

sai study abroad

**PRE-DEPARTURE
HANDBOOK: PART ONE**

BARCELONA

HOLA

We are delighted that you have chosen to study abroad with SAI. As you prepare to embark on this exciting new journey, please take time to read through each section of the pre-departure handbook as it prepares you for the adventure that lies ahead.

The handbook is divided into 3 sections:

- 1. Preparing to Live in Barcelona**
- 2. SAI Housing**
- 3. Living in Barcelona**

We are excited that your program is almost here, and the SAI on-site staff is looking forward to seeing you in Barcelona.

Cheers!

Ben Strevens
Senior Director

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part one:



preparing to live
in barcelona

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SAI U.S. Staff

We are here to help you in any way that we can! Our office is in beautiful Northern California, and our hours are 8:30am - 5:00pm Pacific Time. Please feel free to reach out to any of the staff below for specific questions related to their department. When in doubt, call SAI at 800-655-8965 and we can help direct you to the right person!



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Be social

Follow us on social media to stay on top of announcements, hear about the experiences of fellow SAI students, get involved in activities, and get to know the study abroad world.



@saiprograms

SAI Barcelona Staff

Our on-site team serves as your point of contact while abroad. Our passionate team is dedicated to ensuring that your time abroad is safe, fun, inspiring, and life changing. They serve as your link to your host school, health insurance, and your housing agency. In addition, they offer extensive health and safety services, an array of curated cultural events and activities, and unique opportunities for engagement with the local community. They are dedicated to providing academic and cultural learning experiences that enhance your global awareness, professional development and social responsibility. They are always there to help and love getting to know students, so make sure to stop by the Barcelona office often!



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About Spain & Barcelona

Kingdom of Spain

Population: 46.5 million (2014)

Capital: Madrid

Official Languages: Spanish (country-wide), Catalan, Basque, Galician, Valencian (regional languages).

Currency: Euro (€)

Calling code: +34

Government: Unitary Parliamentary Constitutional Monarchy

Religion: 69% Catholic, 26% No Religion

Barcelona

Region: Capital of the autonomous community of Catalonia

Population: 1.6 million (2011), second to Madrid

Districts: Barcelona is divided into 10 districts.

Catalonia is a rich and industrialized region of Spain with a distinct history that dates back to the Middle Ages. Occupying the far northeast corner of Spain, Catalonia is separated from France by the Pyrenean mountains, and boasts incredible Mediterranean beaches along the Costa Brava and Costa Dorada. Most of the region's population lives in Barcelona, the capital city of the autonomous community of Catalonia. Barcelona has always been a vital hub for Europe and the Mediterranean, and a popular travel destination. Dynamic and cosmopolitan, it is a modern city that also preserves its important cultural heritage. Visitors become first-hand observers of the architectural and cultural remains of the historic movements the city has experienced. Students can enjoy the Roman vestiges, the medieval quarters, and the urban legacy of the development and growth that the city went through in the 19th century.

As the seat of the Catalan government, Barcelona has also been the center of the movement for Catalan nationalism. Students in Barcelona quickly come to understand Barcelona's unique position in the struggle for Catalan independence, and are able to experience first-hand the local efforts to preserve and maintain the history and identity.



WEATHER IN BARCELONA

Month	High	Low
January Enero	55 °F	40 °F
February Febrero	57 °F	41 °F
March Marzo	61 °F	45 °F
April Abril	63 °F	46 °F
May Mayo	68 °F	52 °F
June Junio	75 °F	59 °F
July Julio	81 °F	59 °F
August Agosto	82 °F	59 °F
September Septiembre	79 °F	63 °F
October Octubre	72 °F	55 °F
November Noviembre	63 °F	43 °F
December Diciembre	59 °F	43 °F

Survival Spanish Language

BASIC WORDS	
ENGLISH	SPANISH/CATALAN
Hello	Hola/Hola
Goodbye	Adiós/Adéu
Please	Por favor/Si us plau
Thank you	Gracias/Gràcies or Merci
Excuse me	Perdona/Perdoni
I'm sorry	Lo siento/Perdó
Yes	Sí/Si
No	No/No
Okay	Vale/D'acord
Who	Quién/Qui
What	Qué/Què
Where	Dónde/On
When	Cuándo/Quan
Why	Por qué/Per què
How	Cómo/Com
Help	Ayuda/Ajuda
Stop	Para/Para
Exit	Salida/Sortida

DAYS		NUMBERS	
Monday	Lunes/Dilluns	One	Uno/Un
Tuesday	Martes/ Dimarts	Two	Dos/Dos
Wednesday	Miércoles/ Dimecres	Three	Tres/Tres
Thursday	Jueves/Dijous	Four	Cuatro/ Quatre
Friday	Viernes/ Divendres	Five	Cinco/Cinc
Saturday	Sábado/ Dissabte	Six	Seis/Sis
Sunday	Domingo/ Diumenge	Seven	Siete/Set
		Eight	Ocho/Vuit
		Nine	Nueve/Nou
		Ten	Diez/Deu

USEFUL PHRASES	
Where is the ___?	¿Dónde está el/la ...? / On és el/la...?
Do you speak English?	¿Hablas ingles? / Parles anglès?
I don't understand	No entiendo / No entenc
I don't know	No lo sé No ho sé
How do you say ___ in Spanish/Catalan?	¿Cómo se dice en español X? / Com es diu en català X?
It's very beautiful	Es muy bonito / És molt bonic
How much does this cost?	¿Cuánto cuesta? / Quant costa?



“The most important thing, for me, is to remember to live in the moment and remember how lucky I am that I get to have this experience.”

Communication

Staying in touch with friends and family from home while students are abroad is a great way to share in the study abroad experience and can be very rewarding.

Sending and Receiving Mail

You can receive mail from friends and family at the SAI office. Please refer to the flyer included in your pre-departure material entitled “**sending and receiving mail**” for detailed information.

Wireless Internet

While Wi-Fi is provided in SAI student apartments, it can sometimes be slow. Students can also use the Wi-Fi at their school, or at restaurants and cafes that offer Wi-Fi throughout the city. There are Wi-Fi scanner smartphone apps that identify Wi-Fi hotspots around the city.

Internet calling services

Whenever possible, we suggest that you use Internet calling services (such as Skype, Facetime, Viber) to communicate with friends and family from home. Also, Wi-Fi-based messaging can be a huge money saver. Smartphone apps like WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger are good options to send messages while connected to Wi-Fi.

Useful Apps for your Smartphone

Travel

Moovit

- IOS, Android, Microsoft Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Discover the best transit routes to reach your destination, check next arrival times of your bus/metro.

CityMaps2Go

- IOS and Android Devices
- Wifi connection required: no

See your location on the map via gps with no internet. Check out tips and photos as well.

Skyscanner

- IOS, Android Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Flight app searches millions of flights saving you time and \$.

Booking.com

- IOS, Android Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Puts over 545,000 properties at your fingertips for simple and secure hotel booking.

Google Translate

- IOS, Android Devices
- Wifi connection required: no, only for some features

Break through language barriers.

Wifi Mapper

- IOS Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

The world's largest wifi database, with nearly 500 million networks and free hotspots. Avoid romancing charges by finding free hotspots in every major city.

Staying in Touch

Viber

- IOS, Android, Microsoft Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Viber users text, phone calls, video calls, send photos and video messages over wifi.

WhatsApp

- IOS, Android, Microsoft Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Use your internet connection to message and call family + send photos and videos.

Skype

- IOS, Android, Microsoft Devices
- Wifi connection required: yes

Instant message, voice or video call for free on wifi.

Budgeting/Money

My Currency

- IOS, Android Devices
- Wifi connection required: no

Currency converter and up-to-date exchange rates.

Tip from SAI alum:

Download Venmo so that you and your friends can easily pay each other back for meals and travel expenses (like train tickets).

Cell Phone Options

As a safety measure, all SAI students are required to have a working cell phone number on which they can be reached while they are abroad. Phone numbers that are accessible only with wifi (airplane mode) are not sufficient, and do not meet SAI requirements.

We have laid out below your options for cell phone use while you are abroad. For ease and simplicity, SAI has partnered with Cellhire to offer host country phone numbers to students enrolled in SAI Signature Services programs. Cellhire allows students to receive all their necessary items prior to departure from home, for a smooth transition.

Cell phone options:

1. Bring your own smartphone and use your own U.S. provider's international service plan (AT&T, Verizon, etc.)
2. Bring your own unlocked smartphone and rent an international SIM card and data plan through Cellhire or another provider abroad (Orange, Movistar, Vodafone, Yoigo)
3. Rent a smartphone and SIM card, along with a data plan, through Cellhire or another provider abroad (Orange, Movistar, Vodafone, Yoigo)
4. Rent a basic handheld cell phone and SIM card, along with a simple talk & text plan, through Cellhire or another provider abroad (Orange, Movistar, Vodafone, Yoigo). This option offers no data capability, but students can supplement this with their own personal smartphone, using wifi only.

Please note: If you choose to rent or buy from another provider abroad (Orange, Movistar, Vodafone, Yoigo), it is your responsibility to do your research and purchase the necessary items. Most students who choose this route will save money, but must wait until they have arrived in country to make their purchase.

How to order through Cellhire

Standard shipping is included to your U.S. home address, but you must allow at least 10 days for delivery (a fee is imposed for faster delivery). SAI therefore recommends ordering your phone at least 14 days prior to your departure, as items cannot be delivered on weekends and holidays. Signature required at time of delivery.

In order to obtain your Cellhire SIM card (and phone, if necessary) prior to departure go to: www.cellhire.com/saiprograms.

1. Choose your device for rent (SIM-Only, Cellhire Basic Phone, iPhone or Android)
2. Choose your plan (data plan w/SIM Only, iPhone or Android) – or – (non-data plan w/Basic Phone)
3. Continue through the order process until you receive confirmation

Oops – is it already less than 10 days prior to departure? You have the option to pay a rush shipping fee to receive it at your home address before you depart. Shipping options are provided when placing your order. Signature required at time of delivery.

If you have any questions during the order process, please contact Cellhire at dallasrentals@cellhire.com or call toll-free 1-877-244-7242. Important: if you do call the toll-free number with any order questions, please mention that you are studying abroad through SAI Programs, Inc. In

addition, you must return to the cellhire/saiprograms link provided above to place your order, and to receive special pricing for SAI students.

For information about other cell phone options please see a recent cell phone blog post by our Resources Coordinator: <https://www.saiprograms.com/need-know-cell-phones-abroad/>.

Tip from SAI alum:

Do: Bring an unlocked cell phone. Talk to your cell phone company, make sure your cell phone is paid off and unblocked so when you get to your study abroad location, you may by any cheap cell phone plan.

Meals

The most inexpensive way to eat abroad is to cook at home. Shopping in the immediate area for food in the open-air markets and small neighborhood stores is fairly reasonable—and much fun.

Eating at Home

Since all SAI student apartments are furnished with kitchens, you always have the option of cooking at home. Preparing meals at home can save a lot of money and allows you to experience Spanish markets and specialty shops, which have fresh, seasonal, and inexpensive produce, meat and fish. Students who plan to eat at home often can budget approximately €50 per person per week in grocery expenses. Students who share their meals with one or more roommates can plan for €30 or €40 per person, per week.

Grocery Shopping

Large food chain stores are scattered throughout the city and offer a wide selection of food. The main chains are Caprabo, Bonpreu, and Dia, which are usually open 9am-9pm (usually closed on Sundays). Each neighborhood also has a fresh food market, with a central section for fish. Here you can buy the best and freshest local produce—fruit and vegetables, meat, fish and cheese—at prices sometimes half that of supermarkets. SAI on-site staff can give advice on how to order fish or meat at the markets so you can enjoy the experience and the art of purchasing fish and meat yourself! You will also find all sorts of mini-markets open at later times (some of them until 2:00am or 3:00am) where you can pick up anything you might have forgotten. Along with the typical Spanish cuisine, you will find food, restaurants, markets, and specialty food stores from many different cultures and catering to a variety of dietary needs.

Note that in Barcelona, except for in the city center, stores generally close for lunch between 1:30pm and 4:30pm. Supermarkets typically remain open all day, but fresh food markets outside of touristy areas close for a portion of the day.

Eating Out in Barcelona

Barcelona has the most bars and restaurants per capita in Europe, with food available from around the world and at all price levels. You will no doubt spend a good amount of time exploring all of the options – and loving them all!

Catalonia's coastal Mediterranean location has created a cuisine that is rich in seafood and vegetables, with the more mountainous region contributing world-renowned meats. On top of Catalonia's traditional staples, it is well known for a cutting edge culinary movement headed by world-renowned chef Ferrán Adrià, who experiments with food with unusual mixing, creating foams, and the like.

The most popular lunch option throughout Spain is the menu del día, a set priced menu offering a first and second course, dessert, a drink and bread, all for €10-12. For quick and typical snacks and lunches, Barcelona is full of bocadillos (sandwich) bars/cafes.

Tapas are often a popular choice for light dinners after a heavy lunch. Tapas are small shareable plates that take various forms, from single

bite goodies eaten standing up, to more intricate plates served in small doses. Some of the most popular tapas include pan con tomate (toasted bread with tomato), tortilla de patatas (Spanish omelette), patatas bravas (fried potatoes with a spicy tomato or aioli sauce) or croquetas (delicious béchamel bites filled with various ingredients). Basque bars offer similar items called pintxos (small breads with an array of toppings), which diners use toothpicks to select, and at the end pay by the number of toothpicks.

SAI Recommendations

SAI has put together a collection of some of the most popular and delicious restaurants for students in Barcelona in our online Barcelona City Map https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1fx97v8nbi11HaUK7aj6yZ_hD134&ll=41.36599473360492%2C2.1511709999999766&z=12 which can serve as a great resource. All the restaurants are reasonably priced, and range from typical tapas, late night Mexican food and Basque pintxos, to delectable Moroccan, French, Italian and Japanese food.

Special Dietary Needs

Along with the typical Spanish cuisine, you will find food, restaurants, markets, and specialty food stores from every culture and catering to a variety of dietary needs. As an example, organic markets have more options for vegetarians, and are also a good place to go for organic produce, organic wines, beauty products, and vitamins. Note that in Barcelona, specialty food stores close for lunch 12:30-2:30 pm, and Sundays. Students looking for gluten-free, vegan, or vegetarian food can find these items in specialty food stores, and often, supermarkets. In addition, there are several kosher and halal shops in Barcelona. Our staff on-site can provide a list of restaurants and stores with these types of food.

Tip from SAI intern:

It is also much more common to eat out in Barcelona than in the US. You can find affordable restaurants and bars around you for every budget, which is a great way to meet new people and connect with other students!

Barcelona Life and Culture

Time abroad facilitates personal reflection and teaches students as much about themselves as it does about their host culture. Students often return from studying abroad with an understanding of new foods, art, sports or models of business, science, or government; this expanded knowledge helps them to be more effective and innovative in their working lives and more satisfied on a personal level.

We have provided some general information about Spanish and Barcelonan lifestyle and culture to help you navigate everyday life. Understanding these things can help combat culture shock, as well as help you integrate more fully into local life. It is important to try to be flexible and receptive in dealing with cultural differences, for they, too, are part of the experience abroad.

Languages in Barcelona

As the capital city of the Catalonia region of Spain, the two main languages spoken in Barcelona are Catalan and Spanish (Castilian). Although nearly half of the population of Barcelona is not of Catalan origin, most can understand and speak Catalan. Catalan is an independent language, not a Spanish dialect as is sometimes assumed, and is an important part of the Catalan identity.

Business Hours

Business hours in Barcelona begin at 9:00am and continue until the midday break, when most establishments close for the lunch hour around 1:30pm or 2:00pm and re-open again for business from 4:30pm or 5:00pm to 8:00pm. Some establishments have different hours, such as banks, official government offices and services (post office) both of which usually close for the day at 1:30pm or 2:00pm. Large department stores and shopping malls stay open through the lunch hour. Some shops in tourist areas stay open longer as well, such as Maremagnum, where many shops are open until 11:00pm.

Writing Dates and Time

Dates are written in Day/Month/Year format (25/08/2015) but can also be expressed in full-form: 25 August 2015 or August 25, 2015 (in Spanish: 25 de agosto de 2015). The calendar week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday.

Time is generally written using 24-hour format—for example 2:00pm is written 14h or 14:00. In common spoken language, the 12-hour clock is often used, with 1 to 11 assumed to designate pm unless otherwise stated. If a designation of am/pm is required, use *por la mañana*/*por la tarde*. Eating and

Meals

The Spanish take great pride in their nation's culinary diversity, with Barcelona highlighting in particular Catalan culinary traditions. Catalans take a significant amount of time out of their day for lunch, which usually consists of a three-course meal. Breakfast is typically a simple pastry and coffee, or for something a little heavier, a *bocadillo* (a simple sandwich with cheese or cold cuts) or a *bikini* (a toasted ham and cheese sandwich). Dinner is eaten late, with restaurants filling around 10:00pm or 10:30pm. Tourist areas usually begin serving dinner around 8:00pm, but diners can expect to often be the only ones in the restaurant during this time.

If you are looking to eat lunch between classes, you may have difficulty sitting down for a full meal, as service can sometimes be quite slow. You can easily find a large variety of options for grab-and-go food.

Tipping

Tips are readily accepted in Barcelona. A variable (10-21%) value added tax (I.V.A) is applied to most items and services which, unless otherwise stated, is included in prices.

As a general guideline, the usual tip in a restaurant is around 5% of the bill, depending on the size of the bill and quality of service. Nicer restaurants may warrant something closer to 10% of the bill, but only if the service is exceptional. At a simple café for coffee or a snack, it is customary to round up to the nearest euro.

Local Temperament and Tone

One of the main hurdles for students studying abroad is in using and understanding a new and foreign language. Apart from learning the language itself, you will also learn the subtle and not so subtle ways that the Spanish and Catalan communicate, the cultural expressions of language. Whether in a café, bar, restaurant or outdoor market in Spain, there is a sense of liveliness and friendliness in people. The Spanish tend to speak with a very passionate and spirited tone that can sometimes appear to outsiders that people are arguing with each other when they are actually having a regular conversation. In general, Spanish greetings and conversations involve a much more lengthy discussion than some students might be used to.

Standing in Line

To many visitors, the Spanish may seem reluctant to stand in line in an orderly fashion. They often crowd around bank teller windows, ticket booths, food stands and cashiers with little regard for the fact that somebody else arrived there first, forming lines that can be 4 to 5 people wide. This can be a nerve-racking cultural experience for some visitors who are used to an orderly line where cutting is not tolerated. It's something that takes getting used to, and might require you to be a bit more assertive—always with respect of course!

Using Taxis

With over 10,000 black-and-yellow taxis, finding a taxi in Barcelona is very easy. Taxi stands are interspersed throughout the city, with rather large groups of cars congregating at rail and bus stations. You can also hail taxis on the street, as long as they are not too close to one of the taxi stands, as the cars at the stands would have priority. Available taxis are marked by a green light on the roof and a sign reading *lliure/libre*. Drivers often do not carry much change, although some taxis accept credit cards (look for a sign on the window).

If you require a reliable ride, you call to book a taxi in advance, but you should be aware that a fee can be applied for door-to-door service.

Personal Contact/Greetings

When you are unsure about social relationships, the best approach is to play it by ear to determine their level of familiarity with others. This comes into play especially when greeting people in Spain, as people are physical and complex in their greetings, though this can vary depending on the level of familiarity and context. One aspect of the Spanish culture to be especially aware of is the use of the Formal and Familiar in the language. For those studying Spanish or Catalan, the third person singular is used to address a person in the formal tense. However when it comes to people new to learning the language, this rule is rather relaxed. Most are more impressed with the fact that anyone is speaking the language than their use of formal versus familiar in conversation.

Tips:

- When speaking to strangers the third person is the polite form (i.e., usted instead of tú for “you”). When speaking to strangers your own age, the familiar form is usually used.
- Professors are usually called by their first name, unless the professor addresses students with the usted form, in which case it should be reciprocated.
- Remember to use please (por favor), thank you (gracias), and hello/goodbye (see below) for each encounter, whether it’s with an acquaintance or a shopkeeper.
- Formal greetings: acquaintances are more formalized with a greeting such as buenos días (Spanish) or bon dia (Catalan) / buenas tardes (Spanish) or bona tarda (Catalan) are used with someone older.
- Familiar greetings: close friends greeting each other exchange kisses on both cheeks, accompanied by a greeting that is more familiar, such as hola, que tal, etc. The kiss greeting takes the place of the hug in Spain and expresses an intimate rapport with that person.
- Kiss greeting etiquette: lean right and brush left cheek, then lean left and brush right cheek. One should not actually kiss the cheeks.

Physical Disabilities

Travel and study abroad for students with physical disabilities can be a challenge. Much of Barcelona’s older infrastructure can be difficult to navigate on a wheelchair. While not all metro stations are handicap accessible, a large number of them are, and this number is continuously increasing. Transfer between lines can be difficult, as there are often stairways or escalators, but employees are able to assist someone in need.

Much of downtown Barcelona is relatively easy to navigate with a wheelchair, as almost all streets have wheelchair ramps. Newly remodeled restaurants and hotels offer accommodations (ramps, wider doors, etc.), but these measures have not been introduced everywhere. In most of the larger hotels, access for those visitors with physical disabilities can generally be presumed. Restaurants usually offer the advantage of being at ground level. Access may be more difficult in many older buildings where, if there are elevators, they may be too small to accommodate a wheelchair or have a short stairway before even reaching the elevator.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in enclosed public spaces and on public transport in Spain. All school sites are non-smoking, except for open-air spaces, such as open-air patios or gardens.

Public Drunkenness

Many students go abroad with a feeling of freedom and independence never had before. This can translate into excessive drinking and partying. It is important to note that, while having wine with a meal or a beer at a local bar is part of the regular social pattern, displays of public drunkenness are not appreciated in Spain. You should be extremely sensitive to others’ attitudes and feelings when it comes to drinking. You should know the law, local customs, and their limits. Above and beyond the cultural implications are safety implications, it is much harder to have control in an emergency or dangerous situation under the influence of alcohol.

Local Customs

- Hola is used as a very casual and familiar greeting. Try saying Bon dia for good morning and Bona Tarda for good evening. Do not say Hola to answer the phone, say Sí.
- When visiting churches, it is important to be quiet, cover shoulders, silence phones, and not eat or drink.
- At the end of a meal, diners have to ask for the check, or la cuenta.
- After a meal is complete, Spaniards often order a café or cortado (espresso with a bit of milk).
- Spaniards often accompany wine with food; they rarely drink wine outside of a meal. If you are offered a bottle of after dinner liquor like chupito, you should only take a small amount.
- Many stores are closed on Sundays. Saturdays, consequently, are very busy. It is a good idea to avoid a Saturday evening stop at all costs!
- Some of the larger chain stores have carts, but you may have to put a coin in to get one (you get it back when you return it).
- Some stores/supermarkets require patrons to weigh their own produce. To do so, find the item number, weigh the produce, print out a sticker and put it on the bag. They are not amused when people end up at checkout with unlabeled produce. Also, plastic gloves are provided near the produce; use them to feel the fruit.
- There is a small charge for bags in most stores (and most patrons bag their own groceries); just add them to the conveyor belt (students can use the SAI bag that was given at check-in for groceries!).
- The perception of time in Spain tends to be somewhat flexible. In social situations it is common to show up a bit late but being on time for business and school situations is expected.
- Spaniards tend to touch quite a bit during conversations. This is more common with good friends and family than in business or formal situations.
- It is common to see people hug, couples kiss, and people interlock arms in public. Public physical contact is considered normal within certain limits.

Health Insurance

SAI Health Insurance

SAI automatically provides all students with international student health insurance through Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI). Benefits of the policy include:

- Physician Office Visits
- Inpatient Hospital Services
- Hospital and Physician Outpatient Services
- Emergency Medical Evacuation and Repatriation

As with all insurance policies, there are some coverage restrictions. Policy information can be found on the CISI website: <http://www.mycisi.com/>

Prior to departure, you will receive a Welcome Package email from CISI containing: myCISI Participant Portal Guide which will walk through exactly how to use their site, Consulate Letter, Plan of Insurance Brochure, ID Card and Claim Form. You should print your insurance card before departure and keep it with you throughout your time abroad. For any questions about SAI health insurance, contact Heather at: heather@saiprograms.com.

Remember

- **Create a CISI account and login to access all information and services offered.**
- **Always carry your insurance card with you.**
- **Health insurance coverage is provided during SAI program only.** You are not covered under the SAI insurance if you choose to travel before or after program.

Pre-Departure Medical Examinations

You should have a medical checkup prior to departure. Doctors can also advise you on what special precautions to take based on your medical history and where you are studying abroad. For specifics on what health conditions to expect, you can consult the Center for Disease Control website: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>.

You should complete all appointments well in advance of your departure date, including assessment of special health problems and annual checkups. It is very important that you obtain copies of important health records, including prescriptions for medications being taken (written in generic terms to minimize difficulty in obtaining brand name medications overseas) and a doctor's statement about any special health problems.

You should also contact your Admissions Counselor and home school to discuss any health issues, concerns, and conditions in order for us to provide the best experience/service possible.

Please note that there are no required vaccinations to enter Europe.

Prescription Drugs

See the separate flyer in your online pre-departure drive for complete information.

Prescription medication can be brought into Europe (except in cases in which their importation is specifically prohibited—see below) only if the prescriptions are in their original bottles, labeled clearly, and accompanied by a copy of the doctor's prescription and a note from the doctor explaining why the student takes the medication. The medicine should be packed in carry-on luggage.

“Illegal” Prescriptions

The drug Adderall (and other similar drugs commonly used to treat ADD or ADHD) is not available in Europe and is, in fact, considered an illegal narcotic. If you have a prescription for this drug, you should follow the instructions below about bringing a supply through customs. Doctors cannot supply it in Europe, and you will not be able to have it sent over, so it is important to plan ahead.

In order to bring Adderall into Europe you must keep the medicine in its original packaging have a signed and stamped note from your doctor (on letterhead) that states in English that:

- The medicine is not a narcotic.
- The patient is carrying X amount of the medicine (boxes, grams, etc.) to last X number of months. The note must state that this medicine is necessary for the student's health, and that the student cannot go without it during his/her stay in Europe.
- The medicine cannot be found in Europe, which is why the student must bring it with him/her.

Obtaining Prescriptions Abroad

Non European prescriptions are not valid in European pharmacies. If you think you will need a refill of prescription drugs while you are abroad, you should bring a sample prescription (for generic—not name-brand—drugs) and a doctor's note explaining the need from home. An English-speaking doctor will most likely be able to write a prescription. Medications are sold under different names in different countries. If you rely on a particular headache remedy, or take a medication regularly for high blood pressure or another medical condition, you should make sure to review the CISI Drug Translation Tool before traveling internationally or contact Heather if you have questions.

Note that while European prescriptions are not very expensive, you have to pay for all drugs at the time of purchase (CISI health insurance will reimburse for 100% of all prescription drug costs). Please contact SAI with questions about prescription availability in Europe. The SAI on-site staff is available to help with medical referrals and prescription issues while abroad.

*Please note that SAI does not recommend that families mail prescriptions (including vitamins and contact lenses) to Europe as these items will be stopped at customs and will be difficult to release. See the flyer included in the online pre-departure folder entitled **Sending and Receiving Mail Abroad** for more information.*

Money Matters

Before departure, it's important that you think about your budget and how you plan to access money abroad.

Budgeting

We recommend that you make a budget for your program abroad. It can make a big difference in ensuring that you are able to do everything you hope to. You should think about your big budget goals, such as trips, and then limit some other expenses like eating out to free up funds. The sample budget on this page provides a simple budget breakdown to understand what to expect to spend abroad. See the section on Money Saving Tips for some tips on making money go further.

Currency Conversion

You can easily calculate, compare and convert currencies online at www.xe.com. There are also several smartphone applications to convert on the go such as: *Currency* or *Currency Converter*. After a few weeks in-country the conversion becomes second nature!

Accessing Money Abroad

You should rely on several sources of money (ATM/debit card, credit card, cash) to cover expenses while abroad. This will ensure that if one means for accessing funds fails, there are other options. Also, the amount of money accessible through any one source may be subject to limitations, so a second source is helpful.

If possible, students should consider upgrading to a card with a "chip". These are more widely accepted in Europe.

ATMs | Cajero/Caixa

You can withdraw money from your home checking account at most European ATM machines, found at any bank. Be aware that there are often daily or weekly limits to the amount that can be withdrawn.

Before departure, you should call your bank to:

- Notify them about accessing funds abroad.
- Verify that your card is an international card and can be used in Europe and secure a 4-digit numeric pin code (not letters) for the card. Only cards with 4-digit numerical codes can be used in European ATM machines.
- Understand whether the bank imposes any daily or weekly withdrawal limits.
- Verify whether the bank charges for individual transactions, and if so how much.

Before departure you should write down your bank account number and information and share it with your parents. If anything happens (like losing the ATM card), it will help to have this information at hand. It is also suggested that you come with another card to be used in case of emergencies, such as a lost or stolen card.

Finally, you should withdraw €200 prior to departure so that you don't have to concern yourself with money matters immediately upon arrival.

SAMPLE PARIS BUDGET

Food	\$750 /month
Personal	\$300-\$350 /month
Transportation within Paris	\$100-\$125 /month
Weekend travel	\$300-\$1,000 /month
Books, supplies and fees	\$50-\$200
Airfare to/from Barcelona	\$950-\$1,100
Student Visa Fees	\$160

**This is considered a moderate budget. Your budget will depend on your spending.*

Credit Cards | Tarjeta

We recommend that you bring at least one major credit card (Visa or MasterCard) in your name with you.

Before departure, you should:

- Call your credit card company to notify them of travel, understand fees for international use, and verify the usage limit.
- Write down the credit card's emergency phone number so that it is on hand in case of loss.

Money Saving Tips

There are plenty of ways for you to save money while studying abroad, although many of them require a little extra care and planning. Below are a few tips on how to make money go farther. Travel books like Let's Go also offer great advice on shoestring travel choices.

- Seek out free entertainment. Explore outdoor markets, have a picnic, attend a street fair, or go to museums when they are having free days.
- Walk or take public transport versus taxis.
- Cook at home. You can make it a fun time with roommates, exploring new cuisines.
- Live the way locals do, it's usually cheaper.
- Get to know any student discounts or discount cards, and plan activities around them.
- Know your travel options. Do a little research to find out whether train, bus or plane is cheaper.
- Take the road less traveled to somewhere unusual. Or pick a weekend travel destination where you have other friends studying abroad.
- Avoid sitting down to eat, as it's costly. Opt for grab and go food.

Packing List

You should not bring more than 2 normal-size bags and a carry-on. Wardrobes in Europe are quite small and you will have to share space with roommates.

Remember, you have to manage your own luggage during your travel. Look for luggage that has strong wheels and handles for moving easily through the airport. Use a carry-on bag that you can carry across your chest or a backpack. Check the airline's baggage restrictions and make sure that luggage meets their specifications.



PAPERWORK/MONEY

- Travel documents (itinerary, plane tickets)
- Passport & document holder
- Copies of important docs:
 - Passport
 - Visa (if required)
 - Housing Assignment
 - SAI arrival guide & orientation info
 - CISI Health Insurance card
 - Medical information
- €200
- Major credit card
- ATM card
- Copies of ATM card and Credit Cards (also leave a set of copies at home with your family)

Tip from SAI alum:

Bring rain boots! The spring semester (January and February) in particular can be pretty rainy. You can buy an umbrella almost everywhere but make sure you have waterproof comfortable walking shoes!



CLOTHING

- Pants
- Shorts/skirts (during warmer weather)
- Sweaters/hoodies
- T-shirts
- Long sleeve shirts
- Winter coat (during colder months)
- Light weight rain jacket
- Underwear/socks
- Pajamas
- Swimsuit
- Workout clothing
- Nice/formal outfit
- Walking shoes
- Scarves (during colder weather)
- Flip-flops or house slippers (so that you don't wear noisy shoes indoors & also to keep you warm when cold)
- Rubber flip flops (if you plan to stay in hostels)
- Rain boots



ELECTRONICS

- Laptop with charger
- Unlocked smartphone with charger (if upgrading to data plan or if purchasing local phone contract)
- Camera with charger
- Plug adapter & voltage converter



TOILETRIES/HEALTH

- Comb/brush
- Contact lenses/solution (if needed)
- Health kit with over-the-counter medications (Tylenol, Thera-flu, Robitussin, etc.)
- Vitamins (they are expensive in Europe)
- Prescriptions (in original containers, with doctor's note) – bring it in your carry-on!
- Cosmetics



MISCELLANEOUS

- Weekend bag/backpack
- Cross-shoulder bag/purse
- Travel books
- Travel alarm clock and/or watch
- Sunglasses
- Playing cards
- Journal
- Books or e-reader
- Large garbage bag (to keep your luggage in to prevent bed bugs)
- Snacks in your carry-on
- Reusable water bottle
- Your own pillow (if you are particular)



BUY THERE

Luggage space is precious, so don't waste space on things you can easily purchase abroad:

- Toiletries: just bring small containers of shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, lotion, etc., and do your shopping when you arrive.
- Beach towel: you can buy these anywhere, and they take up too much space for luggage.
- Umbrella: not hard to find in Europe.
- Hair dryer/straightener: More often than not, travelers fry their dryer/straightener within one use from the higher European voltage. While you can buy a converter, you'll be much happier if you just purchase a new one in Europe.



Tip from SAI alum:

Don't: bring heels. Trust me, even I brought a pair but I will not use them, it is a waste of space in my suitcase. The floor here is very uneven and it mostly cobblestone so they will get ruined and you might even fall. So do not risk it.

The Trip to Barcelona

Preparing

Preparing for your flight may seem like a waste of time, but it can set the tone for your entire experience, especially if things don't go according to plan. Count on at least one thing "*going wrong*". That is what is referred to as "*an adventure*".

Weigh your suitcase. If you are over the maximum allowed by the airline, you will find yourself in line at the airport handing your friends or parents extra pairs of shoes that are putting you over the weight limit. It is a good idea to visit your airline's website to check their baggage specifications.

Carefully examine your suitcase, write down the brand name and a brief description (or better yet, take a picture!), and be sure to put a luggage tag on it. This will help in filing a lost/delayed baggage report should your suitcase not arrive with you. Delayed baggage is a very common occurrence, so think about packing a few essentials into your carry-on bag.

Carry all of your most valuable items with you in your carry-on bag, such as prescriptions, jewelry, camera, etc.

Dress comfortably. Make sure you are comfortable and warm in what you are wearing. However, take note that Europeans tend to dress nicely when they travel, so expect to feel a bit out of place if you are dressed too comfortably when you land.

Arrive at the airport 3 hours ahead of time. Checking-in always takes longer than you think and it is best not to rush through this process.

Think about your travel. Think about what you should do during your flight (read, watch movies, sleep, play games) and prepare accordingly. Consider taking an eye mask, earplugs and neck pillow to help with sleep. Resting on the plane is the best thing you can do to counteract jet lag.

The Flight

- Get the trip off to a good start: be organized, well rested, well fed, and comfortable.
- Drink a lot of water on the plane. It is very tempting to drink alcohol on the plane, but it is dehydrating and will contribute to being jetlagged when you arrive.
- Set your watch to the time at your destination as soon as you begin your flight – this helps with jetlag.
- Just before your plane lands, wash your face and brush your teeth as if you are following your morning routine and getting ready for the day. This (along with the excitement of having arrived) will pump up your energy level after the long journey.

Tip from SAI alum:

Do: Just bring one suitcase. It sounds impossible to pack only one suitcase under 50 pounds but it's SO possible. You will buy a bunch of things in Paris throughout your study abroad experience so it is best to save room on the way to Barcelona. On your way back home, you can invest in a cheap suitcase to bring back all of your new purchases.

Arriving in Barcelona

You will receive a separate email and document with specific instructions about your arrival approximately 10 days prior to departure.

Airport Pick-up

You should fly into Barcelona El Prat Airport (BCN). BCN, also called Barcelona Airport, is located just 12 kilometers from downtown Barcelona, and is the second-largest airport in Spain.

If you are arriving within the window of the SAI airport pickup, your SAI program representative will greet you at the airport.

If you do not arrive for SAI airport pickup

If you do not arrive within the window of SAI airport pickup, it is up to you to find your way to program check-in. You will receive an email about one week prior to program start with details of when and where to meet the SAI On-site Staff for program check-in.

BCN airport is about a 25 minute drive from downtown Barcelona, depending on the time of day. There are various options for independent transport to Barcelona from the airport:

1. Taxi: a taxi ride should cost around €35. Taxi stands are found outside of baggage claim areas in both Terminal 1 and 2.
2. RENFE Train: a train connects the airport to three metro stops in downtown Barcelona, where riders can switch to metro. The train runs out of Terminal 2 (T2), and there is a shuttle provided between T1 and T2. The train runs every 30 minutes, and costs about €4.20.
3. Bus: two Aerobus lines, one from T1 and one from T2, take travelers on a 35 minute ride from the airport to Plaça de Catalunya in the center of Barcelona, with a few other stops along the way. Buses depart the airport every 5 to 20 minutes, and cost about €6 each way.
4. Metro: Now there is also a metro line L9 from the airport to Zona Universitaria metro stop in Barcelona, where it is necessary to switch lines to get to the city center. It takes 30 minutes to Zona Universitaria and approx. 20 more to city center, and costs €4.60.

Troubleshooting

Flight change, delay or missed connection

If there is any change in your flight information, contact the SAI Barcelona office immediately:

- Email: sandrine@saiprograms.com
- Phone:
 - From Europe: 00 34 644 775 874
 - From Spain: 644 775 874
 - From the US: 011 34 644 775 874

Stuck in a connecting city overnight

If the airline does not provide you with a hotel go to the tourist/help desk at the airport and ask for a hotel nearby. Be sure to verify transportation information to the hotel and back to the airport in time to make your next flight.

Delayed or Missing Bags

Don't panic, it happens a lot! If all the bags have come out and yours was not included, find the airline's help desk in the luggage claim area and fill out a claim. Provide as much information as possible about your bags.

Use SAI's address for delivery:

[student name]
SAI Programs Barcelona
Carrer del Rossello, 502 Esc. 2 Entlo. 3
08026 Barcelona
Spain

We'll help you check with the airport for luggage updates.

Safety Video

Prior to departure as well as upon arrival, you will be sent a safety video to watch the first night of your program.

Arrival Week Curfew

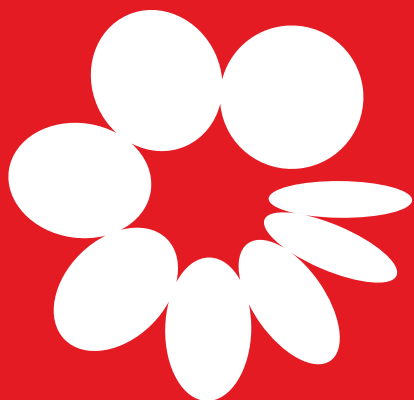
SAI imposes a 12am curfew during the first 48 hours after program arrival day.

UNDERSTAND THE SIGNS

Exit	Salida
Baggage Claim	Recogida De Equipaje
Customs	Aduanas
Stop/Go	Espere/Continue
Citizen	Ciudadano
Passport	Pasaporte
Help me	¿Me Ayuda?

Tip from SAI alum:

Make sure you can carry everything you take with you at one time.



sai study abroad

**PRE-DEPARTURE
HANDBOOK: PART TWO**

BARCELONA

HOLA

We are delighted that you have chosen to study abroad with SAI. As you prepare to embark on this exciting new journey, please take time to read through each section of the pre-departure handbook as it prepares you for the adventure that lies ahead.

The handbook is divided into 3 sections:

- 1. Preparing to Live in Barcelona**
- 2. SAI Housing**
- 3. Living in Barcelona**

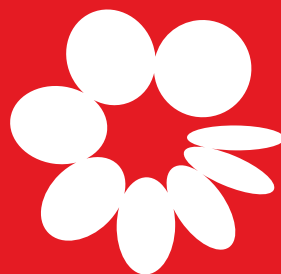
We are excited that your program is almost here, and the SAI on-site staff is looking forward to seeing you in Barcelona.

Cheers!

Ben Strevens
Senior Director

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About SAI Housing

Learning to live in a new environment is an important part of the study abroad experience. We recognize the importance of safe and comfortable living spaces that help students make new friends and build community.

SAI Apartments

SAI offers shared student apartments located in city-center residential areas. Each apartment is unique in size, age, floor plan, and number of bedrooms.

Since SAI student apartments are located within buildings occupied by locals, students are exposed to everyday life: shopping at local markets, enjoying a morning coffee at the neighborhood bar, and establishing relationships with other locals in the building or around the neighborhood.

A typical SAI apartment houses 3-8 students, and contains a combination of private and shared bedrooms, kitchen, bathroom and living areas.

Apartments are within 30 minutes of campus by foot or public transportation. Apartments are outfitted with all basic and essential furnishings.

They include:

- Bedrooms with beds, closets and nightstands
- Common area
- Kitchens with basic kitchen supplies (dishes, pans, utensils)
- Washing machines
- Bed linens and towels
- Wireless internet

SAI staff and the rental agency partners are on hand to greet and help orient students to their new apartment and city, and they remain available throughout the term to answer questions and assist with maintenance needs that may arise.

Housing Assignments

Housing assignments are emailed 14 days prior to the start of the term. Assignments contain the apartment address and contact information for apartment mates.

Please note that if you have been placed in an apartment with an empty bed, this bed will more than likely be filled at some point throughout the term. SAI enrolls students on a monthly, quarterly and semester basis, which means that students may be coming and going throughout the term in certain apartments. Please be open to new students who may be placed in your apartment.

Roommate Requests

You can request specific roommates, but make sure that both you and your roommate have written each other's names on your respective housing request form (or email our office to update your current housing request). SAI student housing is assigned as single gender housing. Under limited circumstances mixed gender housing may be available.

All roommate and housing requests must be received at least 75 days prior to the start of the program. While we work hard to meet all requests, they are never guaranteed.

Housing Policies

You are responsible for keeping your apartment clean and for promptly reporting any damages or issues to SAI and/or the housing agency. At check-in you will receive information on housing policies and tenant responsibilities for your specific apartment.

General SAI policies that apply to all SAI housing are as follows:

No overnight guests: Out of respect for all housemates, SAI does not allow overnight (12:00am and after) guests. Failure to comply with this may result in eviction. SAI will gladly provide lists of hotels, hostels and bed and breakfasts for visitors.

Observance of quiet hours: You are expected to comply with local quiet hours from 10:00pm to 7:00am. You should keep footsteps light, as well as keep music and voices down after that time. Excessive disturbance can incur fines based on local laws or eviction.

No pets: pets are not allowed in apartments.

No smoking: all SAI apartments are non-smoking.

Tip from SAI alum:

Be friendly and polite to your neighbors, and remember that you are in their country and their space! Introduce yourself to your neighbors if you run into them, but be smart about inviting strangers into your home.

What to Expect

Know what to expect from your living situation:

Unusual keys and complicated locks that may take a little getting used to. We do not have after-hours lock out service so make sure you get well acquainted with those odd keys.

Steep, narrow stairs up several flights. Not all apartment buildings have elevators—a good reason to pack lightly! You should notify SAI immediately of any physical disabilities; we will do our best to accommodate these needs.

Creative floor plans that reflect the centuries of changes the buildings have gone through.

Twin beds with futon-type mattresses.

Small refrigerators that make it difficult to pack a few weeks' worth of food in. This is your opportunity to shop like locals, who go to the nearby markets daily for the freshest produce.

Fussy hot water, electricity and plumbing. Even with renovated kitchens and bathrooms, the infrastructure in many buildings is hundreds of years old. You may not be able to run more than one appliance at a time. Using the iron, washing machine and hair dryer at the same time will almost certainly blow a fuse.

Short showers, with water heaters that are generally large enough for a 10-minute shower before they have to reheat and refill.

High standards of cleanliness. You will probably share a wall or two with neighbors, and will therefore be held to the same common standards of cleanliness. To prevent mold, dust, and bugs, you should be prepared to clean weekly, take out the trash three to four times a week, clean dishes daily and air out the apartment daily.

Long laundry cycle and no dryer. Washing machines trade short cycles for energy efficiency and water conservation. Cycles can take up to two hours, followed by the time it takes to line dry clothes.

Mosquitoes come out during the summer months. You can purchase anti-mosquito plug-ins or incense coils at the grocery store to keep them out of the apartment.

Cold apartments in the winter and spring and warm apartments in the summer. Cement walls, marble floors and sometimes drafty windows contribute to cold winters, while no air conditioning can lead to stuffy apartments in the heat. You should plan to bundle up at home in the cold, and open up the apartment for breezes in the heat.

Curious neighbors. Neighbors keep a close eye on the behavior of new arrivals. It may be a bit of a cultural adjustment for you to learn the social norms of apartment living. In such close quarters and old buildings, respect for neighbors makes for successful community living.

Temperamental Internet that may take a bit to get set up.

The Internet in apartments may have a weak signal, be slow or go off from time to time due to thick cement walls and ancient apartment structures. You should be patient and take your computer to school to use the Internet or to one of the many cafés that have Wi-Fi.

Walk a lot. Classes may be up to a 30-minute walk from SAI apartments.

Noisy surroundings. Kids going to school in the morning, tourists bustling, scooters zipping by; there will be many distractions that may disturb you from sleep. Light sleepers should bring earplugs.

Small or shared closet/armoire and dresser space. Expect shared and minimal space for clothes and shoes—a good reason to pack lightly!

No Hanging of posters/pictures on walls. Tape will rip the plaster off the walls and this is extremely expensive to repair (you will be charged for this).

Electricity

Spanish voltage: 220

US voltage: 110

Plug Adapters

Outlets in Spain are circular with both male and female components, and there are two kinds of plugs that are used. You can purchase adapters for the different kind of plugs locally. Most computers, camera battery chargers and phone battery chargers have a battery that can go up to 220V. This means that you only need an adapter and not a converter. Look for 110V-220V on the battery to check if you need an adapter or converter. Many of the items for which you would need a converter can be purchased abroad.

Tip from SAI alum:

Don't bring a 120-volt hair dryer, as the voltage will fry it. Buy one abroad.



“I never expected to experience a quaint apartment, with antiquity that warmed my heart, and four new amazing friends.”

Taking Care of your SAI Apartment

During check-in and orientation, you will receive the contact information for your English-speaking housing agency. Housing issues and maintenance requests should go through the housing agency, which acts as the liaison between you and landlords. SAI On-site Staff is also available to help you address any housing concerns.

Upon check-in you will also receive an **Apartment Condition Form**, which must be filled out within the first 48 hours of the program. Failure to fill out the form may result in frustrating damage fees at the end of the term.

Avoid Damage Fees And Behavior Warnings

Plumbing System: The buildings in Barcelona can be very old. Though many bathrooms and kitchens have been updated, the infrastructure tends to still be old. Please do not throw anything in the toilet except toilet paper! Other things thrown down the toilet will clog the system. The same is true for the kitchen: do not throw anything down the kitchen sink (food, paper, etc.). Remember that you will have to pay the plumber's bill, which can be over \$250. Slow or clogged drains should be reported to your housing agency as soon as possible.

Noise: Please do not slam doors or make loud noises in the apartment (loud music, musical instruments, loud conversations, etc.) after 10:00pm. Locals do their socializing outside in restaurants and cafes. Remember that other families with children and elders are living in the same building. Take off your "street shoes" upon arriving home and put on slippers or soft soled shoes.

Garbage: Please take your trash (garbage bags, old personal things, empty bottles, etc.) out daily. Recycle when possible! Your program cost includes a final cleaning fee, but if your apartment requires extra cleaning the charges will be deducted from your security deposit.

Hot water is available to the apartments via huge boilers shared by all apartments in the building and/or "on-demand" heaters within the apartment. Either way, it is important to know that there is not an unlimited supply of hot water. Please keep your showers short for the sake of your roommates and others in the building. Also, sometimes the hot water heaters need to be turned on and off for each use. If you are the one taught how this works, please pass along the information to your roommates!

How to operate: If you have any questions regarding the use or operation of anything in your apartment, please first contact your rental agency for instructions. This includes items such as: sofa beds, kitchen appliances, table extensions, windows etc. Do not use or "force" items with which you are not familiar. Do not leave the apartment while appliances are running!

Conserve energy. Utilities are very expensive in Europe. Your program cost includes a monthly utility allowance. If it is exceeded the charges will be deducted from your security deposit. Also be aware that an overload of power will leave you in the dark. Be careful about using too many appliances simultaneously. Using the washing machine and hair dryer at the same time may blow a fuse!

Tip from SAI alum:

Talk to your roommates and housemates about safety in your housing. Make sure you have all discussed any concerns you have, and agree to certain safety steps. For example, discuss closing windows and doors, not having guests over, etc. It's also a good idea to get to know your neighbors. It's always nice to have relationships with locals, but they are also likely keeping tabs on the building, and can be a point of contact should you need it.

Think local and enjoy the differences! If you don't find common things from home in the apartment (i.e. a hot water kettle), it's because you're in Europe. Enjoy the differences, be creative (use a saucepan), observe what they do have and have a great time.

Important notice: SAI reserves the right to terminate the housing rights of any SAI student who does not adhere to the code of conduct. Serious offenses, such as stealing, assault, self-endangerment and drug use, can lead to immediate eviction. A written warning will precede smaller offenses.

Bed Bugs

What are Bed Bugs?

Adult bed bugs are about 3/16-inch long and reddish-brown, with oval, flattened bodies and are sometimes mistaken for ticks or cockroaches. Bed bugs are active mainly at night. Their flattened bodies enable them to fit into tiny crevices—especially those associated with mattresses, box springs, bed frames and headboards. Bedbugs "hitchhike" on things such as travelers' suitcases, shoes, and bottoms of pant legs, then find their way into new residences and, ultimately, beds.

The first telltale symptoms of bed bug bites are multiple small, flat or raised welts on the skin that will always appear in a linear or clustered pattern because of their tendency to feed on the same location more than once. The next sign that you may have bed bugs is that you will get bitten every night while you are sleeping and develop similar cluster patterned large itchy welts every day. Bed bugs don't like hair so the bites will be in places on your body where there is less hair. Bedbugs don't carry disease, but don't scratch the bites because they may become infected.

Please note that bedbugs are not common in European homes. They are, however, common to study abroad students who travel frequently and are not used to dealing with the necessary precautions for preventing bedbugs. Please take all precautions to prevent this pest from invading your home!

How to Prevent Bed Bugs

While bed bugs are rare, once they're in your apartment, they're very hard to get rid of. Preventing them from getting in is your best defense.

Prior to Departure

- Buy a bed bug travel repellent and spray soft luggage with it.
- Choose hard luggage when possible (still spray suitcase with bed bug spray).
- Bring an extra-large garbage bag to place your luggage in upon arrival.

Upon Arrival

- Luggage should never be unpacked on or near a bed and should always be stored in a large plastic bag in a closet or away from the bed.
- Luggage should be disinfected each and every time it is used (use full strength vinegar or other disinfectant).
- Sheets should be kept clean and washed once per week (in 90°C water).
- Floors, especially in the bedroom, should be swept and mopped at least once per week.
- Trash should be taken out once daily.
- Shoes should never be on or near your bed. Do not lay on your bed with your shoes on.

SAI Bed Bug Policy

Report a problem within the first 3 days of the program. The tenant is responsible for keeping the property free of insect infestations. If you do not report a bug problem to the SAI office within the first three (3) days of the program (you will know), you will be responsible for paying all related fumigation and furniture replacement charges.

Bed Bug Removal Procedure (within the first 3 days of the program)

1. Upon detection of bed bugs, students are sent immediately to a hotel where they stay until the fumigation process is completed.
2. SAI staff will assist students in securing and isolating clothing in bags and washing them at a Laundromat before returning to the apartment. Note: Clothes must be washed in hot water. Delicate clothing can be washed in warm water with a disinfectant two times. It is always recommended to wash all clothing in hot (60°C) water.
3. SAI staff will accompany students to their cleaned apartment to provide information and support.

Dust Mites

What are Dust Mites?

Dust mites are commonly confused with bed bugs. The main difference between the two is: bed bugs make you itch and dust mites make you have allergy type symptoms.

Dust mites are a common cosmopolitan guest in human habitation, and are a common cause of allergies and asthma. Many people unknowingly coexist with dust mites comfortably with no reactions, but when they enter a new context and/or are in contact with a new species of dust mites, they have allergic reactions. Dust mites thrive in mattresses, bedding, couches, carpets, kitchens and wherever dust accumulates.

How to Eliminate Dust Mites

- Wash sheets and bedding 80° C
- Wash floors, door frames, baseboards, tops of cabinets or places where dust collects
- Vacuum couches, carpets
- Do not put luggage on or near your bed
- Do not wear street shoes while in/on your bed

SAI recommends using the following procedure for dust mite/insect problems:

- Buy pest control spray available in pharmacies. Some important things to remember when using these products:
- Use a separate can for each affected room.
- Open all closets and preferably remove sheets to expose the mattresses.
- Close all windows.
- Place the product in the center of the room
- Push the lever down and immediately exit the room closing the door behind you.
- No one should enter the room for at least 4 hours.
- After 4 hours, air out the room by opening window.

Tip from SAI alum:

The apartment comes with everything that we'd need, like linen, towels, pots/pans, dishes, and a few days supply of other things like dish soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, etc...

SAI Rental Agreement Example

You will be required to sign this document upon arrival.

1. Length of Tenancy

The property is rented from dates specified on page one. If student decides to terminate his/her occupancy before the established date, rent monies will be forfeited.

2. Check-In

Upon arrival, all students must meet with an SAI representative to collect their keys and sign their rental agreement. At that time students must submit a photocopy of passport photo page and visa (if required). All students are required to complete and submit the SAI Apartment Condition Form within 48 hours of apartment occupancy.

3. Occupants and Guests

Only those persons stipulated on the housing assignment letter may occupy the property. Any other tenants than those stipulated on the assignment letter is a breach of this rental agreement. **OVERNIGHT GUESTS ARE NOT PERMITTED.** Any guest hosted in the apartment after 12.00am is considered a violation of the overnight guest policy. Tenants found in violation of this agreement may be asked to vacate the property at SAI's discretion and may be responsible for any policy fines. Switching housing assignments or changing roommates without SAI's consent is not permitted. SAI reserves the right to switch housing assignments during the semester if required. Pets are not allowed in apartments.

4. Behavior

The tenant is responsible for correct and decent behavior while occupying their apartment in accordance with the SAI Code of Conduct. Violations include smoking, drug use, alcohol-related problems, violence, excessive noise in apartment and hallways (especially after 9pm), overnight guests, and substandard maintenance and care of property (see section 6). Should the tenant behave in an unacceptable manner, he/she will be subject to the SAI Disciplinary Policy. In extreme cases, students may be immediately evicted, with no warning.

5. Problems

SAI and «Housing_Assignment__Agency» are not responsible for interruptions to the supply of water, gas or electricity, internet, building renovations or construction. SAI together with «Housing_Assignment__Agency» will do their best to assist with these problems. If a tenant has experiences an issue with his/her apartment, he/she should contact the designated SAI Representative immediately via email and follow up with a phone call. Do not attempt to contact the landlords directly. SAI and «Housing_Assignment__Agency» reserve the right to enter the property for maintenance requests and/or repairs.

6. Maintenance & Damages

The tenant is responsible for communicating maintenance problems immediately to SAI and <<Housing Assignment Agency>>. The tenant will be held responsible for any damages not communicated. Apartment residents will be held financially responsible for any damages incurred during the rental period. Residents are responsible for following the SAI Check-Out Procedures in order to avoid damage charges. Eventual damage charges will be divided equally among all apartment residents unless individuals claim responsibility for specific damages.

7. Cleaning and Cleanliness

The tenant is responsible for keeping the property clean and in sanitary condition for the duration of the rental agreement. SAI reserves the right to inspect properties with prior notice. At the end of the rental period, the property must be left free of garbage, personal belongings, empty bottles, food, etc. If excessive cleaning is required (including trash removal) additional charges will apply. In order to prevent mold, bugs, and unhygienic living conditions, students are asked to: change sheets once per week, sweep and mop floors and bathrooms once per week, air out apartment each day, take trash out each day, keep sinks free of dirty dishes, clean kitchen and stove top on a regular basis.

8. Bugs

The tenant is responsible for keeping the property free of insect infestations. If students do not report a bug problem to the SAI office within the first three (3) days of the program, students will be responsible for paying all related fumigation and furniture replacement charges.

9. Payments

The security deposit paid to SAI Programs, less any applicable claims, will be returned to the tenant by SAI within 90 days after the apartment has been vacated, provided the apartment is left reasonably clean and without damages, and provided that all accounts are settled. The SAI program fee includes normal utility use, and a final cleaning fee. **Excessive use of utilities that result in a utility bill higher than \$75 per student/per month, could incur additional charges.**

10. Apartment Condition

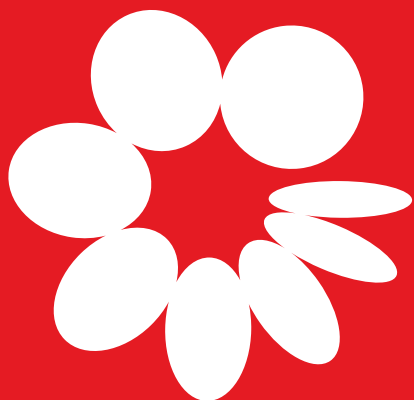
Tenants may not modify the apartment in any way including moving furniture, hanging items on walls, painting, construction, etc. Any unauthorized changes to the apartment may result in disciplinary action, including fines and possible eviction.

11. Safety

Any activity or behavior that is a threat to any tenant's well-being or a violation of local law may result in disciplinary action. This can include, but is not limited to, tampering with fire and safety equipment, possession of flammable materials, throwing objects or any substance out of windows or balconies. Students are responsible for adequately securing their accommodation by properly locking the apartment doors and windows.

12. Check-Out

Apartments must be vacated by 10am on the last day of the rental agreement. All keys must be left on the kitchen table/counter in an envelope with the student's name and apartment address. Students will be required to pay for replacement keys, if lost. The apartment will only be checked after the last student departs.



sai study abroad

**PRE-DEPARTURE
HANDBOOK: PART THREE**

BARCELONA

HOLA

We are delighted that you have chosen to study abroad with SAI. As you prepare to embark on this exciting new journey, please take time to read through each section of the pre-departure handbook as it prepares you for the adventure that lies ahead.

The handbook is divided into 3 sections:

- 1. Preparing to Live in Barcelona**
- 2. SAI Housing**
- 3. Living in Barcelona**

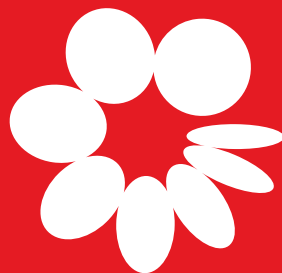
We are excited that your program is almost here, and the SAI on-site staff is looking forward to seeing you in Barcelona.

Cheers!

Ben Strevens
Senior Director

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part three:



living in
barcelona

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Travel In and Around Barcelona

Barcelona has an impressive public transportation system that comprises the metro, buses, trains and a network of funiculars and cable cars. To sort it all out, SAI students are provided with a public transport map upon arrival.

There are three transportation companies operating in Barcelona, with TMB being the main one that operates the Metro, Bus and Tram. All systems are quite simple and user-friendly, with clearly displayed maps throughout.

Metro (TMB)

The underground metro is the fastest way to traverse the city, with about a two-minute ride between each stop. Barcelona's TMB Metro operates 9 lines, and almost all stops are very large, clean and well lit. Lines are designated by a color and a number (*L1, L2, etc.*), and the direction is marked by the final destination. The Metro operates 5:00am to 12:00am on weeknights, with service until 2:00am on Fridays and non-stop service on Saturdays.

FCG Train System

Within Barcelona, the Catalanian FGC train system is integrated with the metro. Three lines operate in Barcelona, and connect outer reaching areas with the city. When riding the FGC trains downtown, students may not even notice they are on a different system, as tickets work interchangeably and the stop are shared with TMB.

Bus (TMB)

Barcelona's bus network is extensive, and offers a great opportunity to get around while seeing the city. During the day, buses run 5:00am to 10:00pm. At night, the night buses (*Nit-bus*) run 10:00pm to 5:00am and most leave from Plaça Catalunya. They are easily identified by the "N" (for Nit-bus) on the bus. TMB Metro passes can be used on the bus. Alternatively, single bus tickets can be purchased on the bus with exact change, but these tickets are not eligible for transfers as the metro tickets are.

Tram (TMB)

Barcelona's trams offer a convenient way to get around above ground in green and white cars along tracks. The two Tram networks, Trambaix and Trambesós, include three lines each that do not connect. Tram tickets (the same as TMB Metro tickets) can be purchased at all stops, and they must be validated on the on-board machines.

Rodiales Renfe Train

The Spanish Rodiales Renfe train system connects Barcelona with nearby beaches as well as the airport. Tickets are shared with TMB and can be used on these trains, however the train goes beyond Zone 1, which is what TMB tickets cover.

Tickets

A transit plan divides the province into six zones, which reach as far out as Vic 2 hours away. The entire metropolitan area of Barcelona falls within Zone 1, El Masnou is in 2E, Sitges in 3A and Montserrat in 3C. Since students generally travel around the metropolitan area of Barcelona, they will only require Zone 1 tickets. For further travel they can buy a single ticket for more zones.

You can buy a single ticket every time you ride, but even if only in Barcelona for a couple of days it's cheaper to buy a *targeta*, a discount ticket pack which you either pass through the box on top of the barrier

or punch in the machine at the metro entrance or on the bus. Tickets are available at metro station ticket offices and at FGC stations.

The T-10 (10 tickets) *targeta* is valid for ten separate journeys on the metro, bus, FGC and Rodalies Renfe trains, and also on night buses. These tickets can be used by more than one person at a time, but they need to be run through the system with each use. A journey lasts 1 hour and 15 minutes, allowing for free transfers throughout the system within the window.

Taxis

Vélib' is a self-service bike system available 24 hours a day, all year round. To access the service, you can buy a 1-day or a 7-day ticket online or at any Vélib' station. You can also sign-up for a longterm subscription. Vélib' stations are everywhere in Paris, and many Parisians use Vélib' bikes to get to and from work in their suits. They are an inexpensive way to get from one place to another. The base price for a one-day pass only allows you to use the bike for 30-minute intervals. If you exceed 30 minutes the price increases significantly. All you have to do is check your bike into a station before reaching the 30 minute limit, wait a few minutes, and check it back out again for another 30 minutes, at no extra charge.

Tip from SAI alum:

Branch out! Go on trips or excursions that SAI provides, even if it's not something you'd normally do. Go to new restaurants, explore new places, and try new foods!

Weekend Travel

Study abroad students in Europe love to travel on the weekends—and it's no wonder, with such amazing access! You can easily traverse all of Europe in short weekend trips, using a combination of budget airlines and trains.

Discount airlines

There are ample discount airlines operating throughout Europe, providing flights that can seem astoundingly cheap. But beware, these airlines add on a slew of unexpected charges. Also keep in mind that discount airlines tend to service the less popular airports in major cities.

Airline Search

With such a large number of discount airlines it sometimes helps to begin with a search engine like SkyScanner, which includes low-budget airlines in their search results. Some specific discount airlines are also listed below:

- Easy Jet: www.easyjet.com
- German Wings: www.germanwings.com
- Jet 2: www.jet2.com
- Ryan Air: www.ryanair.com
- Tuifly: www.tuifly.com
- Wizz Air: www.wizzair.com
- Meridiana: www.meridiana.it
- Vueling: www.vueling.com

Extra Travel Charges

Here are some helpful suggestions on how to make the most of the low-cost airline flight experience:

- **Baggage charges:** Beware of extra fees when checking bags! Even one checked bag can increase your ticket price by 33%! Avoid these fees by traveling light and only using a carry-on. Make sure your carry-on luggage is light enough to pass requirements; overweight carry-ons have price tags too! Always check with the carrier regarding fees before you travel.
- **Payment charges:** Watch out for bogus payment charges. These are fees tacked on to your ticket price when paying with a credit card or debit card.
- **Check-in charges:** Some airlines charge you to check in! Some travelers suggest printing your boarding pass before you get to the airport. Ryanair has been known to charge up to €40 to 'check-in' passengers.
- **Boarding and seating charges:** Some airlines charge extra for first-select seating. Avoid this charge by skipping this option, checking-in online and getting to the airport early.
- **Charges for unwanted extras:** Make sure you are not being charged for unwanted extras! Be extra vigilant about the booking process and 'checking' and 'un-checking' options that appear throughout the online booking.
- **Charges for changes:** Be very careful when selecting flight times and dates. Changes are very pricey. Ensure that all names are spelled correctly and that all passport information is typed properly. Changes to names details are even more costly than date and time changes!
- **Telephone booking charges:** Avoid high charges over the phone by reserving through websites.

Train travel

Train travel within Spain is often much simpler than flying. When traveling between countries, taking the train can be more costly and time consuming than air travel.

Train stations are usually downtown, eliminating the hassle and cost of getting to and from a remote airport, and trains do not tack on additional charges, like airport taxes, baggage and booking fees. With some good research and advance booking train travel can also be quite cheap.

There are many train travel options to consider, including whether to buy passes, piece together different legs of a trip, and whether to buy in advance. We recommend a great site to start the research: <http://www.seat61.com/Europe-train-tickets>.

Where else is SAI

SAI has main offices in Paris, Barcelona, Milan, Florence and Rome. If you would like to be put in touch with staff from one of those cities don't hesitate to ask your local Program Coordinator. SAI staff will gladly help provide information or support if you plan to travel to their city.

Share Your Travel Itinerary With SAI:

If you are planning an overnight trip, don't forget to fill out the Travel Itinerary form on the SAI website:

<http://www.saiprograms.com/travel-itinerary>

Success Abroad

Jetlag

Jetlag is a very real phenomenon. Symptoms include sleeplessness, anxiety, sweats, confusion, inability to concentrate and emotional sensitivity. Minor issues can seem catastrophic when you are jetlagged. You should keep this in mind when you call home the first few days as it can really panic family!

There are a few things that can be done to ease your way out of jetlag:

- Drink a lot of water.
- Only sleep at night. You can get away with taking 1-2 hour naps for the first couple of days, but after that you are only slowing down the adjustment period. A light sleeping pill can help put you to sleep the first few nights.
- Don't drink a lot of caffeine after 2:00pm as it might interfere with your normal sleep patterns.
- To help stay awake during the day, take walks around your neighborhood and do some grocery shopping.
- Adhere to the 12:00am curfew during arrival week so that you allow yourself to get plenty of rest.

Feeling Homesick? Could Be Culture Shock! 🙄

Each year, thousands of students study abroad. It's a great way to find out about who you are and what life is like in another part of the world. When you started making plans to take part in a study abroad program, you were probably hoping to make new friends and learn about the culture in your host country—everything from attitudes and beliefs to social customs and popular foods. Yet, the reality of constantly having to deal with new situations in a foreign language, in unfamiliar surroundings, can be frustrating, stressful and even scary, no matter how broad-minded or prepared you may be. When you travel and live in a foreign culture, you can feel like a fish out of water.

One of our Admissions Counselors talks about homesickness on our blog: <https://www.saiprograms.com/homesickness-adventurers-rite-passage>.

Homesickness, stress, fear, and confusion are all symptoms of culture shock. Culture shock can begin when you get on the plane to leave or hit you months after being abroad. Culture shock is a normal and necessary part of making the transition from one culture to another, which requires fully immersing yourself into an unknown culture and language. As time goes by, you will begin to notice that you recognize a word or two and feel more comfortable with the daily routine of the locals. This personal growth is part of the reason you decided to study abroad.

The Stages Of Culture Shock

For over 30 years, culture shock has been a bona fide field of research for anthropologists and psychologists, who have identified stages of experience. Not everyone experiences the exact stages but most travelers go through the highs and lows of living in a new culture.

At first the new environment excites you and a few frustrations do not spoil your enthusiasm. When experiencing some difficulties with simple things like making phone calls, or using public transport, you tend to downplay negative emotions. Then follows a period in which cultural differences in behavior and values become more obvious. What previously seemed exciting, new and challenging is now frustrating. You may feel isolated and become withdrawn from life around you, seeking security in the familiar.

In the next stage you may reject what is around you, perhaps becoming opinionated and negative. You may feel that everyone is against you and that nobody understands you. You cling to other students from your home country, hoping to validate negative stereotypes of the new culture. However, you are beginning to re-assert yourself.

Based on your successes in negotiating a variety of social situations and, maybe, increased language skills, your self-esteem grows. Knowing that you cannot change your surroundings you now enjoy certain aspects of the new culture that you are experiencing and feel relieved and strengthened from having overcome the difficulties. You may even feel a sense of belonging.

How To Overcome Culture Shock

At first, you may feel like getting on a plane and heading home. It's OK to have those feelings, but hang in there! Don't make any quick decisions. Give yourself time to adjust to the newness of the experience—at least 2 weeks. Most often, simple things like getting some rest or having a good meal can help a lot. Jetlag and overall fatigue will always make you feel a bit more homesick.

Talk About It

Don't forget your SAI On-site Staff are there to help you. We have helped many other students with the same issues in the past and know personally what it feels like to be homesick in a strange and new place. Make an appointment to discuss what you are feeling; sometimes just talking it through can help.

Flexibility and Adaptability

The ability to respond to or tolerate the ambiguity of new situations is very important to intercultural success. Keeping options open and judgmental behavior to a minimum helps to create a more enjoyable experience.

Have an Open Mind

While it's certainly OK to feel frustration or confusion in your new surroundings, try not to form an opinion about the new culture too soon. You may be quick to judge its food, manners and communication styles and, as a result, you may want to do things the way you are used to. This is a sign of culture shock. If you have this kind of attitude, you will probably avoid some of the very experiences that you came for. Your expectations, as well as common cultural stereotypes, will often be inaccurate. Don't think of the host culture as better or worse, just different—you'll be more willing to try new things.

Tip from SAI alum:

In order to make a closer connection with the locals in Paris, learn basic greetings.

Participate

This is obvious, but everybody needs to be reminded. Just watching life go on around you isn't good enough—try things for yourself. Don't worry about making a mistake. People in your host country will generally be very understanding and willing to help if you have questions. If you are unsure of what to do in a formal setting, follow others' leads. Active participation in conversation is important, especially if you want to become fluent in the local language. Your efforts will be appreciated!

Keep in Touch

Call or email your friends and family at home. Talking to someone familiar always makes you feel better, and that person can encourage you when you're feeling homesick. It's helpful to make plans to call every week on the same day and time. That way you'll never be disappointed that nobody is home to answer your call and you'll have something to look forward to each week. Ask your family to send photos in their emails, or try video chatting when possible.

Making Friends

While abroad, try to make friends with locals. They can help explain cultural practices and customs. Learning about a country's culture firsthand from the locals may make you more tolerant and lessen your culture shock. They can help you with the language and introduce you to things tourists and vacationers never experience. They also protect you from the worst blows of culture shock, which often come from only hanging around other study abroad students. Above all, pay attention to the unique viewpoints you bring with you. Just as a foreign culture will offer new insight to you, you can offer new insight to locals you meet. Making friends while abroad can help foster the international camaraderie that overseas living is all about.

Sense of Humor

A sense of humor is important because in another culture there may be frustrations or misunderstandings that may lead one to feel angry, annoyed, embarrassed, sad, or discouraged. The ability to laugh things off will help guard against despair.

Explore Your New City

Try to overcome the unfamiliarity with the city, as well as create comfortable spaces by trying out some of the following things in your first few weeks there. It can help you feel more at home.

- Explore a few different grocery stores, buying a little something from each. Walk the aisles, compare foods, and start getting used to brands and options.
- Find an open market and buy fresh produce at a few different stalls. If you're having a hard time communicating, point and smile!
- Decide on a few tourist destinations and find your way there, either by walking or public transport.
- Stop into a new café each morning, ordering different coffee options each time.
- Take a good book to an area with a nice view and enjoy the scenery for a while.
- Be a tourist and join a tour of the city (hostels usually offer free or cheap tours).
- Blog about your experiences, and think about giving tips to future travelers to the same city. What can you recommend? Can you make a list of must-do things thus far? If not, try to find them

We want all SAI students to make the most of their time abroad. Studying abroad offers cultural immersion, independent living, life skills, adventure, and of course, new coursework. It is important to understand that a good study abroad experience means so much more than travel.

Use these tips to make sure you set yourself up for success in all aspects of your study abroad experience.

Begin your program right 

Go to all SAI and host school orientation events, even the ones that are not mandatory. Ask questions, introduce yourself, and remain open-minded.

Know what to expect from school

Make sure you understand what it will take to succeed in your classes. If it is unclear, ask your professors. Be aware that the education system and classroom instruction may be different in your host country, so it is important that you get to know how you will be graded. Please know that you can always contact SAI with any academic issues.

Attend class regularly

Don't let your travel and efforts to get to know the local culture get in the way of attending classes regularly. Don't forget, your grades from abroad will likely go toward your GPA, and class attendance can be a major factor in your success.

Visit your SAI on-site staff

Make a point to stop by the SAI office regularly to touch base with the SAI staff. Talk to staff about any issues you are having, whether roommate, health, or school-related. We are here to help, and we love to see everyone's faces.

Language

If you have no prior experience with the local language, make it a point to learn some basic sentences. You can use the Survival French Language guide in this handbook as a starter. Try to use the local language in your everyday interactions – people will open up quite a bit when they see that you are trying.

Strive for balance

Too much of one thing can be overwhelming. Be sure to incorporate a balance of activities in your time abroad. Balance nights out with friends with an independent yoga class, or long days studying with a good meal cooked with friends. Find the things that make you happy and try to balance some of the stresses of life abroad with those activities. Also, set aside time for introspection when you can. Check in with yourself, and think about how this experience might be changing you or your global outlook.

Get to know locals

As much as possible, find ways to engage with locals—we promise, your experience will be better for it. Become a regular somewhere, talk to the staff at your local café, try asking questions instead of sheepishly circling a block trying to find an address.

Get involved

Look for ways to get involved in local happenings. Join a local sports league, try volunteering, or attend some interesting art exhibits. If you want help with ideas, reach out to your SAI on-site staff.



“Never waste a day abroad because when it’s time to leave you’ll wish you had just one more day (or semester).”

SAI Emergency Contacts

As part of SAI orientation, you are briefed on all emergency procedures and are provided with an emergency numbers card.

Spain Emergency Phone Numbers

- Pan-Europe SOS (medical, fire and police): 112
- Ambulance and Medical Emergencies: 061

Barcelona Hospitals:

- *Hospital Quirón Barcelona*. Plaça d'Alfonso Comín, 5, 08023 Barcelona. Tel: 932 55 40 00 (from Spain)
- *Hospital Santa Creu i Sant Pau*. Carrer de Sant Quintí, 89, 08026 Barcelona. Tel: 932 91 90 00 (from Spain)

Dental Emergency:

- *Centro Odontológico Integral*. Carrer Valencia, 247, 08007 Barcelona. Tel: 934 05 30 00 (9:30am to 7:30pm)

24 hour Pharmacy:

- *Farmacia La Pedrera*. Passeig de Gràcia, 90, 08008 Barcelona. Tel: 934 87 61 45 (from Spain)

Poison info:

- *Institut Nacional de Toxicologia*. Tel: 933 17 44 00 (from Spain)

US Consulate General in Barcelona

Paseo Reina Elisenda de Montcada, 23-25, 08034 Barcelona, Spain
Telephone: 93 280 22 27 (from Spain)
Emergency After-Hours Telephone: 91 587 2200

Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)

All US students are automatically enrolled by SAI in STEP, a free service of the US Bureau of Consular Affairs to provide automatic updates on travel destinations: <https://step.state.gov/step/>

Benefits of enrolling in STEP:

- Receive important information from the Embassy about safety conditions in the destination country, to help make informed decisions about travel plans
- Help the US Embassy contact you in an emergency
- Help family and friends get in touch with you in an emergency

Additional Information

The US Department of State maintains updated information on country profiles and travel warnings to help inform US travelers.

Country Information: Select your country of choice and read about health and safety, travel restrictions, local laws and more: <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country.html>

Travel Warnings and Alerts: The US Department of State issues travel warnings for destinations around the world. As a first step in planning any trip abroad, check the Travel Advisories for your intended destination: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>



SAI Emergency Procedures

For real emergencies, **FIRST** call the police, ambulance, fire department. **THEN** (if necessary) call the SAI emergency number:

644 775 874
(from within Spain)

NOTE: This number can be used **AFTER HOURS** for **EMERGENCIES ONLY**, defined below. Students calling this number after hours for non-emergencies risk being placed on program probation.

What is an emergency: When your **LIFE** or **HEALTH** is in serious danger.

Examples of non-emergencies include:

- Being locked out of your apartment (call roommate or get a hotel room).
- Not having hot water, heat or electricity (this will have to wait until the morning to be resolved).
- Losing your wallet, your passport, and keys (this will have to wait until the morning to be resolved).

Personal Safety

Student safety, security, and well-being are of primary importance to SAI. While neither SAI nor SAI host universities can guarantee a risk-free environment, all efforts are made to ensure the safety, security, and well-being of our students throughout the duration of the program. SAI's safety, crisis and emergency management procedures are in place to ensure that transportation, lodging, medical facilities, communications, and emergency responses are available to best provide a safe environment while abroad. With this in mind, it is also important to note that all program participants take responsibility for their own safety, security, and well-being while abroad. Pre-departure preparations and on-site orientations cannot replace good judgment. This means using common sense, being aware of your surroundings, and not putting yourself in compromising positions, particularly regarding the use and abuse of drugs or alcohol. In short, the same precautions you would follow in your home communities should be maintained when studying abroad.

Emergencies Abroad

SAI has taken the following precautions to ensure student health and safety abroad:

- SAI provides all students with international health insurance through GeoBlue Insurance. SAI on-site staff and our host school staff can refer you to a local English-speaking doctor. In the event of a more serious case, an on-site SAI staff member will accompany the student to the local hospital.
- SAI carefully monitors public announcements and travel warnings issued by the US Department of State.
- SAI staff communicates as necessary with local consulates and embassies.
- SAI registers all students in the US Dept. of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP)
- SAI strongly recommends, unless specific situations dictate otherwise, that you designate your parents or legal guardians as emergency contacts.
- SAI maintains a thorough handbook of Safety, Crisis and Emergency Management Procedures, which can be found on our website. : <http://www.saiprograms.com/services/health-safety/>.

Crisis communication

We encourage you and your family to discuss and establish a contact system that can be used in the event of a crisis on either side. In most instances of crisis, parents or guardians should attempt to contact you first before they attempt to contact individuals at SAI in order to gain reassurance of your safety. If this is not successful, parents or guardians can contact SAI on-site staff, or the SAI main office in California (800-655-8965) for assistance.

**SAI Barcelona
Emergency
Number**
644 775 874
(from within Spain)

Common sense precautions

Most students traveling abroad in Europe have a safe and incident-free trip. However, crimes do take place overseas, and you should always be prepared for unexpected events. It is important to adopt a generally vigilant attitude when traveling anywhere, including keeping a low profile and avoiding conspicuousness in dress, speech, or behavior. Following are some tips for you to consider regarding safety abroad:

- Stay alert to your surroundings and for people who may be watching you.
- Keep photocopies of your passport, student ID and other papers in your apartment. Keep a record of all your credit card numbers, expiration dates and the telephone number to call to report loss or theft of the card.
- Be responsible when entering your apartment and apartment building. Do not let strangers into the apartment building and never lend out your keys. Remember, also, to shut the entrance door to your building.
- Do not draw attention to yourself either through expensive dress, personal accessories (cameras, radios, jewelry, sunglasses, etc.) or careless behavior.
- Be wary of unexpected packages and stay clear of unattended luggage or parcels in airports, train stations or other areas of uncontrolled public access.
- Report any suspicious people loitering around your school or apartment. Use common sense in divulging information to strangers about your study abroad program and your fellow students.
- Make sure SAI always knows where you are and how to contact you in case of an emergency.
- Never walk home alone at night even when you think you are comfortable in your surroundings.
- If someone is bothering you, ignore him or her and do not make eye contact. If they persist, walk into a place of business or ask a police officer for help.
- Take care of your friends. If you notice that a friend is putting him or herself in a dangerous situation or is ill, notify the SAI On-site Staff immediately. Never let a friend go home alone or with someone they do not know.
- Remember, consuming alcohol reduces your ability to respond in certain situations and defend yourself.
- Do not enter a car with strangers, do not sit in the front seat of a taxi and do not hitchhike.
- Avoid public demonstrations and other civil disturbances.
- Try to seem purposeful when you move about. Even if you are lost, act like you know where you are going.
- Let someone know when you expect to return if you are out late at night.
- Follow your gut feeling; if something doesn't feel right remove yourself as quickly as possible from the situation.

Money and theft

As a tourist city, Barcelona attracts pickpockets. By taking the same precautions anyone would in an urban center, you can avoid being a victim. The key to protecting yourself is to stay alert. These simple precautions can spare you the hassle and misery of pickpocketing and theft:

- Avoid carrying large sums of money with you; carry only what you need for the day.
- Leave your passport, credit cards, etc. at home unless you specifically need them.
- When you carry money or valuables, do not keep them in one place, and never keep them in a back pants pocket.
- Be watchful on crowded public transportation, and try to keep your hand or arm over the pockets holding your valuables.

Common Theft Tactics

- Thieves often attempt to distract their victims by bumping into them, spilling something on their clothing, asking for directions, or otherwise diverting attention from an accomplice.
- Pickpockets take advantage of crowded situations, especially on trains and buses.
- Thieves on scooters may drive up from behind, literally ripping off backpacks, purses, cameras, and even jewelry.

Reporting a Theft or Loss

To report the loss or theft of a passport, driver's license or credit card you must make a report at the nearest police station to where the crime took place. Stolen passports should also be reported immediately to your Embassy.

Women studying abroad

Some female students have a hard time adjusting to attitudes they encounter abroad in both public and private interactions between men and women. Spanish men sometimes openly demonstrate their appreciation of women in ways that others may find offensive: being honked at, stared at, verbally appraised, etc. At times, the attention can be flattering; however, it may become very annoying, and potentially even angering. Spanish women, who often get the same sort of treatment, have learned to ignore the attention. It is a person's choice to ignore someone and keep on walking. If you ever feel uncomfortable about specific attention you are receiving, you can turn into a shop or café and let someone know what is going on.

Look like a local

Foreigners are often targets for scams or petty theft. To avoid this unwanted attention, we encourage you to act and look like locals. While it might be difficult at first, when it seems impossible to find the way without glancing at a map every few steps, some simple awareness of Spanish attire can go a long way:

- Females do not wear shorts, unless at the beach
- Wearing athletic socks and shoes is unusual, except while participating in an athletic activity
- Dressing "athletic" in general is typically reserved for athletic activities. Items that are considered "athletic" include team sweatshirts, fraternity/sorority shirts, hooded sweatshirts, sports t-shirts, shorts, and tennis shoes.
- Wearing a baseball cap is uncommon

Know the local laws

It is each student's responsibility to know the laws of a foreign country before arriving, because "I didn't know it was illegal" will not get a student out of jail. Some laws may be applied more strictly to foreigners than to local citizens. You should never assume that just because local people are breaking laws, it's acceptable for you to do so as well. The SAI Orientation covers the most important local laws that you should be aware of.

Tip from SAI intern:

Make sure to never set your bag/purse on the back of your seat or the bar when you are out. If you do so, you run the risk of forgetting it or of having something stolen from it.

Health Insurance

Staying healthy abroad

Taking care of yourself while abroad starts by eating right, exercising, getting plenty of rest, and keeping alcohol consumption to a minimum.

Studying abroad drastically changes daily routines. Study abroad students enjoy new foods, practice different social norms, and likely travel significantly. As a result of all this excitement, your physical and mental health can be affected.

You should try your best to maintain the healthy lifestyle you practiced at home, and take time for personal reflection.

CISI Health insurance

All SAI students are covered under Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) student health insurance for the duration of their program. You should always carry your CISI identification card with you.

I need medical attention, what do I do?

Contact SAI on-site staff for assistance or visit <https://www.mycisi.com/CISIPortalWeb/pub/login.aspx?PT=GEN> or their mobile app.

If you visit a CISI approved doctor, you will not have to pay for your visit out of pocket. If you visit an out-of-network doctor, you can pay cash or credit and submit reimbursement paperwork to CISI. It is important to save the receipts for any out of pocket doctor's visits and prescription medication in order to be reimbursed by CISI.

Reimbursing medical care or prescription drug expenses

To be reimbursed for covered expenses, you will be asked to complete the claim form which can be found in your "MyCISI Portal": <https://www.mycisi.com/CISIPortalWeb/pub/Login.aspx>.

