



School Enrollment Guide

First-Time Enrollment & School Transfer Steps

Understanding Grade Placement in the U.S

In the United States, children are enrolled in a grade level based on their age and exact birthdate. To attend **Kindergarten**, your child must be **5 years old by September 1st** of the current school year.

Below is a general guideline for grade placement:

SCHOOL TYPE	AGES	GRADES
Elementary School	5-12 yrs	Kindergarten-6 th Grade
Middle School/Jr. High	12-14 yrs	7 th -8 th Grade*
High School	14-18 yrs	9 th -12 th Grade

Locate your New School

There are multiple methods to find out which school your child will be going to. Remember that your child's age determines whether they go to Elementary School, Middle School, or High School.

Method 1

- Find out which school district you are moving into. A school district is a group of public schools located near each other that work under the guidance of a single administrative authority where you live determines which district you are in [School Ratings & Reviews for Public & Private Schools: GreatSchools](#)
- Call your new district and ask for information about which schools your child will be attending or check their boundaries online.

Method 2

- Go to the closest public elementary, middle, or high school to your home, depending on your child's age, and ask for their help to register your child. Please be aware that the closest school to your house may not be the child's correct new school since each school has specific geographic boundaries. They may direct you to a different school nearby

Method 3

- When you are notifying your child's current school that you are leaving, ask them for help identifying your child's new school by giving them the address that you will be moving to

Prepare Documents for Enrollment

Every school requires you to provide specific documents before you can enroll your child into school. Listed below are the most common documents required:

Proof of Identity

You will need to prepare one identification document for yourself and one for your child. Acceptable documents are:

- A birth certificate
- An I-94 or passport
- A visa
- Transportation Boarding Letter
- Employment Authorization Document or a Green Card

Vaccination Records

Ask your child's doctor for these if you do not have them. If your child is not up to date on their vaccines, they have 30 days from the time they start school to receive all needed vaccinations.

Proof of Residence

You will need two of the following documents that prove residency:

- A driver's license
- Rent Statement or Lease agreement
- Proof of home ownership, such as a mortgage statement
- Income tax return statement
- Official documents that have your address on them (e.g. utility bill, phone bill, or credit card statement)

If your child has been enrolled into a program at school that provides special services such as behavior plans, medical accommodation, or programs for advanced learning, please bring records of those (e.g. 504 records, Special Education records, or Gifted and Talented records). If your child has been enrolled in school before, please bring a copy of their most recent report card

Make an Appointment to Visit your New School

- Contact your child's new school to set up a time to complete registration paperwork and confirm their first day of school. Some schools require online registration.
- If you cannot complete the forms online, call the school and ask if you can fill them out in person with their help. Even if you register online, visiting the school in person can help you and your child feel more comfortable.
- If you need language assistance, you have the right to an interpreter. Call the school and say:
"I need a(n) [your language] interpreter."

Frequently Asked Questions

How Will My Child Get to and from School?

- If you live more than 1.5 miles from your child's elementary school or more than 2 miles from their middle or high school, a school bus will transport them to and from school.
- If you live closer, your child will need to walk to school. For very young children, parents should walk with them to ensure they stay safe and do not get lost.
- In the U.S., it is also common for children to ride a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard to school. If you have a car, you can drive your child to and from school.
- If your child has a medical condition that prevents them from walking to school, contact the school to request an exception. The school will likely require a letter from your child's doctor.

Will My Child Eat Meals at School?

Yes, all public schools in the U.S. provide lunch for students, and some also offer breakfast. You can send your child to school with a packed lunch or purchase the meals offered by the school. If you are experiencing financial difficulty, your child may qualify for free school lunch. To apply, you will need to provide documentation of your financial situation. Be sure to ask the school for a Fee Waiver Form and a Free School Lunch Form, as they might not provide these forms unless you specifically request them.

Does My Child Have to Go to School Every Day?

Yes, unless there is a special event or circumstance that causes the school to close, children between the ages of 6 and 18 must attend school every weekday. In the United States, it is illegal not to send your school-aged child to school. Frequent absences can lead to legal consequences. However, there are some rare exceptions. For example, if your child has a health condition that makes attending school difficult, they may be allowed to stay at home.

What Information Must I Communicate with the School?

While you can contact the school whenever needed, there are certain situations where you must inform them. Be sure to contact the school if:

- You move to a new apartment or house
- Your healthcare plans change
- Your child will miss some or all of a school day
- Your child is struggling academically, socially, or emotionally

What information do I need to remember about my child's school?

It is a good idea to have the following information memorized or in a place where you can easily find it:

School's name

School's calendar

What grade your child is in

School's phone number

Teacher's name

Daily school start & end times

School's address

Teacher's email address