



TtMADRID
Teacher Training Madrid

HOW TO PLAN YOUR 2026 TEFL JOURNEY

A Practical Guide for Future English Teachers Moving to Spain

1. Choosing the Right Course Date

Choosing when to begin your TEFL certification is one of the most important decisions you'll make. Your course date shapes your move to Madrid, the timing of your job search, and how smoothly you transition into Spanish life.

The Spanish academic calendar has two major hiring waves: September-October and January-March. Starting your TEFL course just before or during these periods maximises your chances of finding work quickly. However, there are strong reasons to start at other times of the year as well, especially if you prefer quieter settling-in periods, want more personal preparation time, or need to coordinate timing with your current job.

When choosing your start date, consider:

- your financial readiness
- your employment commitments
- visa processing timelines
- your preferred arrival season
- whether you want to adapt during a busy or calm period

Your TEFL course is the beginning of a much larger transition, choosing the timing that supports your wellbeing and long-term plans.

2. Visa Documents you need to Prepare

If you are coming from outside the EU, your visa preparation should begin months before your chosen course date. Document processing is often slower than expected, and requirements vary by country, so the earlier you begin, the better prepared you will be.

You may need:

- a valid passport
- criminal background check

- apostilles and official translations
- bank statements or financial evidence
- medical certificates
- proof of enrolment in your TEFL programme
- visa application forms and appointment bookings

Each of these steps can take time. Background checks can take weeks, apostilles up to a month, and consulate appointments may be limited. A well-organised visa plan reduces stress and ensures you arrive in Spain ready to begin your training without delays. You can [contact us](#) and we'll give you guidance on how long it would take from your home country.

3. Understanding the different types of visas

Spain introduced a law in May 2025 that has radically changed how student visas work. There are two main types of visas that you'll encounter while doing research for a TEFL program:

1. Postgraduate Studies

If you come to Spain on a visa through a postgraduate program, you're in a solid position to set yourself up long-term. Our [year-long TEFL program for Non-EU citizens](#) falls into this category.

You can:

- work 30 hours per week alongside your studies
- study up to 50% of your course online throughout the year
- modify your visa to a work visa after a year (through company sponsorship upon completion of your year-long program)

2. Spanish Study Program

Many TEFL schools partner with Spanish language schools to offer visas. Your course is specifically to study Spanish, and you would have to prioritise that during your year in Spain. Our partner school, [LAE Madrid](#), offers programs that qualify for this visa as it's accredited by the Instituto Cervantes so we know everything there is to know about how these programs work too!

Here's how this visa is different from the Postgraduate Studies' visa:

- you must apply to be able to work alongside your program (max 20 hours). It's not guaranteed that it'll be approved
- your whole course must be in-person
- you must study 20 hours per week

It's really important that you understand which visa you'll be applying for and what your rights are BEFORE you sign up for a course. We're happy to go through your options with you and explain all of your options - even if those options don't end in your studying with us!

4. Planning your [Move to Madrid](#)

[Relocating to Madrid](#) is an exciting step, but it also requires structure and foresight. The more organised your move, the more confident you will feel during your course.

Begin by thinking about:

Accommodation:

Many new teachers choose temporary housing for the first weeks, giving themselves time to explore neighbourhoods before committing. Popular areas include Malasaña, Lavapiés, La Latina, Chamberí, and Salamanca (where TtMadrid is based) each with its own personality and pace.

Cost of living:

Madrid is affordable compared to other European capitals, but budgeting for rent, transport, food, and initial setup costs helps ensure a smooth transition.

Practical logistics:

Research health insurance, SIM cards, transport cards, and what documents you'll need once you arrive. Setting up small essentials early creates stability.

Your move to Madrid is more than logistics; it is the first chapter of your new life. Good planning makes space for you to enjoy the excitement of that change.

5. How to know if Spain is the right destination for you

Spain attracts thousands of new English teachers every year for good reason. It offers a blend of professional opportunity and lifestyle quality that is difficult to find elsewhere, but determining whether Spain is the right fit for *you* requires self-reflection.

Spain may be a strong match if you:

- value community-oriented cultures
- want a job that is meaningful and human-centred
- enjoy social, open environments
- want access to a strong TEFL job market

- hope to learn Spanish
- prefer a balanced, life-friendly pace
- want to build confidence while experiencing something new

[Madrid is not just a location, it is a way of living](#). Ask yourself whether you want an experience that challenges you, supports you, and expands your worldview. If the answer is yes, Spain is likely to be the right destination.

6. How to choose a TEFL Course you can Trust

[Choosing the right TEFL course](#) is one of the most important steps in preparing for your move to Spain. A strong programme gives you the confidence, skills, and support you need to teach effectively and find work in Madrid. Not all TEFL courses offer the same level of quality, so it's important to know what to look for.

A trusted TEFL course should offer:

Recognised accreditation

A [Level 5 TEFL qualification](#) is considered the gold standard. It ensures rigorous academic quality and stronger recognition from employers in Spain and worldwide.

Observed teaching practice

Practical teaching with real students, and structured feedback from trainers, is essential. It prepares you for real classroom dynamics and builds confidence before your first job.

Job placement support

Look for programmes that offer help with CVs, interviews, job leads, and introductions to academies. Local connections in Madrid significantly increase your chances of finding work quickly. Check out [TtMadrid's Job Support in Madrid](#) for more information about how 100% of our graduates find work after finishing their course.

Visa and relocation guidance (for non-EU students)

A reliable centre helps you understand required documents, timelines, and consulate processes. Clear visa support reduces stress and ensures a smoother move.

Transparency and realistic expectations

Strong TEFL schools are honest about workload, career opportunities, and the realities of teaching. You should feel informed, supported, and never "sold to." At TtMadrid this is one of the things that we value over everything, as making such a huge leap is definitely better with a safety net, and we're there with you every step of the way!

A supportive community and ongoing mentorship

The best programmes stay with you beyond graduation, offering professional advice, alumni networks, continued development, and a sense of belonging.

Choosing the right TEFL course means choosing a strong foundation for your new life in Spain. When you begin with quality training and genuine support, your path into teaching, and into Madrid, becomes much clearer and more rewarding.

What's Next?

Planning your TEFL journey is both practical and personal. It involves choosing the right timing, preparing documents well in advance, organising your move, and reflecting on whether Spain aligns with the life you want to build in 2026.

TtMadrid is here to help you decide what works for you. We've spent over 20 years helping people move to Madrid to teach English.

[**BOOK IN A CALL WITH US TO DISCUSS YOUR 2026 TEFL JOURNEY**](#)



[Watch the Video Here](#)