

SPAIN
MADE 
SIMPLE
SANDTONS

SCHOOLS IN SPAIN MADE SIMPLE

Spain offers a high quality of life for children. But the school system is rigid.



THE QUICK GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Spain offers a high quality of life for children. But the school system is rigid.

The Myth: "I can just enroll my child when I arrive."

The Reality: Public schools have a strict application window in March. If you miss it, you fight for scraps in September. International schools fill up 6-12 months in advance.



THE THREE PATHWAYS

You have three routes. Choose based on your timeline, not just cost.



Option A: Public Schools

Colegios Públicos

Cost: Free.

Language: 100% Spanish (or Catalan/Valenciano depending on region).

Best For: Children under 8 who will soak up the language quickly. Families committed to long-term integration.



Option B: Concertados

Semi-Private

Cost: Low (€100-€300 /month).

Vibe: Usually Catholic. Strict discipline. Uniforms.

Best For: Families who want "private school values" on a budget.



Option C: International Schools

Privados

Cost: High (€800-€1,500 /month).

Language: English (US/UK Curriculum).

Best For: Children over 10. Families on temporary stays (1-3 years). Students needing US University access.



THE "PADRÓN" REQUIREMENT



City Hall Registration

You cannot apply for a Public or Concertado school without being registered on the "Padrón" (City Hall Register).

This is a Catch-22: You need a rental contract to get the Padrón. You need the Padrón to get the school.

Strategy: Secure your housing before the March school application window if you want a public spot.



TIMING IS EVERYTHING



March/April

The main application window for Public/Concertado schools.



May/June

Lists are published.



September

"Extraordinary" period for late arrivals (you get assigned whatever empty seat is left in the city).



QUICK DECISION: WHICH SCHOOL?



**My child is 6 years
old**

Public School

They will be fluent in 6 months.



**My child is 14
years old**

International School

Throwing a teenager into a high school where they speak zero Spanish is usually a recipe for failure and misery.



We are staying for 1 year only

International School

Don't disrupt their curriculum for a short stay.

LET SANDTONS HANDLE IT



School Search Services

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NEED PERSONALIZED GUIDANCE?

We've created dedicated resource hubs for different backgrounds. Get support tailored to your country of origin.

Get personalized guidance on:

- Tax optimization for US expats and reporting to the IRS
- UK family relocation and post-Brexit implications
- EU residency requirements and Padron registration
- International school comparisons (US, UK, EU curricula)
- Accurate, not abstract cost of living comparisons from where you live to where you want to live in Spain

US HUB

UK HUB

EU HUB

BEYOND THE GUIDE?

We handle everything—legal documents, tax registration, power of attorney, and complete relocation support including schools, insurance, and settling in.



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