits from your home country

AFS recommends that no visits are made to the participant during the program, (even if they are natural parents or close relatives) since **it can interfere with the adaptation process** and impact negatively on the experience.

However, anyone who wants to visit the participant must request permission from the AFS office in the country of origin. And visits only will be allowed:

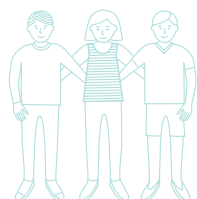
- ◆ From the month of February for Year Program students.
- ◆ During June, for Semester Program students.
- ◆ Visits are not allowed for the Trimester Program students
- ◆ If the host family, tutor and AFS agree.
- ◆ Provided that the participant does not have to miss classes at school.
- ◆ Provided the visit does not coincide with AFS Intercultura mandatory activities.

In case you want to stay longer in Spain...

Extending your stay in Spain after the program **will be only authorized if natural parents pick you up** on the last day of the program.



Remember! Should a student travel and not comply with AFS regulations, it can be considered grounds for early return home.



Early Return for personal reasons

An Early Return occurs when participant and natural parents decide that the participant returns home for personal reasons (such as, weddings, graduations, jobs, school requirements, etc.) - but only to return home. AFS Intercultura will hand out the travel ticket to the student on receiving a signed Early Return and Ticket Release Form. The domestic trip (arrangement and payment) from the hosting community to the international departure point will be the responsibility of the student and the natural parents. AFS Intercultura will not arrange international travel nor provide transit assistance. The AFS medical insurance plan will remain in effect until arrival in the home country.



Orientation camps

The orientations are meeting opportunities for students and volunteers to work on aspects that will help you to have a good experience during the program, solve problems that can appear or help you to understand particular situations.

While in Spain, you will have the **following orientation camps**:

When you arrive to Madrid you will have the first orientation, what we call “**a survival orientation**”, where we will explain the most basic things - that you probably already know - and we will give all the instructions for next day trip to your host family.

Year participants will have the following local orientations:

- Two or three weeks after arrival, a local welcome with the chapter.
- In October, the autumn orientation.
- In February, the “half year orientation”.
- In May or early June, the “final orientation”.

Semester participants will have a local orientation within two weeks of the arrival or, depending on the chapters, the first orientation may be also together with the year program students in February.

- In May or early June, the “final orientation”.

Trimester participants will have the following local orientations:

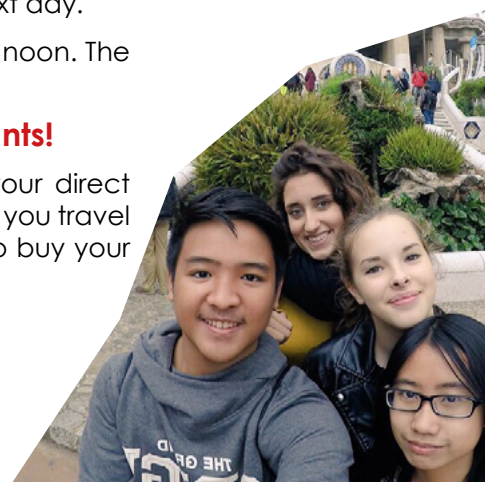
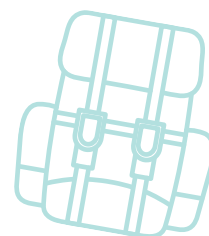
- Two or three weeks after arrival, a local welcome with the chapter.
- In October, the autumn orientation as your final orientation.

For all participants: right before you return home, you will come to Madrid again for the final departure orientation (“end of stay”) as you will board the plane the next day.

Normally local orientations begin on Saturday morning and ends on Sunday noon. The February orientation, however, starts usually on a Friday.

Attendance at all orientations is mandatory for all participants!

Whenever you participate in an AFS Intercultura mandatory activity, all your direct expenses will be taken care of. These are transportation, food and lodgings. If you travel to another part of Spain in one of these activities and receive instructions to buy your bus or train tickets, we will reimburse you accordingly.



Other activities

Each chapter could organize activities with the participants and host families during the program. **These are not mandatory activities** and it is up to you to participate or not.

There are chapters that organize more activities than others but all of them for sure will organize a special Christmas meeting, and other interesting activities.

For several years now the Galician chapter has been organizing "The Camino de Santiago" (St. James's Way), a pilgrimage route that ends in Santiago de Compostela.

It is a very interesting activity and though hard in some way because participants walk around 100 Km in 4 days. It is a beautiful experience where you can go deeper into our culture and strengthen ties with other participants and volunteers.

Expenses covered by AFS

AFS Intercultura covers the following expenses:

Text books / Libros de texto:

Not pens, pencils, notebooks, literary books or dictionaries. It is quite frequent that host families already get the books before the student arrives in Spain but in other cases you will have to buy them and afterwards the cost will be reimbursed.

School transportation / transporte escolar:

If you need to take a bus or other public transportation in order to go to school, you will be reimbursed for the money you spend. This will normally be ten trips a week. You can buy monthly or trimester ticket passes that are cheaper and allow you to use it for all the period.

Physicians and medicines / médicos y medicinas:

If you are sick and require medical care this is what you need to do:

- 1) we will need a medical report signed by the doctor.
- 2) you should ask the doctor to bill to AFS Intercultura directly.
- 3) If the doctor cannot send us the invoice directly, you should send all the documentation to us in order to be paid, together with the bill or invoice. The same applies to medicines prescribed by the doctor: you should prepay and then send us the receipt to get reimbursed.

AFS Intercultura is responsible for sending your medical report and expenses to the insurance company. You will get clear instructions and forms upon arrival.

All of you have a health insurance that covers all medical problems you might have during your program. When signing the participation agreement you will receive the AFS Medical Pamphlet where you can find all the information regarding the insurance coverage. It is very important that you read it as well as your parents in order to know exactly what it covers and what not.

AFS doesn't pay for:

... medicines required to treat pre-existing medical conditions, as well as medicines you take regularly (e.g. vitamins), vaccinations, or expenses related to dental or ocular care (glasses, contact lenses).

At the first orientation you will receive a card with name, address and emergency phone of the Insurance Company in case you couldn't reach host family, tutor or AFS Staff and need help. Keep it with you all the time.

... for school trips, travels with your host family or other activities in which your participation has not been requested by AFS Intercultura.

How to get the money back

When you arrive in Madrid you will receive a monthly expenses form; you must send it to the office at the end of each month, with a list of your expenses and with the original receipts or bills which justify the payment. In case of a medical visit, you have to add also the medical report. You will be reimbursed by the middle of the following month. Be aware that we must receive the receipts within 30 days after occurrence – otherwise we cannot reimburse you.

5. Do I need a visa?

Non-European citizens

All the students, not having a European passport, need to ask for a student's visa in the Spanish Embassy or Consulate in his/her country. AFS Intercultura will provide the documentation you need in order to get it through your local office. Without this Visa you won't be able to travel to Spain.

Once in Spain:

This Visa allows you to stay in our country for no more than 3 months. In our first orientation we will provide you with the information and documentation you need to get the TIE (Tarjeta de Identidad de Estudiante – Student Identity Card) that will allow you to stay in Spain for the whole length of the program. We sometimes refer to this as “extending the visa” – Visa extension.

In order to do that, you will have to go to the police and ask for a student card that will be the document that certifies that your stay in Spain is completely legal after your visa expires.

In the first orientation, we will give you the instructions about how to get it. Your host family, volunteers and staff will help you with this process but **you must understand that the responsibility to get this card is only YOURS.**

If the visa expires before you have obtained the student card it won't be possible to ask for it. You will be illegally in Spain and probably you will have to return home. It is important that you initiate the process of extension within the **FIRST MONTH AFTER ARRIVAL** and even if it will take some months you get the student card, at least you will receive a document that states that you are already within the process to get it. That certifies you are legal in Spain.

You have to pay for the cost of getting the TIE. It is around 20€.

European citizens

Students from a European country don't need a visa but also have to go to police once in Spain, provided they are here more than 3 months, to be registered.

You will also get the instructions to do that and your host family and volunteer will help you.



Now... get ready for your experience!



6. Preparing your trip

Some students arrive in Spain with very light clothing, convinced that we always have sun and warm days. But it will depend on the part of Spain where you are placed. It is not the same the north than the south of Spain!!! We recommend you to bring a thick jacket that keeps you warm during chilly months.

Be careful preparing your luggage. Bear in mind that you will travel with it so if it is too big and heavy it won't be easy for you to handle. Always ask the airline about the luggage allowance but also take into account that once in Madrid you will have to travel to your host community. We will let you know upon arrival if your onward travel will be by bus, train or flight. Domestic flights can be less permissive than international flights!

So put in the luggage what you think you will need but bearing in mind that in Spain you can also buy at a good price all kinds of clothes, socks, etc. (especially during sales).

Also keep in mind that there is a tendency to gain weight during an experience abroad, so in a few months some of your clothes may not fit anymore.

Bring a swimsuit in your hand luggage. Maybe you could use it at the hotel/hostel during the arrival camp.

Gifts

It's nice to bring a gift for your host family. It's better to give something small to each member of the family than to give a large gift. Some ideas for a gift could be: Recipes of you country foods, Folk music, handicrafts, T-shirts, a book about your country, etc.

Money

Effective January 1st 2002, the Euro coins and notes are the Spanish legal currency.

There seems to be a widespread notion of Spain being a relatively inexpensive country; this may have been so some years ago, but it certainly does not apply now. Going out for a drink, cinemas, concerts, books, etc. is expensive. You will have to pay for your personal expenses, so plan your budget ahead of time.

Prices vary a lot from a big city to a small village. For example, the cinema will be cheaper if they are not showing a recently published film; there are "cine-studios", which are small, where you watch two movies for the price of one; there is one day a week when you only pay half price (normally Wednesdays or Mondays). You can check some approximate prices here:

Common purchases	Approximate prices	Common purchases	Approximate prices
Cinema - Cine	From 4 to 10 €	Hand pocket book – <i>Libro de bolsillo</i>	5 – 15€
Theater - Teatro	12 – 60€	Pizza, Hamburger, Sandwich – <i>Pizza, hamburguesa, bocadillo</i>	3 - 10€
Concert (rock, pop...) <i>Concierto</i>	15 – 60€	Haircut - <i>Corte de pelo</i>	10 - 25€
Opera - Ópera	20 – 135€	Flight Madrid-Barcelona- Madrid – Vuelo	100 - 200€
Museum – Museo	0 – 14€		
Coffee, tea – <i>Café, té</i>	1,50 – 3€		
Public swimming pool – <i>Piscina pública</i>	2 - 4€		

Most of the students travel with a credit card that allows them to get money in a bank cashier and also use it to buy what they need. We think it is the best way to manage money while you are on the program. In Spain you won't be able to open a bank account if you are less than 18 years old.

Phones

We ask all the students to have a mobile phone with a Spanish phone card during the program. This allows host families, volunteers and AFS office to be able to contact them if necessary. Bring an unlocked phone so your host family will help you to get Spanish SIM card.



7. Safety in Spain

The Police

In Spain there are three kinds of police, called "policía municipal", "policía nacional" and "policía autonómica", patrolling the streets and controlling the traffic in the cities. They are there to help people and are usually friendly people who you can ask for directions or ask for help if you get lost.

There are also other civil authorities called "guardia civil" who usually patrol in rural areas and roads outside the urban centers keeping an eye on traffic and making sure that law is followed.

If the police or other civil authorities stop you for any reason, you should show respect and cooperate with them, even though you may be innocent of any crime and you think that you are being treated unfairly.

Remind to bring always with you your Student ID Card, once you get it, and a copy of your passport.

In case of emergency...

... call your host family, the local contact person or AFS Intercultura National office. After office hours you can call the AFS emergency phone:

+ 34 629166322

This number is only for emergency and urgent matters, not for general consultations.

... There is also an emergency toll free service available from any public phone or home telephone. You should keep it in mind. Any emergency (police, ambulance, firemen):

112

Abuse of this number or use with no justified reason may be punishable by law.

In case of a national emergency the students should follow the advice of the government or the local authorities. The AFS Intercultura office will immediately contact you in order to provide any necessary help.

Laws

AFS Intercultura students are subjected to the laws of their hosting country. Neither AFS Intercultura nor the National government of the student's home country has the power to protect the student from punishment with respect to drugs, shoplifting, driving, and other legal offences.

Participants and their natural parents are fully responsible for damages caused by the participants, to third parties and any costs involved in connection with claims due to the use of alcohol or drugs. AFS Intercultura does not assume any legal liability for the participants.

Illegal Drugs

Unfortunately, as in many other countries, some illegal drugs have found their way into the high schools, discotheque, bars, rock concerts, parties etc.

Generally these drugs are not hard such as cocaine, heroine etc., but other drugs that are smoked such as marijuana or hashish may be more common. Other common names for them are "chocolate", "María", "porros", "hierba" etc. In Spain the consumption of these drugs is not punishable but you will be arrested if caught with them because the possession is illegal and fines are very high.

Other common drugs include designer drugs such as ecstasy. These are popular in some discotheques. These drugs are very dangerous and obviously illegal.

If you are invited to go to a party or other event and you are not sure if it's safe to go, ask your host family, host sibling, tutor or AFS Intercultura office.

As you already know, it is forbidden for all AFS participants to possess or consume any kind of drugs. Be aware that hanging around with people who consume or possess drugs is not allowed for you neither. **Don't put yourself in a risky situation.** Explicit violation of these rules is cause for dismissal from the program and immediate return to the home country.

The early return of the participant also applies to situations when she/he is involved with drugs. It is important to understand that involvement not only means actually using drugs, but also having drugs in your possession, frequenting places where drugs are used or knowingly associating with persons using these substances, etc.

Alcohol

Many families will allow you to have a glass of wine or a beer at home and it is considered socially acceptable; in many families they usually have a bottle of wine on the table at each meal.

In Spain, the **legal age for buying alcoholic beverages and drinking in public is 18.**

This law cannot be enforced in some bars. We have to add that sometimes young people do not have a responsible attitude towards alcohol. It is common to find people less than 18 drinking; however AFS students should avoid these groups.

Abuse of alcoholic beverages could also cause dismissal from the program.

Cigarettes

In Spain, laws are being very strict in the last years about smoking in public places. It is not allowed to smoke in bars, restaurants or other closed places and even in certain open places, like parks, can be also prohibited. You must also have in mind that the **legal age to buy cigarettes is 18.** But more important than this is that if you have said in your application that you are not a smoker and you won't smoke during the program.

This is what your family and AFS expects from you. This means that although you have become a smoker after you signed the application, you will need to follow the compromise of not smoking during the program.

Personal safety

It can be difficult to handle a new situation within your home society but, in a culture that is new to you, such a situation can seem even more confusing. By presenting you with some legal and cultural rules of Spain, we hope to help you make wise decisions when confronted with sexual harassment, alcohol and drugs.

In any situation you may encounter during your stay in Spain, it is important to keep in mind that you should not compromise your personal moral values or do anything that makes you feel uncomfortable while you are here on the AFS program. While it is important for an exchange student to be open-minded, adventuresome and accepting the host culture, this does not mean you should ignore everything you have learned in your home culture. It is always a good idea to observe the behavior of those around you then follow what your inner voice tells you about what you have learned concerning what is right and what is wrong.

The best general advice AFS can recommend regarding issues of personal safety is as follows:

Get to know the host culture through questions, dialogue and discussion with your host family, peers and the AFS local contacts.

Take serious any concerns expressed by your host family, school and AFS volunteers and follow their advice.

As stated in the Participation Agreement document that you signed prior to your departure, the national AFS office will make recommendations and give guidelines for physical welfare and security. Take this advice seriously and comply with these guidelines.

Do not ignore your instincts in any given situation or feel you have to compromise your own personal behavioral values and beliefs. These are valuable resources in making decisions about what to do.

Take personal responsibility for making smart choices that will keep you safe and healthy.

Some rules to keep you safe

Don't go out alone.

THINK ABOUT IT before you go. Remember that if you can avoid situations that put you at risk in the first place, you're already one step ahead. You are always safer if you are accompanied by a friend, host sister, or host brother.

Always tell an adult where you're going!

Again, THINK ABOUT IT. NEVER, EVER go somewhere with someone you don't know. This includes hitchhiking which is totally forbidden for AFS students. Give a telephone number and an address to your host family BEFORE you go. Letting someone know where you'll be at all times is a clever choice. If you are ever facing a risky situation or get into trouble, your host family and friends will know where to start looking for you.

It's your body!

During your exchange year, you will face some situations that put you in uncomfortable spots. You will constantly have to make decisions for yourself and will be faced with peer pressure about anything from who your friends are – male or female – to exposure to drugs and sex. One more time: THINK ABOUT IT. You have the right to reject unwanted and inappropriate attention such as teasing, touching and bullying.

Say NO if you feel threatened, and tell a trusted adult.

Don't be afraid to stand up for yourself. Listen to your intuition and follow your best judgment. If your friends are making bad decisions, you don't have to do the same. Have the confidence to say NO if anyone makes you feel uncomfortable about anything. And remember, it is never too late for you to tell an adult if anything is bothering you. If someone – anyone – touches you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable, you have the right to say no. Whether it is peer pressure about sex, drugs, or doing something that you know is wrong, be strong and stand your ground. Don't be afraid to make your feelings known.

Now you know the rules. You may have always known them but now we hope you can understand them better. They're like alarm bells that go off in your head when you're faced with a risky situation. They can't get you out of every tough spot but they might keep you from getting into one.

We know that you're SMART and STRONG and ready to TAKE ON THE WORLD. Go do it, just use your brain FIRST. Know the rules. From now on, these are your rules for life.

Preventing and Identifying Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment has become a major issue in most countries. It is now accepted that certain types of sexual advances, either verbal or physical, are seen as inappropriate and, if you initiate these advances, you could be breaking the law. For an exchange student, this can mean being expelled from school, arrested by the police and even being sent back to his or her home country.

When a person asks you to stop making sexual advances towards him or her, it is your responsibility to stop. Likewise, if you ask your companion to stop, he or she should listen. **"No means no"** is a phrase being used to encourage women and men to speak up if they want to stop their companion's advances. It is also being used to educate people to stop advances they are making when their companion says "no."

Often clarification of attitudes may be necessary and the advice of people you have around is very valuable. Knowledge about the people that you socialize with is also important and this is acquired best through increasing knowledge of the culture.

Equally important are your own values and beliefs regarding your behavior. In societies where some young people are sexually active, there are also many that are not. You should not compromise your own personal behavior.

You may be unsure in some situations if you are being sexually harassed or if a particular person's behavior would be considered as normal or just friendly. An important source is your own instinct. Often your host parents and friends will be able to advise you about what is normal behavior regarding people you don't know. Other people to whom you can turn to for advice or help are teachers at school, the AFS Intercultura contacts within your community and at the AFS national office.

In the event of a sexual assault, the student should first notify their host parents. The host family will then take over and notify the police and AFS Intercultura local chapter or/and national office and arrange for a medical checkup.

Sexual attitude

We know that sex among adolescents is becoming more common every day.

Even though, we strongly discourage you from involving yourself in casual sex.

Remember you are in a foreign country, far from home, experiencing new feelings and you are still very young even though you may feel mature enough.

Statistics show the increased number of cases of venereal diseases and the spread of AIDS. We must also mention the number of unwanted pregnancies.

In case of sexual activities please be aware of the unwanted consequences and always use a protection. The use of a condom is a MUST.

Some general tips to take into consideration for your experience

Observe what others do. It is the best way to learn

Never say Ok if you are not sure about what has been said. It may be important!!!

School can be hard. But never forget that this is a school program. After a couple of months you will see how everything will be easier.

When the cultural codes are different to ours, communication becomes one of our most powerful tools.



Appendix I: Language guide

You are about to start an intercultural experience with AFS in Spain. And here's a very quick guide on how to make the best of out of it:



Good humor
Respect
Determination
Initiative
Will

In order to achieve all your goals and meet your expectations, something crucial for this experience is to learn the language and make an effort before you come to Spain.

Language is a very important part of the experience:

to communicate at home.

to study at school.

to make new friends.

Want to know a gossip?



30 min of daily study in 3 months, you will be able to express yourself quite well in a different language. So take some time of your summer to learn Spanish.

If you know some basic of the language...

Your adaptation process will be faster and you will struggle less.

You will make friends easier and be less bored at the school.

It will be easier to be accepted by your community.

You will help your host family and have a faster integration.

And if you don't...

During at least the first two months you will be out of everything.

You will have to use English and this can be a problem if your host family or surroundings don't speak English.

At school you might end up being ignored.

The host family will get tired of explaining things.

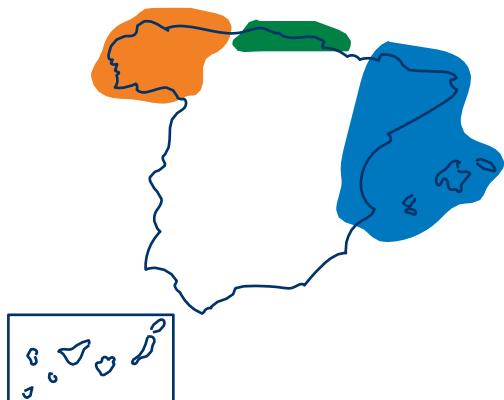
So... what do you choose?

Of course you chose option 1, right?

But first of all, for sure you know that **Spain is a very diverse country** in terms of culture and even language. Our official language is Spanish, but **there are other co-official languages** that are spoken in different regions. And you must be aware of this, in a very positive and enriching way, if a family from that region decides to host you.

We can tell that AFS participants who come to Spain take advantage of this situation and end up learning another language besides Spanish!

Where do we speak other languages?



Galicia. Around 50% of the population speaks gallego in everyday life. At the school, this is also a common subject.

País Vasco. Around 20-30% of the population in the Basque Country speaks euskera. There are 2 types of school in the region: Basque or Spanish. However, it is rather unlikely that you fall into an only-Basque speaking family, but in case you do, don't lose this amazing gift and put a lot of effort on it.

Cataluña, Comunidad Valenciana and Baleares Islands. In these regions, people speak Catalán and Valenciano, which is very similar to Catalán. In Cataluña, more than 80% of the lessons are in Catalan so it becomes mandatory to learn it to follow the school.

Regarding *Valenciano*, it is a language spoken by approximately 2 million people in Comunidad Valenciana. But at school you will have some subjects in this language and others in Spanish.

Remember!

AFS is an intercultural learning program, not a language training academy. Ask your host family

what language they speak at home and try your best to get integrated in your community by learning any co-official language. Usually, learning Spanish and another co-official language is a very satisfying reward.

You can start now!

Learning a language is like cooking! You have words and you can cook them into phrases.

- By knowing the 250 most used words at the beginning, you will be able to communicate with basic sentences and understand around 65% of the day-life language.

- By learning the 750 most used words, you will be able to express in any vary basic conversation and understand around 75% of the day-life language.

So let's start cooking: Try several tools, books and websites for your language training and train anywhere: in the sofa, in the beach, in the metro, in the car, in the class, in the train, in the bus, in the toilet....

It is always good to hear the language to get used to the sounds and to repeat like a parrot, even if you don't understand anything.

From AFS Intercultura, we provide you with some tools:

On-line materials:

www.bbc.co.uk/languages/spanish/ - You can find different resources to learn and practice Spanish.

Try these apps for your mobile:

www.duolingo.com/ - keep some vocabulary in mind.

www.memrise.com/ - test your knowledge!

What about an on-line dictionary:

<http://en.pons.com/translate>

<https://translate.google.com/>

Learning some Catalán can be useful before arriving...

<http://goo.gl/7Eiwie>



Appendix 2: Useful Questions for the first days with your host family in Spain

Here are some questions that can help you with your host family during your first days. You can find the question in English and then in Spanish.

Use this guide as much as possible because you can find a lot of vocabulary with very useful words. You can also practice pronunciation with your family, asking them to pronounce the sentence for you.

Questions in English	Questions in Spanish
How should I call you, mum, dad or first names?	¿Cómo debo llamarte: "mamá", "papá" o por tu nombre?
What else am I expected to do daily other than making my bed, keeping my room tidy, cleaning the bathroom every time I use it?	Además de hacer mi cama, tener mi habitación ordenada o mantener el baño limpio, ¿Qué otras tareas esperáis que haga?
Where shall I keep my dirty clothes until wash day?	¿Dónde debo dejar mi ropa sucia?
Shall I wash my own underclothes?	¿Debo lavar yo mismo/a mi ropa interior?
May I use the washing machine at any time? If yes, how is it operated?	¿Puedo utilizar la lavadora a cualquier hora? ¿Cómo funciona?
May I use the iron and how is it operated?	¿Puedo utilizar la plancha? ¿Cómo funciona?
Where can I keep my bathroom accessories?	¿Dónde puedo guardar mis cosas de aseo?
May I use your toothpaste, soap, shampoo...?	¿Puedo utilizar vuestra pasta de dientes, jabón, champú?
What is the procedure about using the bathroom?	¿Cómo os organizáis para usar el baño?
May I take a shower every day and at what time?	¿Puedo ducharme todos los días? ¿A qué hora puedo hacerlo?
What time do you usually have meals?	¿A qué hora son las comidas?
May I take food and drinks between meals or must I ask first?	¿Puedo coger libremente comida o bebida entre comidas o debo pedirlo antes?
Are there strictly private areas at home?	¿Hay alguna parte de la casa donde no pueda entrar o estar?
Where can I put my clothes? May I have a coat hanger?	¿Dónde puedo poner mi ropa? ¿Puedes darme una percha?
Where should I store my suitcase?	¿Dónde puedo guardar mi maleta?
What time am I supposed to get up on weekdays and at weekends?	¿A qué hora debo levantarme a diario? ¿Y el fin de semana?
What time should I usually go to bed on week days?	¿A qué hora debo acostarme a diario?

Appendix 3: Adaptation

10 tips on how to adapt to a different culture

Though many hidden factors can make it difficult to get insight into another culture, it is not impossible. The following tips may help you better understand and adapt to a new culture.

1. Be cautious: Don't always think you understand everything – remember that you are among new rules and customs that may be unfamiliar to you.

2. Learn the language and use it: Even though you can't speak perfectly, the fact that you try to speak Spanish will be appreciated. Making an effort at learning the language shows people that you really try to adapt.

3. Don't judge situations too early: Especially in problematic situations it is important not to arrive at conclusions until all sides of the story have been heard.

4. Avoid value judgments: The natural tendency to label everything you see as "good" or "bad" may be a serious obstacle to understanding a new culture. Observe and describe, and most importantly accept other people on their own terms.

5. Show empathy: To show empathy means to identify you with somebody else's feelings. It is to put yourself emotionally in the place of a different person and see the situation from their point of view. Remember that there are different ways of seeing the same situation.

6. Listen and observe with caution: Intercultural communication is not easy; there may be many factors that complicate mutual understanding. To be observant about verbal and non-verbal signs, and to place them in the right context, is a great challenge that demands time and patience.

7. Learn to express yourself correctly: Communication happens on many levels; it is necessary to be aware that every culture has its own pattern for expressing thoughts and feelings. Try to adapt to this pattern – both verbally and non-verbally.

8. Check meanings: If you are in doubt, double check that you have understood correctly. Both, words and body language, can have different meanings in different cultures.

9. Accept that it is natural to be insecure: Cross cultural communication is not easy, there are many stress factors involved in communication between people from different cultures. Openness, willingness to take chances and the ability to laugh at your own mistakes may help you to handle your insecurity in a positive manner.

10. Share with others as much as you can: Show your ability to participate, to try out new things, and to learn about your hosting community and the culture there.

Adaptation is the key to success!



Your Address book

This booklet belongs to:

Your AFS local chapter:

Your contact person (tutor)

Name:

Phone:

E-mail:

Host family

Names:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

School

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

Friends:

Names and contact info:

Names and contact info:

Names and contact info:

Names and contact info:



We hope that all
these advices will help
you to have a good
experience in Spain.

Good luck and have fun!!!

AFS mission

AFS is an international, voluntary, non-governmental, non-profit organization that provides intercultural learning opportunities to help people develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to create a more just and peaceful world.

AFS values

AFS enables people to act as responsible, global citizens working for peace and understanding in a diverse world. It acknowledges that peace is a dynamic concept threatened by injustice, inequity, and intolerance.

AFS seeks to affirm faith in the dignity and worth of every human being and of all nations and cultures. It encourages respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language, religion or social status.

AFS activities are based on our core values of dignity, respect for differences, harmony, sensitivity, and tolerance.

Learn more about AFS at www.afs-intercultura.org

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