



High schools can be very different depending on where you live and in America it is very unusual from the perspective of a Spaniard.

The first amazing fact is the number of students. In most high schools there are 1,300 students and in the biggest around 4,000! The organization of the grades is different too. There are four grades: 9<sup>th</sup> year (freshman), it is from 13 to 14. It is the worst level. 10<sup>th</sup> year or sophomores it is from fifteen to sixteen. 11<sup>th</sup> year or junior goes from seventeen to eighteen. 12<sup>th</sup> year or senior ranges from eighteen to nineteen. It is the best level.

Their school year is divided into two semesters and they have four classes of eighty-five minutes, starting at 8.00 a.m. and finishing at 2.00 p.m. They can choose the subjects that they have during the two semesters but they have core requirements. These are subjects that are compulsory. Some electives are weight-lifting, ballroom dancing, pottery ... but the strangest one is child development. In it, you have a fake baby and you must take care of it, but be careful! You can't throw him/her through the windows because it has a sensor and it can detect that!

The marking system is very complicated: you need to get a 7 to pass your core requirements and a 6.4 in your electives.

In America, the teacher is a well-respected professional, for example, you can't call the teacher by his/her first name, you must say Mr (for men), Ms (if she is not married) or Mrs (if she is married) followed by his/her surname.

The attendance policy is very strict: if you ditch 4 times, you must write a letter to the Principal, but if s/he doesn't accept this, you fail the subject.

I think that the American school system is better than the Spanish one but more difficult. We all should choose how to guide our studies.