

Applying for Your Student Visa: Spain

What is a visa?

A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

Do I need a visa to go to Spain?

A visa is required for students going to Spain through an officially registered organization or program such as ISEP or UM's Partner University Exchange program, so you (and your dependents, if applicable) will need to obtain a visa for your period of study in Spain. A visa is valid for 90 days beginning on the day of issuance. Therefore, your visa application must be submitted between 60 and 90 days prior to your departure. **Remember that once you are in Spain, you must renew your visa every 90 days.** To renew the visa, just go to the nearest police department a few days prior to the expiration date.

What do I need to apply for a visa?

You need the following documents to apply for a visa (also called a "residence permit"):

- ▶ **Attention:** This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the consulate with jurisdiction over your permanent residence, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.
- **A valid passport** and provide one copy;
 - ◆ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for how to apply for a passport.
 - ◆ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
- **One copy of you ID card**, such as a US driver's license, US state ID card, or voter's registration card.
- **Three completed visa application forms** (one original, 2 copies);
 - ◆ The application can usually be downloaded from your respective Spanish consulate's website. You can also contact the consulate via phone or mail to request forms.
- **Three passport size photos** against a white background.
- **Original letter of acceptance** (and one copy) from the Spanish university you will be attending that states you will be enrolled as a full-time student, your program dates, and subjects of study, and the provision of tuition, room, and board benefits;
 - If the acceptance letter from your host institution has not arrived within three months prior to your departure, please notify UM's International Programs
 - Partner exchange students: include a letter from UM's International Programs addressed to the Spanish consulate certifying your participation in the program as a full-time student, your program dates, the name and address of your Host Coordinator, stating you will be paying tuition and fees to UM.
 - ISEP students: include "certification letter" from ISEP indicating that tuition, room and board are fully prepaid; included in your ISEP acceptance package. Also, ISEP will issue you a letter addressed to the Spanish consulate certifying your participation in the program as a full-time student, your program dates, the name and address of your host ISEP Coordinator, and the provision of tuition, room and board benefits as well as your enrollment in health insurance.
- **Visa fee of \$100** in the form of a money order or cash; personal checks will not be accepted.
- **Evidence of funds.** Provide either of the following, and one copy:
 - Proof of financial aid or scholarship of at least \$2,200/month for room and board.
 - Notarized letter from parents/sponsors assuming full financial responsibility for at least \$2,200/month while student is in Spain

- **Proof of health insurance** (and one copy) with international accidental coverage for the intended period of stay in Spain for a minimum of 30,000 euros (or equivalent in US dollars).
- **Certificate of absence of police records** (and one copy). If you are going to spend more than 6 months in Spain, you may be required to bring an original certificate of good conduct issued by the police department of the city or cities in which you have spent 6 months or more in the last 5 years. This certificate cannot be older than two months from the application date and must be legalized with the Apostille of the Hague Convention (contact the Secretary of State of the state where it is issued http://travel.state.gov/family/law/judicial/judicial_2545.html). If the country is not the US, then the certificate must be legalized by the Spanish Consulate in that country.
- **Health Certificate**, a letter (and one copy) from your doctor verifying that you are in good physical and mental health to be able to study abroad.
- **Round-trip airline reservation/travel itinerary**. It is recommended to wait until the visa has been issued before purchasing travel tickets.
- **A self-addressed USPS envelope** is to be submitted with your application so that your passport may be returned to you. Be sure that the prepaid envelope is for express mail service, and include \$17.50 in stamps. No other courier service is accepted.
- ▶ **Attention:** This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the consulate, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person (Please note: **You must apply for the visa in person**, and you must apply at the consulate with jurisdiction over your **permanent residence, not your school residence**).

- Visit your Spanish Consulate's website and schedule an appointment to apply in person for your visa.
- Take the above documents to the Spanish consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.
- **Residents of Montana will need to travel to the Spanish Consulate in San Francisco to apply for their visa.**
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation, location and paperwork requirements.
- Avoid waiting until the last minute to apply for your visa, as omitting one document or failing to complete a form completely may delay the processing of your visa for weeks. Applications will not be accepted less than 40 days prior to departure.

B. Via mail (Please note: In most cases you will be required to **appear in person at the consulate to apply for the visa**. In exceptional cases, if you live far from the consulate or are unable to appear in person, it may be possible to obtain the visa by mail or for a parent to present you application at the consulate. Call the consulate for details. Normal processing time is three to six weeks).

If you receive permission to apply for your visa via mail rather than in person, you should:

- Send all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to the consulate. Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.
- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*. (Or include at extra US\$17.50 for the Spanish Consulate to return your visa via overnight mail.)
- Apply early: normal processing time is three to six weeks and cannot be started until all paperwork is submitted.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

General tips for applying for a visa:

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquires every day so contacting them may be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day. You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

Spanish Consulates in the US:

If the appropriate consulate is not listed below, visit

<http://www.mae.es/embajadas/Washington/es/MenuPpal/Servicios+Consulares/> for a listing of all Spanish Consulates in the U.S and the states they serve.

Consulado General de España en San Francisco

1405 Sutter St.

San Francisco, CA 94109

Tel. (415) 922-2995/96

Fax: (415) 931-9706

E-mail: conspfo@mail.mae.es

Website: <http://www.maec.es/Consulados/sanfrancisco/es/Home/>

States Served: Alaska, California (salvo parte sur), Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, posesiones estadounidenses en el Pacifico.

Embassy de España

2375 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.

Washington, D.C 20037

Tel. (202) 452-0100; Fax (202) 833-5670

E-mail: spain@spainemb.org

Website: <http://www.spainemb.org/ingles/indexing/htm>