

HIGH SCHOOLS IN AMERICA

High schools in the United States are very different from high schools in Spain. First, when speaking to your teacher, you never address them with their first name unless the teacher specifically asks you to do so. We address teachers with Mr./Ms./Mrs. and their last name. Next, high school in the U.S. consists of four levels or grades. The first grade of high school is known as 9th grade, or freshman year. A freshman student is usually 13-14 years old. The second year is 10th grade, or sophomore year. Sophomores are usually 14-15 years old. The third year is 11th grade, or junior year. Juniors are usually 16-17 years old, and this age is particularly important because many students begin to drive themselves to school because the legal age to drive is 16. The last year of high school is 12th grade, or senior year. Seniors are usually 17-18 years old. The size of high schools can vary a lot, but a typical high school in the U.S. has anywhere from 200-400 students per grade. With 4 grades total, a typical high school would have 800-1600 students. However, there are high schools that have less than 100 students total, as well as high schools that have over 5,000 students total.

The school year in the United States typically starts in mid-August and goes to late-May or early-June. Students usually attend classes from 8:00am to 2:30pm, Monday-Friday. The school year is broken up into two semesters. During the 1st semester (Aug.-Dec.) students attend 4 classes every day for 85 minutes per class, Monday-Friday. During the 2nd semester (Jan.-Jun.) students change their schedule and attend 4 new classes. This is a common system but there are different systems depending on the school, for example 6 classes per day for 50 minutes per class.

Classes in the United States are graded using both a lettered system, (A, B, C, D, and F) and a number system. Typically, a letter grade of F equals 0-63%, a D equals 64-69%, a C equals 70-79%, a B equals 80-89%, and an A equals 90-100%. The way students attend classes in the United States differs from Spain a lot. In the U.S. the student chooses which classes they want to attend. There are two types of classes in the United States. Classes can either be considered a core (required) class or an elective class. Core classes in the U.S. are all of the "traditional" classes that you must complete with a C or better. These classes include Mathematics, Sciences, History, English, etc. Elective classes are classes that are not required for everyone to attend and must be completed with a D or better to graduate. These classes can be very different from core classes and usually they are fun. Examples of elective classes are cooking, weight lifting, art classes, drama, child development, auto shop, etc.

In conclusion, there are many different types of high schools in the United States. Some schools are public without uniforms, some are private with uniforms. Some are very large or very small. Each school has their own rules and systems, however, many schools use a system similar to this one.