



Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

Chile Host School FAQ

When does the school year begin and end?

The Chilean school year begins within the first week of March and lasts until the first or second week of December. There are two vacation periods during the school year: a two-week “winter vacation” in June or July, and a one week vacation in September to mark the coming of spring and Chile’s National Holiday. The school year is divided into three trimesters or two semesters, depending on the school you are attending.

In what type of school will I be enrolled?

Seventy percent of Chilean schools are private, and most AFSers are placed in private schools.

What is a typical school day? How many classes per day?

Most school days begin between 8 and 8.30am, have one hour for lunch, and end between 4 and 6pm. There is usually a 10-minute break between class periods. Classes usually take place Monday through Friday, but there are a few schools that have classes on Saturday mornings as well. When the school schedule is from 8 to 4, students have lunch at school. If school schedule is from 8 to 6, students can go home for lunch.

In what grade level will I be enrolled?

Students are placed in a grade that corresponds with the same level that he/she is currently attending or has recently finished in his/her own country.

Will I be able to choose my classes? What classes are available?

All levels have some fixed courses and must also choose 3 to 4 elective courses. The courses may include sciences (biology, chemistry, and physics), history and geography (world and Chilean), math, Spanish and literature, foreign languages, civics and economics, physical education, music and arts, philosophy and technology. Religion (Catholic or Protestant) is taught in schools owned by religious congregations. In other schools religious can be offered as optional.

The number of hours, per week, that each subject is taught depends on the grade level that the student is placed. All exchange students must attend all the subjects in their set schedule, even if there are subjects they have never taken before.

What grading system does the country use?

Outstanding: 7

Good: 6

Average: 5

Poor: 4 (passing grade)

Failing: below 4

In what language will the classes be taught?

All classes, with the exception of foreign languages, are taught in Spanish.



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Will I need to buy a uniform, books, or other school supplies?

All Chilean students are required to wear a uniform. Exchange students are expected to purchase their own uniform, either in Chile or in their home country. When students receive their host school placement, they should check the “School Information” form to see what kind of uniform is required at their school and what parts of it might be purchased before leaving for Chile. The following is the most commonly required uniform in Chilean schools. Keep in mind that some schools (especially private schools) have a different uniform and that prices may vary.

- Navy blue jacket - US\$45 (boys only)
- Navy blue, round neck, knee long jumper (girls) - US\$25
- Gray trousers (boys) or navy blue (girls) non-corduroy pants – US \$27
- White or light blue shirt (depending on school) - US\$16
- Black leather shoes (no high heeled or platform for girls) - US\$65
- Navy blue or gray socks - US\$5
- Knee high, navy blue socks (girls) - US\$5
- Sports uniform – US\$58

Students in Chile have to buy their own books, but AFS students are almost always able to borrow books from the school or a host sibling.

Are extra-curricular activities available such as sports, music, or art?

Chilean students are required to participate in at least two extra-curricular activities. Options include sports, social service, scouts, arts (painting, music, handicrafts, etc.), etc. The variety of extra-curricular activities depends on the type of school and the interest shown by the students.

Can I get an official transcript or a certificate of attendance?

Exchange students should be able to receive a transcript of grades from their host school, provided they comply with all the school requirements.

Can I get academic credit for my study abroad?

The amount and type of credit you receive is determined by your high school in the U.S. so it's important that you talk with your teachers and guidance counselor before you depart. Be sure to keep a copy of any formal grades or transcripts you receive from your host school. It is your responsibility to obtain any written information about your attendance and grades in your host school before you return home. AFS does not have any influence over obtaining academic credit for your studies abroad and cannot assist you with course or grade information for your time on program.