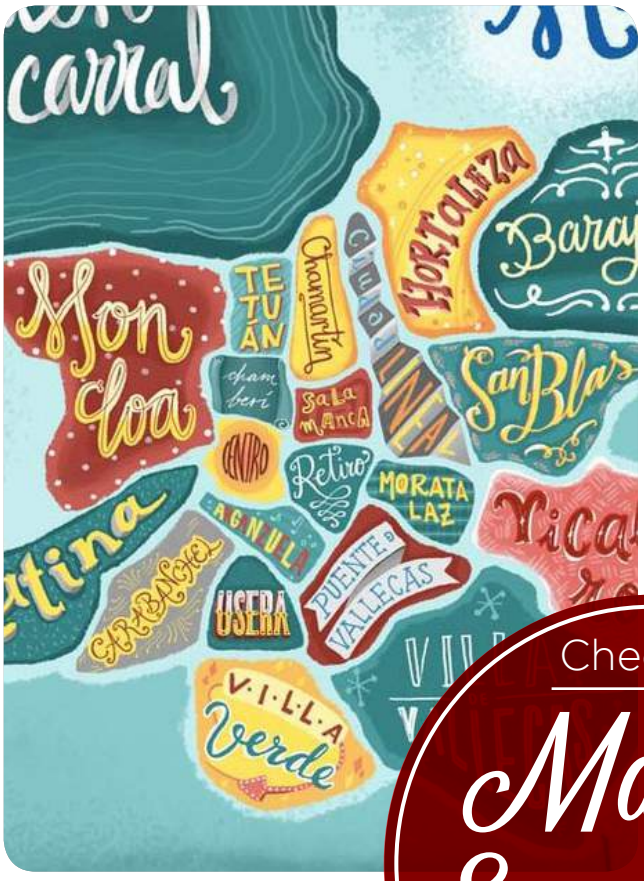

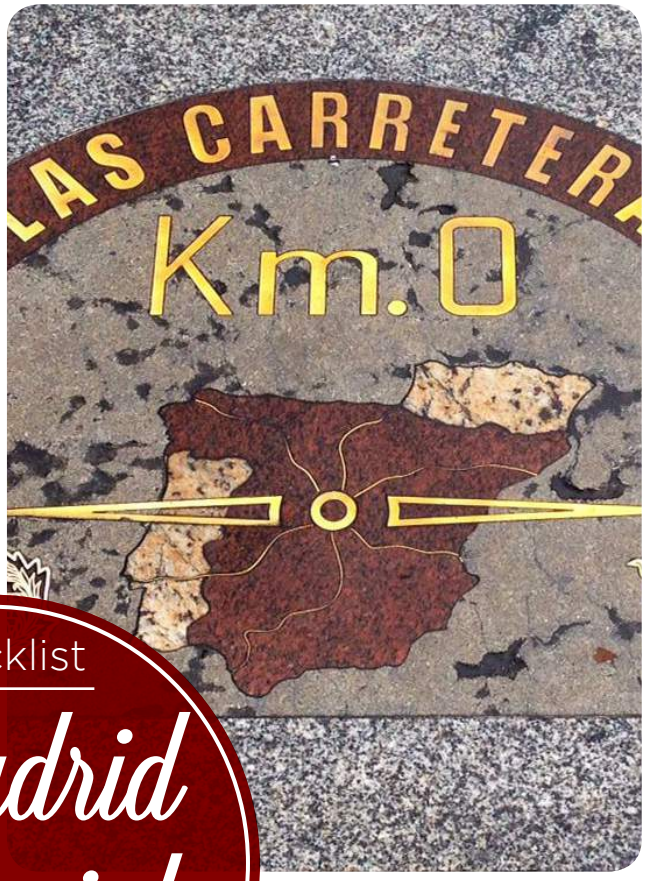

Checklist Madrid Essentials

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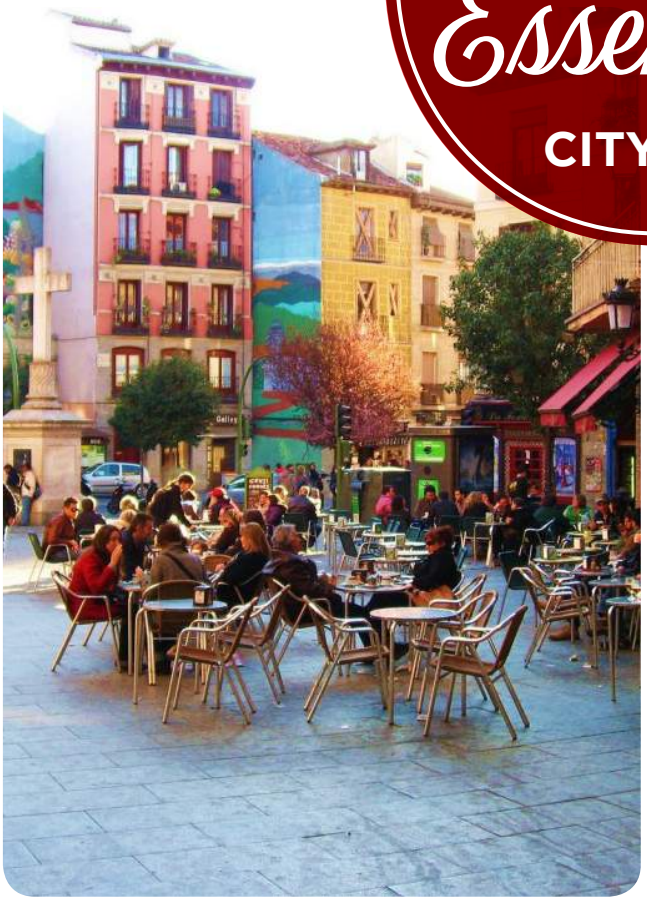

Content Overview

1 Welcome to Madrid

Are you ready to have the time of your life?

- About Citylife Madrid
- Madrid and its neighbourhoods

2 Settle in smoothly

Take a breath, all of your answers are here!

- Living expenses in Madrid - An overview
- Important steps to do upon arrival
- Housing - Finding the perfect place to stay and avoiding pitfalls
- Getting around - Madrid's public transportation system and alternatives
- How to get your public transportation card & monthly abono
- Getting Connected - Cell phone plans & Internet
- Banking & money tips - How to open a free bank account in Spain & money transfer options
- Getting Legal - How to apply for your NIE/TIE and Empadronamiento
- Healthcare in Spain - Understand the medical system and be safe
- Emergency numbers & useful contacts

3 Live & Enjoy

Explore Madrid & Spain's culture while saving money!

Click Here

In addition to "**Madrid Essentials**", we have created more guides for you as part of the "**Welcome to Madrid**" kit that you can **download for FREE!**

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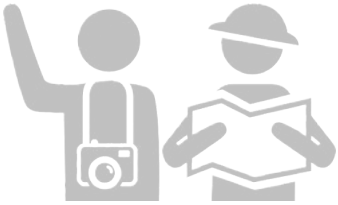
CITYLIFE MADRID

Check us out on YouTube

A brief introduction

CITYLIFE MADRID

Citylife Madrid is an organization founded by international people for international people. It was created with the idea of bringing the **many cultures** in the city together to establish one, united community for exchange students & young international people. It is our goal to **help you** integrate and **enjoy** your stay in Spain. We specialize in cultural & social activities, trips around Spain, Europe & Africa as well as helping you **to get settled** all while bringing people together from around the world!



For more information on our services please visit our webpage **www.citylifemadrid.com**

Follow us:

Click Here

We believe you should have access to the best of the best Madrid has to offer to you to get the most out of your stay. So what are you waiting for?
Become a part of our community now!

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CITYLIFE MADRID

Welcome to Madrid - Are you ready to have the time of your life?

Madrid is a vibrant city with an array of fun things to do, both day and night. It's filled with lots of great neighbourhoods, mouth-watering cuisine and a great nightlife scene. It is the center of the entire Iberian Peninsula; drive 6 hours east and you're in Barcelona; drive 6 hours west and you are in Lisbon, Portugal. If you're worried about Madrid being landlocked, you can hop on a high-speed train to Valencia and be swimming in the sea within 2 hours. So open your eyes and pay close attention to everything that this cosmopolitan, friendly and fun capital city has to offer!

Website: www.madrid.es
City population: about 3,165,000
Elevation: 667m
Time zone: CET/CEST (UTC +1/+2)
Postal code: 28001/20080
Phone code: +34 (ES), + 90 (M)
Coordinates: 40°23'N 3°43'W
Districts & Wards: 21 & 128.

Climate of Madrid

The climate of Madrid is continental with an average temperature of 19,4°C (66.9 °F) during the day. Summers are characteristically hot and dry, whereas winters are fairly cold with frequent frosts during the night and occasional snowfall. Autumn and spring are mild and probably the best times to visit, especially during the months of April, May, June, September and October. To read more about Madrid's climate click here. If you would like to see our complete list of recommendations on preparing your trip to Spain, please click here.

Get more hints & tips as well as discounts here:

Travel & Flight Recommendations | Hostel, Hotel & Touristic Appartments | Airport Transportation Services | Parcel & Luggage Shipment

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Madrid & its most popular neighbourhouds at a glance!

PUERTA DEL SOL

Puerta del Sol is the center and home to Madrid's most popular meeting-point; the "Bear Statue" or as it is called in Spanish, "El Oso y el Madroño". Sol also marks Kilometer Zero, meaning that all of Madrid's building numbers and highways stem from here. It's literally the middle-point of the entire Iberian Peninsula. Sol is also very central when it comes to transportation, shopping and tourist attractions. All of Madrid's most popular shops are located within walking distance of Sol, and there are plenty of restaurants, both new and old, to dine at. Plaza Mayor is only a hop skip away, and a 10 minute walk from Sol will conveniently bring you to the Prado Museum or the Royal Palace.

M

Sol, Sevilla, Ópera, Gran Vía, Santo Domingo, Callao, Tirso de Molina (Line 1, 2, 3 & 5).

MALASAÑA

Malasaña is known as the hippest part of town, mainly because of its history. Its main street, Fuencarral, runs parallel to Calle Hortaleza, making Malasaña and Chueca very friendly neighbours. Its main plaza, Plaza de Dos de Mayo, was home to the battle in 1802 when the Madrileños rose against Napoleon. Today the plaza is full of cafés and restaurant terraces. Malasaña was also home to Madrid's ground-breaking experimental movement known as "La Movida Madrileña", which came alive after the fall of Franco's dictatorship in the late 1970's. The highly drug-ridden and sexually-open movement took place in the 80's and went well into the 90's, leaving a heavy imprint on the neighbourhood. It also seeped into Chueca. Remnants of graffiti can be seen as you walk through its tiny streets. The seedier places have since been replaced with high-end tattoo parlors, vintage shops, and uber-trendy cafés, bars and restaurants. You could call it the East Village of Madrid.

M

Tribunal (Line 10 & 1), Bilbao (Line 1 & 4), Noviciado & San Bernardo (Line 2).

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CHUECA

Chueca is a stones throw away from Gran Vía and one of the best places to go out in Madrid. Its main street is Calle Hortaleza. Chueca is undoubtedly one of the trendiest nightlife destinations in the city. During the day, Chueca is home to fabulous restaurants, outdoor terraces and boutiques, as well as an entire street of shoe stores on Calle Agusto Figueroa. Also along this street is the Mercado de San Antón, a 3-story gourmet food market offering all types of delicious food and a fantastic rooftop bar. Chueca is the proud host of one of the world's largest **Gay Pride Parades** that attracts thousands of visitors every year. Due to its mix of edgy and high-end nightclubs, restaurants, bars, stores and ambience, Chueca is easy to fall in love with.

M Chueca, Gran Vía & Alonso Martínez (Line 1 & 5) and Tribunal (Line 1 & 10).

HUERTAS

Huertas is colloquially named after its main street, Calle Huertas. More than just a neighbourhood, Huertas is considered to be the place to go out. It's five minutes walking from Sol, and the perfect place to start your night. Huertas is covered with all types of bars, some more upscale than others, and a lot of great restaurants. There are many other little streets to discover, such as Calle Leon which has fun bars, old-school delicatessens, boutiques and more. One of Huertas' highlights is Restaurante Meceira (amazing Galician food) and Bar Populart (often called Madrid's best jazz bar), although the list goes on. Huertas street turns into Castellana and later "Paseo del Prado", which is full of museums and sightseeing attractions.

M Sol (Line 1, 2 & 3), Antón Martín (Line 1).

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BARRIO DE LAS LETRAS

Barrio de las Letras usually refers to the neighbourhood just above Calle Huertas and is named after the many writers who lived there, such as Cervantes, Quevedo and Lope de Vega. You can actually visit "**Lope de Vega's former house**", which is now a museum on c/ Cervantes, 11. Oddly enough c/ Lope de Vega is just one street over, and is the site where Cervantes is buried. This neighbourhood is slightly different from Huertas in that it is less of a nightlife area. Instead it houses many arts and crafts fairs, as well as cultural attractions.

M
Sol (Line 1, 2 & 3), Sevilla (Line 2), Atocha, Tirso de Molina, Antón Martín (Line 1).

LAVAPIÉS

Lavapiés with an underground and rugged feel, Lavapiés is fast becoming one of Madrid's trendiest neighbourhoods. It was home to an influx of immigrants for many years, mainly from Africa and Middle Eastern countries. Once considered the dodgier side of town, Lavapiés is now being embraced for its edgy culture, diverse cuisine and alternative (oft-artsy) nightlife. Just one stop from Sol, Lavapiés is the perfect place to check out Madrid's changing personality. Lavapiés is often called Curry Row because it is lined with fun and cheap Indian restaurants. The other famous street in Lavapiés, c/ Argumosa, is lined with hipster bars and tantalizing outdoor seating areas. It stretches right to Atocha street behind the "**Reina Sofia Museum**".

M
Lavapiés (Line 3) extending to Tirso de Molina, Antón Martín & Atocha (Line 1).

LA LATINA

La Latina boasts the city's oldest architecture (hence the name, the Latin Quarter) and some of its finest cuisine. Especially beautiful are the small alleyways nestled between 18th century buildings, as well as the tiny streets where restaurants set up summer patios. On Sundays La Latina's most famous street, La Cava Baja, turns into Madrid's "place to be." This charming street is lined with tiny bars serving up cañas (draft beer), wines and tapas. It's typical to go here on a Sunday afternoon after visiting the city's largest flea market, "**El Rastro**".

M
La Latina (Line 5).

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MONCLOA & ARGÜELLES

Moncloa & Argüelles are fantastic neighbourhoods to live in, especially for young people. Madrid's main university, La Complutense, is very close by. The area is packed with neighbourhood bars and shops. Its main street, Calle Princesa, is full of shops such as Zara and El Corte Inglés. In fact, Calle Princesa turns into the Gran Vía right after Plaza de España. It's also a relatively quick walk from Sol (anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes depending on where you start), and it is right next to the two most lively neighbourhoods, Malasaña and Chueca. It also borders Chamberí, a slightly more expensive residential neighbourhood.

M Moncloa (Line 3 & 6) and Argüelles (Line 3, 4 & 6).

CHAMBERÍ

Chamberí is located just to the East of Moncloa and stretches to the Castellana, at which it becomes Salamanca. You could call it Moncloa's older brother, as it is a much prettier neighbourhood and caters to a slightly older crowd. Chamberí boasts beautiful architecture; some of its buildings are absolutely gorgeous, such as the "Museo Sorolla", Instituto Internacional and the British Council. It also has quaint plazas such as the Plaza de Chamberí and Plaza de Olavide; the latter being a popular place for tapas and beer on one of their various terraces. Chamberí is also a business district with many offices and plenty of restaurants and bars throughout the area. One of the best streets for wining and dining is Calle Ponzano, where you can find great restaurants and bars.

M Bilbao, Iglesia and Rios Rosas, Alonso Martínez, Gregorio Marañón, Colón, Rubén Darío, San Bernardo, Quevedo, Canal (Line 1, 4, 5, 7 & 10).

RETIRO

Retiro is Madrid's most popular city park and also refers to the residential neighbourhood that borders the park's eastern side. It's a great neighbourhood to live in if you enjoy tranquility, as you can leave the city's hustle and bustle on the other side of the park. Inside Retiro you can enjoy plenty of beautiful attractions including the Glass Palace, rose gardens and green lawns. Many **free activities** are held regularly, from bootcamp and running clubs, to roller-skating and yoga lessons.

M Retiro (Line 2), Príncipe de Vergara (Line 2 & 9), Ibiza and Sáinz de Baranda (Line 9).

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SALAMANCA

Salamanca is Madrid's most upscale neighbourhood. Let's call it Madrid's "Upper East Side". Located just above Retiro Park and to the East of the Castellana, this neighbourhood's two main streets are Serrano and Velázquez (as are the metro stops with the same name). It is much quieter than the other neighbourhoods mentioned on this list. As in most upscale neighbourhoods you will find the "high-end shoe stores", top-notch restaurants and prime real estate. Barrio Salamanca is no exception. However, chic nightclubs and lounges aside, you will also find hidden gems. Salamanca is a neighbourhood where many people live and they have mom and pop shops and friendly bars.

M

Retiro (Line 2), Príncipe de Vergara (Line 2 & 9), Ibiza and Sáinz de Baranda (Line 9).

Click here and download your free map of Madrid now!

Click Here

Get to know more about this beautiful city by checking out the **Citylife Madrid blog** as well as the blog of our friends of **Naked Madrid!**

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CITYLIFE MADRID

Settle in smoothly - Take a breath, all of your answers are here!

For many of you it will most likely be your first experience living independently abroad. **Citylife Madrid is here to guide you every step of the way on this amazing adventure!** Living in Madrid is not cheap, but it doesn't have to be expensive either! We will help you plan, organize and budget your time in Madrid. This monthly budget guide will show you a general estimation of typical student expenses. It will not include possible visa fees, tuition fees or flight bookings. In general, the average monthly costs as a student in Madrid can range from 800 to 1200€ depending on your budget and social habits.

Living Expenses - Plan your budget!

Housing In general, the cheapest and most common option for accommodation is renting an individual room in a shared apartment with other students. The average costs of these rooms range from 300 to 700€ per month. Find more information in the "Housing" chapter of this guide!

Public transportation Madrid has an excellent public transportation system (metro, buses and suburban trains) and a relatively cheap and abundant taxi service. There are monthly public transportation passes at affordable prices that allow for unlimited traveling using different modes of transportation within their zones. The typical monthly pass for the city center costs around 54€. If you are under 26 years old, you will get the abono "Jovén" for only 20€. This monthly transportation pass includes all zones. Read more on how to order your public transportation card and save money on single tickets in the "Public Transportation" chapter of this guide.

Cell phone & Internet Depending on your cell phone provider and how often you use your phone, your monthly cell phone fees will range from 10 to 40€. Lycamobile is one of the most popular cell phone companies in Spain and they offer a special prepaid fee to the Citylife Madrid community. It will save you a lot of money! Learn more and reserve your SIM card now by reading the "Cell phone plans & Internet" chapter of this guide!

Medical Insurance For students who need additional private insurance or who would like to have an additional private insurance alongside their basic insurance, we assume additional costs of 40€ per month. Read more about the Spanish healthcare system in the "Healthcare in Spain" chapter of this guide!

Food & leisure These expenses completely depend on your eating and social habits. The average monthly total for groceries will cost between 150€ and 250€. For leisure activities such as eating at restaurants and going out, the costs can widely vary, but will average around 200€.

Click Here

To help you save money during your time in Madrid we have created a great online discount resource containing discount codes & vouchers to save money on popular student needs such as restaurants, traveling, clubbing and much more! **Check it out now!**

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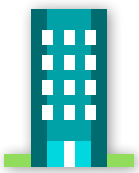
Important steps to do upon your arrival!

To make your arrival and first days in Madrid as smooth as possible, we have created a separate guide called "**Upon Arrival - Important steps to do upon landing in Madrid**" that we recommend you to **download for free** if you haven't done it yet. It contains helpful hints and tips that will get you ready to make the most out of your time in Madrid!

Once you've landed at Madrid Adolfo Suarez International Airport, there are **several options to get to the city center**. You could either go by taxi (flat fee of 30€ regardless of your destination in the centre), limousine service, airport bus or metro (**check here for discounts**). In case you haven't booked a place to stay for the first few nights yet, **click here** for a list of **recommended hostels & hotels with discounts!**

For those of you who have never been to Madrid before, the city can be a bit overwhelming at first. This is why we tell everybody to **stop by the Citylife Madrid office upon arrival!** In our office there is a nice lounge area with **free WIFI and a team that is looking forward to help you!** Feel at home in our office and relax. **All support is completely free of charge!**

Citylife Madrid
Calle Gran Vía 22 Dpdo, 2nd Floor
28013 Madrid
Hours: Mon-Fri 10h-19h



Click Here

The following chapters will describe in detail everything you need to know to settle in. In case you have any questions, feel free to join our **Questions & Answers forum** where our team will answer all your questions immediately!

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Housing - Finding the perfect place to stay & avoiding pitfalls!

One of the most important decisions you will have to make when coming to Madrid is deciding **where** and **how** you want to live**.** When it comes to finding a place to live in Madrid, most international students choose to **share an apartment with other students.** The average costs of these rooms range from **300 to 700€ per month**. The subsequent chapters will provide you with detailed information and recommendations on how to start your housing hunt and what you have to be aware of when it comes to expenses, contracts, etc.

Search & reserve your room online ***BEFORE ARRIVAL!***

Start the housing hunt ***UPON ARRIVAL!***

Besides the recommended online housing platforms outlined below, one of the best places to look for listings is at the **local universities in Madrid (blackboards)**. Also check with your university (international office), as they might have a service called bolsa de pisos where you can find apartment listings. Also ask them for a list of student residences (they are usually quite expensive). In case you prefer to look for your new room/apartment upon arrival in Madrid and you need a place to stay during your first few nights in Madrid, **click here** for **discounts in Madrid's most popular and central hostels & hotels!**

Click Here

Download our **free Housing Guide** now and be well informed!

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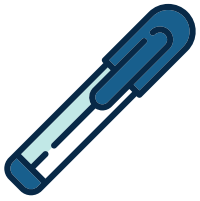
Understanding housing related expenses & contractual obligations!

Before renting your room/apartment, make sure you understand the details of the **contract** and the **obligations** that come along with it (e.g. cancellation period, refund of the deposit) as well as **housing related expenses** (e.g. additional fees like water, gas and electricity) that you might need to pay:

Contract

Before signing a contract make sure you understand all the details, especially the duration of the contract and what happens in case you leave before the contract ends. Furthermore, it is really important that it is clearly stated when and how to get back your initial deposit. Don't move into an apartment without having a signed document that clearly lays out these two important issues.



Deposit & Commission

You will most likely be asked to pay an upfront damage deposit (Fianza) of 1 to 2 months, which you will get back within 3 months of moving out. We recommend that you pay no such deposit before moving in if you are not going through a rental agency. With a rental agency, however, this is completely normal and your money will be safe. Always double check the percentage of commission you may have to pay when renting a room via an agency; some of them will charge you. Also always ask for a receipt.

Fees

It is very important to check if the rental price includes all expenses (gastos incluidos) such as gas, electricity (luz), water and community costs (gastos de comunidad). Most of the time when renting from landlords directly (not via agencies), these costs are not included. Average monthly fees in a 4 bedroom apartment will be around 40€ per person (fees are less in the summer, Internet not included).

Click Here

FREE contract reviews: Simply **contact us** or stop by our office in Calle Gran Vía 22Dpdo – 2nd floor!

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Finding the perfect place to stay — **Let's get started!**

We know that it can be quite confusing how to start your housing hunt. To make it easier for you, we compiled the most important information as well as **hints & tips** below. Get started now by clicking on the buttons following the instructions.

The **Housing Request Form** is a free service that gives you access to some of the most reliable & secure housing platforms in Madrid. Once you have submitted the form, you will receive housing offers via email that match your specific search criteria!

The **Madrid Roommate & Flat Search forum** is the perfect way to get in touch with fellow internationals as well as to check current flat & room offerings of internationals who are about to leave Madrid looking for others to take over their rooms.

If you feel unsure, lost or simply would like our opinion before signing a contract and transferring money, get in touch with us by clicking on **Housing Advice**.

Last but not least, If you are looking for some financial support, feel free to apply for our **Housing Scholarship**.

Check out the next page for an extensive overview of recommended **agencies**, **residencies** and popular **online platforms**.

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Where to search — Recommended agencies, residencies & popular online platforms

Some platforms are free, like Idealista, Fotocasa and Roomgo (but always be aware of misconduct and potential scam!).

Others, like helpHousing, Aluni, Mi Casa Inn, Atmosphere Living, PyR Solutions, Homiii, Madrid Easy, Mundial Rooms and Rooms in Madrid are **very known rental agencies** offering great and reliable service throughout your entire stay in Madrid.

Alternatively, there are several popular, secure online platforms like Spotahome, Uniplaces, Study Abroad Apartments and Erasmusu that will allow you to search online for a place to stay in Madrid but a reservation fee* will be applied upon the booking of your room. See below for available discount codes to save money.

Free online platforms

roomgo · id · fotocasa

Secure online platforms with reservation fee*

SPOTAHOME · uniplaces · erasmusu · StudyAbroad Apartments

Recommended, trustful rental agencies

help HOUSING · ALUNI.NET ALOJAMIENTOS UNIVERSITARIOS · PyR solutions · ATMOSPHERE LIVING · Rooms in Madrid · homiii · Regina Alojamientos · madrideasy · MundialRooms Gestión de inmuebles y Habitaciones

Popular Residencies

MI CASA INN · nexo RESIDENCIAS · COLLEGIATE Aravaca Madrid · WUNDER HOUSE · YOUNIQ

Our recommendation is to rent your room with a rental agency. This way, everything is official, organized and most importantly, you will have a reliable contact in Madrid in case you have any questions.

*You can obtain on all three platforms: Spotahome (15%), Uniplaces (25%) & Study Abroad Apartments (15%) a discount on the reservation fee indicating the **promotion code "CITYLIFEMADRID"**!

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Moving to Madrid made easy with MTS!

Are you planning to move to Madrid but do not know where to begin and would like to have support?

MTS | Relocation & Consulting Services
SPAIN MADE EASY!

Then we have good news for you! We established a strategic partnership with **Moving To Spain Relocation & Consulting Services (MTS)** with the idea to support you with **tailored Student Relocation Service packages** which are catered to your needs and expectations.

Whether you are looking for accommodation, information on legal topics like NIE/TIE or orientation on everything important before traveling to Spain. MTS has you covered!

MTS is here to help you through every step of your move to Madrid!

HOW IT WORKS

- Fill Out Consultation Form
- Book A Free Consultation
- Get A Free Quote
- Settle in Smoothly

Read more about the service by clicking here or book a free consultation and let's get started!

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Getting around - Madrid's public transportation and alternatives!

Madrid is not only a great walking city, but also has a fantastic and vast public transportation system. The city offers public buses, metro and regional trains (Cercanías), which are all fast, reliable and clean. While the metro can get you anywhere within the city, the Cercanías and buses can get you as far as Madrid's beautiful surrounding towns and mountains. If you plan on moving around by public transportation on a regular basis, we highly recommend getting an abono (monthly travel card) for unlimited trips. Since June 2014, Madrid also has public electric bikes that you can rent.

Metro

- **MULTI-CARD (Tarjeta Multi):** Madrid's transport authorities recently introduced a new contactless "multi-card". With this innovative move you can now top up and use your "multi-card" to store all of your transport tickets, such as simple Metro and Light Metro tickets or ten-trip tickets for the interurban. This fairly new monetary card will act like a wallet card, leaving behind many of the old magnetic-striped metrobus tickets that litter the streets and Metro stations of the capital. The price of the card is only 2.50€, available at metro stations and tobacco stores.

- **MONTHLY TICKET (Abono):** If you are planning on staying longer in Madrid e.g. to study, you should consider getting a a monthly travel card, called "Abono", in which case you will pay between 20-82€ per month for unlimited access to the metro, bus and Cercanías. For further information about this ticket, please read the chapter "How to get your transportation card & monthly abono" of this guide!

Madrid's transportation system is divided into different areas (A, B1, B2, etc.), which in turn leads to different metro fares. Most of the time you will travel within Zone A (city center). For a complete overview on different zones and prices, please **click here**. Before purchasing your monthly pass make sure you find out what zones you'll be traveling in based on where your accommodation and place of study are located!

Click here to download and print out your FREE map of Madrid's metro.

To find out how long it takes to travel from your new home to your university **click here.**

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Buses

Buses in Madrid don't come as often as the metro, and may take longer to get from point A to point B. However, taking a bus can sometimes be faster than the metro, and it gives you the opportunity to see the city. In addition, buses cover more city area than any other form of public transportation in Madrid. Along with the metro, it's the cheapest way to travel. There are three different ways to travel by bus: EMT Buses, Suburban and long distance buses:

• **EMT BUSES:** EMT buses are blue or red, and they cover all areas in Madrid. EMT buses run every day from 6.30am to 11.30pm. You should confirm the exact time of each line because it can vary. For more details, please check out the EMT Bus Map and **Madrid's transportation website.**

• **NIGHT BUSES:** In Madrid, there are also night buses called búhos or nocturnos. They all leave from Plaza Cibeles and go to various points throughout the city. They start running from Cibeles at 11.15pm and go until 5.30am. Check out the **night buses map** for further details.

• **SUBURBAN** ("Interurbanos") Interurbanos refer to suburban buses. These buses are green and connect Madrid with nearby towns and cities. The buses leave from the following stations: Plaza Conde de Casal, Avenida de América, Plaza Castilla, Moncloa, Príncipe Pío & Plaza Elíptica. You can use your abono monthly ticket on these busses. Ticket payment can also be done in the bus with the driver.

• **LONG DISTANCE BUSES:** A vast range of bus lines connect Madrid with many cities in the country. All of them depart from two main stations: Estación del Sur in Méndez Álvaro (this is the main station) and Estación de Avenida de América. The two largest bus companies are Alsa and Avanza, and you will have to book your tickets through their websites. You can also purchase tickets through Internet travel agencies such as Go Euro. Here are the links where you can book a long-distance bus trip: • **Alsa Continental** • **Avanza Group**

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Taxi

Madrid has an abundance of white taxis running 24/7, all year round, so there's no need to call a taxi ahead of time. If their light is green, just stick your arm out and they'll pick you up. Click here to learn about Madrid's current taxi rates. Not all taxis accept credit/debit cards, so it's better to have cash on you. Do not expect your taxi driver to speak English, although you may be pleasantly surprised. A taxi ride to and from the airport to anywhere in the city center is 30€ (flat rate). If you would like to make a complaint or report a lost item, you can **call Customer Attention / Lost & Found at 0034 91 527 95 90.**

Trains

For many years Spain has been investing in rail infrastructure all over the country. As a result, Spain has one of the largest train and high-speed train systems in the world. Madrid has an inner-city commuter train called the Cercanías, which covers medium distances and is extremely reliable. There is also the AVE, which is a high-speed train that travels across the country, taking you conveniently from city-center to city-center. In addition to air travel, train is Spain's fastest form of transportation. Please find all the information you need regarding trains in Spain below:

Suburban train services - Cercanías

The suburban train system (Cercanías) goes across the city connecting the main stations of Madrid with other cities near the capital. The service runs from 5am or 6am (depending on the line) until 12am. There are 10 different lines and some of them are connected to the normal metro system. You can combine them to make your trip even faster. For more information on schedules etc., please click here.

High speed train - AVE

AVE is the Spanish high-speed-train system. These trains travel to some of Spain's largest cities in just a few hours or less. Although prices aren't cheap, there are always options to purchase cheaper tickets. For example, by booking early and taking the 4-seat option (you'll be seated at a table), you'll save between 40-50%. The train stations are in the city center, so you won't waste money and time getting to and from the airport. Spain's official train company is Renfe. To check prices and buy your tickets click on the following links:
AVE website in English / Renfe Official Website

Instead of taking a taxi, you can use one of the many private transportation services in Madrid that are available at discount, so your first ride will be way cheaper than taking a traditional taxi: Cabify | myDriver | Uber

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Car rental & sharing

In addition to Madrid's public transportation, you can find all the major car rental companies. Unless you're picking up the car directly from the airport, it is advisable to go to the Atocha train station because most of the companies have offices there. Ask around for the best deal and pick up the car right on the spot. There is also the option of booking online. The top 5 based on popularity are Hertz, Europcar, Sixt, Pepecar.com and Avis.

A cheap alternative to renting your own car is to share one via the platform **blablacar!**

Rent a bike

Below you'll find all the information you need to know about renting Madrid's public electric bikes and participating in Madrid's rising bike scene. Although far from Amsterdam, Madrid is in the midst of a fast transition towards becoming bike-friendly. In recent years, bike lanes have appeared on main streets such as Calle Alcalá and Calle Mayor. The new electric city bikes, **BiciMAD**, are a fun way to explore, avoid traffic, and tackle those relentless hills of the city! BiciMAD is an initiative launched by Madrid's Ayuntamiento (City Hall) to provide affordable, public rental of electric-powered bikes, allowing city-dwellers to move around Madrid on eco-friendly wheels 24/7. "Electric-powered" means that there's a small engine that helps you pedal, especially when starting your journey or going up hills. The engine automatically shuts off when you reach a speed of 16 km/h.

Check out the links below for more information:

BiciMAD's website

Pick-up stations

Interactive map of Madrid for bikers

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How to get your public transportation card and monthly abono!

Almost all students in Madrid use the public transportation system on a daily basis. The cheapest and most convenient way is to get your monthly transportation pass, which gives you full access to all Madrid public transportation. The first step is to order your **transportation card**. Once you have your card, you can top it up with a **monthly credit called abono (valid for 30 days).**

The price of your monthly abono depends on your age and the zone of Madrid where you'll be traveling within. You will be required to choose between the Abono Jóven (less than 26 years of age) and the Abono Normal (between 26 and 65 years of age). The Zones are: A, B1, B2, B3, C1, C2. Zone A includes the city's central areas. Please **click here** for more details on abono fares per zone.

SAVE TIME, MONEY AND HASSLE

To avoid lengthy waiting times at the beginning of each semester, we recommend one of the following options:

Order your transportation card **now online** and indicate our office address as the shipment address!

Stop by our office upon arrival to process your card quickly without requesting the online appointment!

We recommend to **apply for your transportation card online about 4 weeks before you come to Madrid!** You can indicate our office address as shipment address, we will **store your transportation card for free** so that you can **pick it up upon your arrival!**

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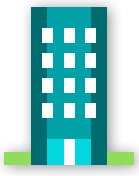
Order your public transportation card now and pick it up upon arrival!

You simply need to fill out the request form online, upload a standard passport sized photo, and attach a copy of your passport or ID. Once your request has been processed by the Consorcio de Transporte, your card will be sent to the indicated shipping address within 5 to 10 days (you can indicate our office as the shipping address for no additional charge):

1. Please access: www.tarjetatransportepublico.es and select option "Quiero obtener una Tarjeta Transporte Público". Click "Aceptar".
2. Select the correct value according to your age. Click "Aceptar".
3. On the next screen you have to choose between "Pasaporte" (if you have a passport) or "DNI no español". Proceed by clicking "Aceptar". In order to continue the request of your transportation card online, select "iniciar solicitud online".
4. Alternatively you can request an appointment in person for the time of your arrival at one of the offices of the Consorcio de Transporte. In this case please follow the instructions provided online.
5. If you choose iniciar solicitud online, on the next screen, you will need to fill out all mandatory personal data. You can use our office address as the pick-up location. We will store the card for you for free until you arrive. **Click here if you need more help with the form**. (Once you've ordered your card online **send us a message on Whatsapp at +34656190745** so we can let you know once it has arrived in our office). On the same page, select "Primera solicitud nueva Tarjeta" as the value and click on "Siguiente" to proceed.
6. You will be asked to upload a standard passport sized photo in color, as well as a scanned copy of your passport or ID card.
7. Once uploaded, you need to accept the terms and conditions at the bottom and continue by clicking on "Siguiente".
8. Last but not least, you will be asked to review and confirm the information you just provided. You will also have to pay the mandatory fee of 4€ to the Consorcio de Transporte for issuing your transportation card.

Citylife Madrid
Calle Gran Vía 22 Dpdo, 2nd Floor
28013 Madrid
Hours: Mon-Fri 10h-19h



*In the event that you don't have a Spanish cell phone number yet, you can use the Citylife Madrid phone number in the request form: 656190745.
(If you would like a free Spanish SIM card now, **click here!**).

If you are having any problems while requesting your transportation card online, **stop by our office upon your arrival to obtain your card instantly!**

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CITYLIFE MADRID

Getting connected – Cell phone plans & internet!

The first step to having a cell phone in Spain is deciding if you will use your current phone from home or get a new one once arriving. If you decide to use your current phone, you should **make sure it is unlocked before leaving the country.** An unlocked phone means that it is compatible with any SIM card around the world. You will be charged a fee for unlocking your phone, but it is something you must do in order to put a working Spanish SIM into your current phone. For information on unlocking your phone, please contact your cell phone provider. Once in Spain, choosing a new phone is relatively easy. You can either buy a used phone from small tech shops located throughout the city, or visit one of the many cell phone companies and pick one up. **Click here** for more information!

The next step is getting your Spanish SIM card. You can either sign up for a contract, or pay- as-you-go (i.e. a prepaid SIM card is called prepago in Spanish) with any service provider in Spain.

1. Contracts are ideal if you plan on living in Spain for 12 months or more. If you are interested in signing a contract with a phone company, you will need both your **NIE** and a **Spanish bank account**.

2. Prepaid SIM cards are extremely common and flexible. They are very popular among the international student community in Madrid as there are no papers to sign and you add money to your phone at your own discretion. However, the different charges with prepaid cards are usually not very easy to understand and information is often misleading – for example, it is very common in Spain that you will need to pay an additional fee for each call you make, regardless of length. This fee is called “establecimiento de llamada” and is often not well explained. It is also common that there are additional costs concealed in the fine print.

If you would like to unlock your phone or buy a second hand phone in Madrid, **check here** for your options and discounts!

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To avoid misunderstandings and subsequent frustration when choosing the ideal cell phone plan, our recommendation for the new academic term is Lycamobile!

Lycamobile is one of the biggest cell phone providers in Europe offering different, cheap bundles that you can choose from.

Get your new SIM card for free and on top a brand new portable power bank charger for your cell phone as a welcome present by Lycamobile to the Citylife Madrid community!

Click Here!

Avoid frustration due to hidden costs and fees!

The SIM card provided by Lycamobile is one of the cheapest and best offers you can get in the market today. All prices already include IVA (value added tax in Spanish is called IVA), so there are no hidden costs.

Be connected already on your first day in Madrid!

Once you have reserved your SIM card online, you will immediately receive your new Spanish cell phone number that you can share with your family and friends back home. You will immediately be connected to the world on your first day in Madrid once you have activated your SIM card in our office. Also take advantage of this visit by getting to know us, ask us any questions you might have, get your free "Madri Starter Pack" and pick up your public transportation card in case you have also ordered it online.

Reserve your Sim Card now conveniently online!

1. Fill out the **request form** with your personal information and submit it.

2. We will process your SIM card reservation and store your SIM card in our office. In case you would like to know your number immediately, please send us a short email to **info@citylifemadrid.com.**

3. When you arrive in Madrid, please visit our office as soon as possible to pick up your new SIM card. To activate your card, you must bring a piece of ID (passport or drivers license). We provide this service for free to our community, so please ensure when reserving your card that you pick it up or let us know if you dont need it anymore, so Citylife and Lycamobile can continue offering this wonderful service.

Cancelation

Once your departure is getting closer, you don't have to worry about any type of required cancellation. Make sure to consume your remaining credit. Your SIM card will be deactivated automatically after some months without usage.

Any questions? We are happy to help you wherever we can. Don't hesitate to contact us by sending us an email to **info@citylifemadrid.com.**

After reserving your SIM card online, spread the news to all your friends planning on traveling to Madrid. This prepaid offer by Lycamobile is and will be widely popular among the international student community, which means that you will save a lot of money when making calls! Be connected on your first day in Madrid and take another step towards enjoying your time in this great city!

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Internet

Much like cell phones the Internet is a must-have for most people. There are many free wifi spots to be found in Madrid including some plazas, cafes, McDonalds, Tim Hortons, Starbucks and many other large chains. **You are also welcome to enjoy free Internet in our office.** If you need wifi at home, its recommendable to look for flats with Internet already included.

However, if you have found a flat that you like but Internet is not included, there is a **very practical & economic solution offered by WifiAway which will save you money, hassle and complicated paper work** (e.g. no **NIE** or **Spanish bank account** are required to obtain Internet for your new home)! Be connected on your first day in Spain with WifiAway wherever you are. There is no minimum contract duration! To read more, **click here!**

Besides WifiAway there are many more well-known Internet companies like Movistar, Orange, Vodafone, Ono & Jazztell who have unique offers and services, so you will need to do some research on what suits best your needs. All of them offer the basic Internet & phone packages, as well as packages for Internet only. Contracts usually last from 12-24 months, so make sure you or someone you live with will be living in the flat for the duration of the contract. To sign up for any type of Internet contract you will need your NIE, as well as a Spanish bank account. It is likely that most flats will already have Internet installed so you will not have to worry about setting it up yourself.

CITYCARD
YOUR ACCESS TO THE CITY

Do more, spend less and enjoy your time in Madrid & Spain to the fullest! **City Card** - Your access to the city!

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Banking & money tips - How to **open a FREE bank account** in Spain & money transfer options!

Optimizing your spending during your time in Madrid is a bit tricky. You can be facing a different form of currency, different exchange rates and different fees associated with the use of ATM's and credit cards abroad.

Choosing a bank

Opening a bank account in Spain can take a while; there are a lot of required documents and steps. In addition, only a few banks allow you to open a bank account for free and offer an easy process designed for foreign exchange students. When choosing a bank, make sure it is widely recognized in both Madrid and Spain, so you have no issues accessing money via an ATM. It is also important to review the costs of withdrawals and other transactions with your current cards from home. Once you have opened your Spanish bank account, you will be able to send money from home and receive payments, e.g. from a job or internship. Some Internet and cell phone companies require your banking information in order to sign a contract with you.

Get your FREE bank account with our partner banks!

To make the process of **opening a free Spanish bank** account as easy as possible, Citylife Madrid has teamed up with several of the most popular banks in Spain! All of the banks offer their services in **Spanish** and **English** as well as online, so you can open your account even before traveling to Madrid!

For more information or to open your free bank account, simply click here!

The opening of the bank account is **not binding and doesn't cost you anything**! If you realize at any point after submitting the form below that you do not need a free Spanish bank account anymore, do not worry, just let us know.

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Compare your options to transfer money to minimize fees!

To transfer your money to your new bank account there are several options that you can choose from. It is important to assess the costs and benefits of these different transfer options to ensure that you get the best deal on your international money transfers. You can either:

1. Send money through your current bank (always ask for the related fees; some banks charge a lot for international money transfers)

2. Transfer money through specialized transfer operators such as **Western Union** and **MoneyGram** (also in this case please ask for the related fees)

3. Use online money transfer services such as **Transferwise** (your first transfer of up to 3000€ is for free!) and **Paypal**. If you choose to use Paypal the recipient and the sender will need to have a PayPal account as well. In this case it is possible to transfer money between international accounts. However, the fees for such transfers are usually set to a minimum fee, which could lead to expensive transfer fees for larger transactions.

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Getting legal – How to apply for your NIE/TIE and Empadronamiento!

The Empadronamiento and NIE/TIE documents can create a lot of confusion for international students here in Madrid. In this chapter we will outline the basic information to help you in the application process for these legal papers. However, as requirements vary throughout the government offices, we strongly recommend that you keep up to date on all of this information. You can do this by getting in touch with your international student office in Madrid, as well as the respective Spanish authorities to see exactly what you will need for your appointments.

NIE, TIE & Empadronamiento

The **NIE** ('Número de Identidad de Extranjero') is a number of identification assigned to any non-Spaniard who lives in Spain. It is necessary to carry out any procedures with administration services, to contract products and services, and ultimately to provide your identity number. EU citizens (or equivalent*) might need to apply for the NIE depending on the criteria in the graph outlined on the next page!

The **TIE** ('Tarjeta de Identidad de Extranjero') is the identity card that all citizens of Non EU member countries (or equivalent*) have to apply for once they arrive in Spain. This identity card will contain a photo in addition to your NIE proving your identity and recognising you legally. So as a Non EU citizen you will need to apply for the TIE once in Spain, not the NIE!

The **Empadronamiento** is a 'List of Registered Inhabitants' that live in the city. This will make you a citizen of the city, and will be needed in many cases (especially if you are not a citizen of the EU or equivalent) to apply for any other paperwork like the TIE etc.

** EU citizens and equivalent refers to: Citizens of the European Union (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Denmark, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Holland , Hungary , Ireland , Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Romania and Sweden), the European Economic Area (Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway) and Switzerland.*

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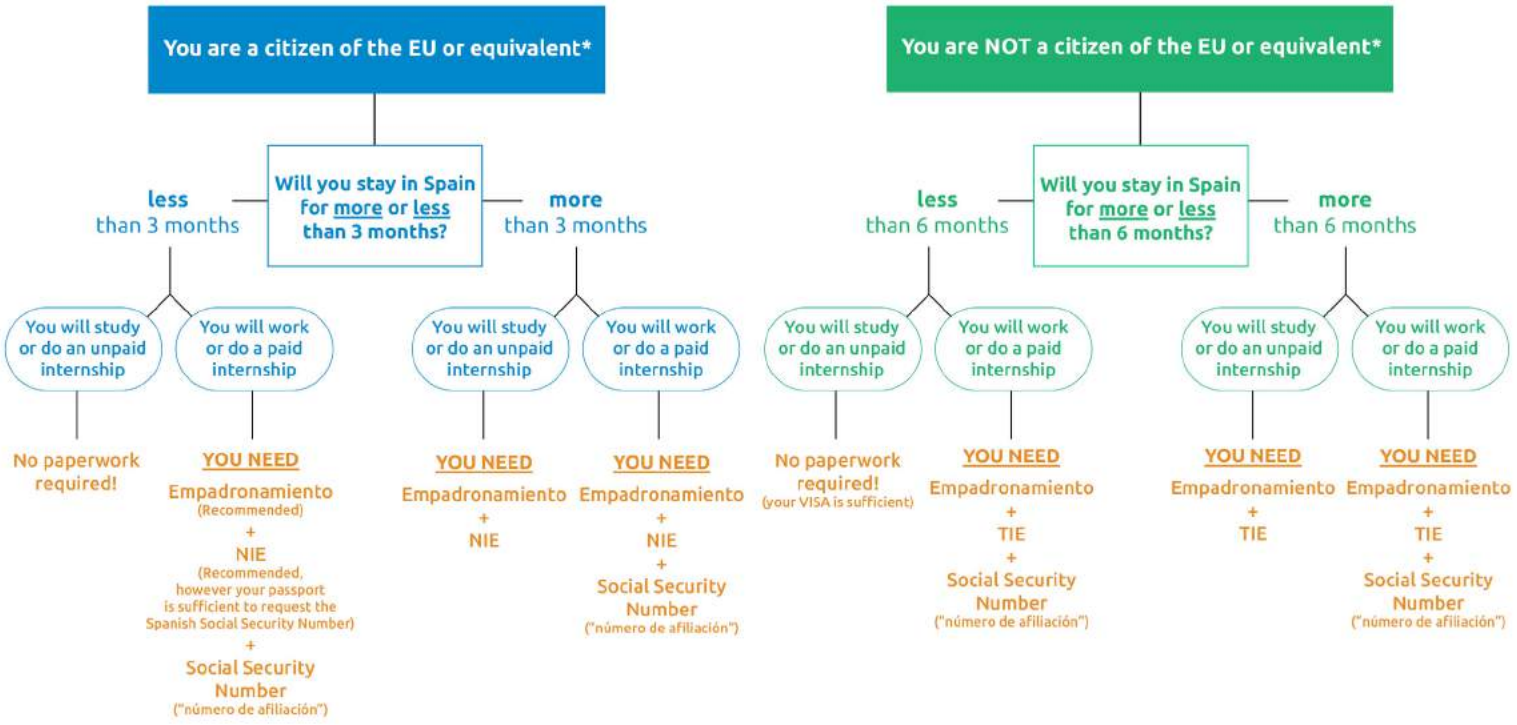
What documents do I need to live, work & study legally in Spain?

Depending on the following criteria, you may need one or more of the documents mentioned above:

- From a EU-member country or not
- Length of your stay in Spain
- Purpose of your stay in Spain:
  - Studies / unpaid internship
  - Work / paid internship
- Carrying out operations with tax repercussions



If you are a citizen of the European Union or equivalent, click here to find out what to do next. If you are a Non-EU citizen or equivalent, please check here and follow the instructions.

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Looking for support regarding your **NIE/TIE application**?

IMPORTANT

If your home country is **outside of the European Union**, and you will **reside in Spain for more than 6 months**, it is **mandatory to apply for the TIE** (not the NIE) in the **first 30 days upon your arrival** in Spain! If you will be in Spain for less than 6 months and you are from a country outside of the EU, then the TIE is not required, as your visa will be sufficient. If you are a **European citizen** and you **will stay longer than 3 months in Spain**, you will need to **apply for the so called NIE**.

Applying for the NIE or TIE is a 2-steps process: The first step consists of requesting what is called a "cita previa" (online appointment) by filling in the necessary data and paying the corresponding fee; the second step is the actual going to the appointment to complete the process and receive the NIE or TIE.

The application process is quite **complicated** for different reasons:

There are no online appointments available and by law, it is mandatory to get the online appointment within the first 30 days after entering Spain (non EU citizens)!

Due to incomplete and/or contradictory information online, it is often difficult to find the correct forms that correspond to your personal situation.

On top, forms are difficult to understand and it takes a lot of time to fill them out correctly.

At the time of the appointment, applicants are expected to present several documents. Missing even one of these documents will result in having to start the process from the very beginning.

To avoid the frustration and stress that comes along with the process, **MTS is here to help you!** MTS is a specialized provider managing applications for the NIE/TIE on a daily basis on behalf of their clients. They are offering a **special discount for international students!**

To be able to assess your personal situation and to give you the right advice, we recommend to

get in touch with them now!

The first email consultation of MTS is free of charge and without any obligation. Click here for more information!

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Empadronamiento (Proof of residency)

The **Empadronamiento** is a simple procedure used by the City Hall to keep the city up to date with who is currently living in the municipality. To get it, you will need to prepare a set of documents and request an appointment ('cita previa'). Simply follow the steps outlined **here** and be well prepared!

I want my Empadronamiento

Unsure if you really need the Empadronamiento or about other documents you might need to live, study and/or work legally in Spain? Don't fret, simply **read our main article** and follow the instructions there! Read more about the Empadronamiento on the official page of the city of Madrid **here**.

Número de Seguridad Social (Social Security Number)

The **Social Security Number** ('Número de Seguridad Social') is required to legally work or do a paid internship in Spain. You will need to request the so called "número de afiliación" so that your employer can request your social security number.

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Healthcare in Spain - Be safe!

Spain has an excellent healthcare system with a wide network of care centers and hospitals. The national healthcare system (Seguridad Social) includes a network of healthcare centers for Primary Health Care (PHC) and minor emergencies. These centers are called **Centros de Salud** and are usually your first stop when in need of a doctor. Specialist and emergency services are provided in both **public** and **private** hospitals.

In Spain, prescription and over-the-counter medicine is sold only in pharmacies and is relatively inexpensive. In case you get sick and you need to see a doctor, your first stop should be the closest Centro de Salud. If you have private insurance we highly recommend you go straight to **HM Hospitales**, **the leading Hospital Group in Madrid** covering all medical and surgical specialties! They will **liaise with your insurance directly carrying out all the necessary procedures** on your behalf so you do not have to do any paperwork. With their team of interpreters, HM Hospitales ensures that you will be **attended in your own language!**

Health coverage in Spain

It is a basic requirement to have health coverage in Spain, be it through reciprocity agreements between the different National Health Services, or through private insurance:

European Students (EEA country citizens)

To receive the same medical services as Spanish nationals you will have to apply for the **European Health Insurance Card** prior to your arrival. This will provide you with all basic medical treatment during the course of your stay.
Important – the European Health Insurance Card:

- is not an alternative to a private travel insurance. It does not cover any private healthcare or costs such as a return flight to your home country or lost/stolen property,
- does not guarantee free services. As each country's healthcare system is different, services that cost nothing at home might not be free in another country.

In the Spanish healthcare system, PHC services are typically provided at Healthcare centers where family doctors have their offices. These centers refer patients, if required, to spe- cialists whose offices are usually in public hospitals. You can apply for a student healthcare card by going to your local health care center and providing them with your ID card or your passport and your European Health Insurance Card. Once you have found your new home, simply check for the nearest health care center by **clicking here**.

Non European Students

As a Non-EU citizen you will always be required to purchase insurance for your intended stay abroad in order to be eligible for any kind of visa. Always educate yourself on every detail of your insurance plan – how the plan works and what the limitations and conditions are before you leave home. It also is very important that you purchase medical health insurance that will cover the entire duration of your stay abroad.

Click Here

Take a look at this useful **list of English speaking doctors & clinics** and our "**Quick Guide**" to the Spanish medical system!

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STM NUMMOS LIFE

CLÍNICASOUKI
INNOVACIÓN PERIO·DENTAL Y ESTÉTICA

Recommended private insurance plan for Spain

In the unlikely case that you arrive in Madrid without medical coverage or you would like to get an additional private insurance, you can get in touch with STM Nummos Life SL.

STM Nummos Life SL are registered intermediaries for Bupa Global and Sanitas, the world's leading medical insurance companies. The different insurance plans offered serve as **additional coverage to the European Heath Insurance card**, as well as **full private insurance coverage**. It will cover important private services like hospitalization, home transportation, lost luggage, robbery and much more. They are available to call 24/7 throughout the entire year. Get more information here!

Dental treatment

CLINICA SOUKI is a benchmark in the field of **personalized dental care in the heart of Madrid**. The clinic specializes in all areas of dental treatment and has its own team of professionals, trained in renowned, prestigious, international schools.

They offer an exquisite **treatment in your own language**: Spanish, English, French, Arabic and Portuguese. Click here for more information!

SINEWS

Multilingual Therapy Institute in Madrid

Are you struggling with your life abroad? Do you need help with anxiety and/or mood issues? Even if you are just looking for someone to talk to, at SINEWS MULTILINGUAL THERAPY INSTITUTE you will find native licensed professionals who speak your language in a comfortable and confidential setting.

They offer **psychology, psychiatry, speech therapy, online therapy, coaching, nutrition, and accent reduction** in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Hebrew, German, and Polish. With a wide range of prices and continuous scheduling from Monday to Saturday, they are the best option in Madrid for therapy. Click here to read more!

trébol farmacias

Pharmacies/drugstores

Unlike other countries, when you want to buy something like Aspirin, Alka-Seltzer or any other kind of medication you have to go to one of the many local pharmacies in Madrid (green cross) or buy it online. Farmacias TREBOL is one of the biggest pharmacy chains in Spain with locations all over the city offering a **free membership card (5% discount)** and a great online shop with lots of **discounted drugs with free & quick shipment** within Spain!

To see an overview of other dentists in Madrid, simply click here!

Click here to find pharmacies that are open 24h within your neighbourhood!

hm hospitales

In case you ever get sick during your time in Madrid and if you have private insurance we highly recommend you go straight to HM Hospitales:
• Leading hospital group in Madrid • No paperwork needed with your insurance
• Attention in your own language • Automatic payment

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Emergency numbers & useful contacts!

As emergencies do happen, it is important to have a list of numbers on hand:

112
Emergency telephone number in Madrid as well as Spain (all kinds of services)

092
Telephone number for the Local Police in Madrid (called "municipal"), as well as SAMUR ambulances

091
Telephone number for the Spanish National Police

089
24h Pharmacy and Yellow Pages: **Pharmacies Madrid**

080/085
In case of a fire (Community of Madrid)

Robbery and other incidents:

We always recommend that you report any robbery or any other kind of incident to the police! If you need to report a robbery or assault, go to the nearest police station or do it by phone (902 102 112) or **via Internet**.

Lost & Found:

In case you have lost something, we recommend you get in touch with the Lost & Found office (Paseo del Molino 7 – Metro: Legazpi – 91 527 95 90)
Madrid Tourism Center: Plaza Mayor 27 (Casa de la Panadería) – Metro: Sol or Ópera

Taxi Services:

- Tele Taxi Madrid: 91 371 21 31
- Radio Teléfono Taxi Madrid: 91 547 82 00

Centros de Salud:

In case you need a doctor, your first point of contact is the closest **Centro de Salud**.
Specialist and emergency services are provided in both **public** and **private** hospitals.

Haven't found what you were looking for? **General information can be obtained at the Madrid City Hall by calling 010!**

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Be part of it!

Follow us:

Live & Enjoy - Explore Madrid & Spain's culture while saving money!

Subscribe to our newsletter & check out our blog!

Madrid is a vibrant city and more that boasts tons of fun things to do day and night. Citylife Madrid wants to give you access to all of them! That's why we created the Citylife Live & Enjoy Magazine which is also available to **download here!**

It will be your must-have companion during your stay in Spain and aims to help you experience this amazing city to the fullest! You will learn about:

- Top must-sees, hidden treasures & recommendations for exploring the city in detail
- Fun leisure and nightlife activities where you can meet young people and make friends
- Useful tips on saving money while enjoying this amazing city
- Spain & Europe's hotspots that you shouldn't miss while living in Madrid
- Sports facilities in Madrid to stay in shape
- Ways to learn, practice and improve your Spanish... and much more! :)

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Explore. Dream. Discover.

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CITYLIFE MADRID