KAPLAN

INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES

# Chicago

# School Guide

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# About *Chicago*

**Name of location:** Chicago

**Famous landmarks:** Magnificent Mile, Millennium Park and The Bean, Lake Michigan, Art Institute of Chicago, the Field Museum, Lincoln Park Zoo, and the Shedd Aquarium

**Cuisines within a 20-minute walk:** Chicago style deep dish pizza, Chinese, French, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Mexican, Middle Eastern, Spanish, Thai, Vegetarian

**Transport within a 10-minute walk:** Trains and buses

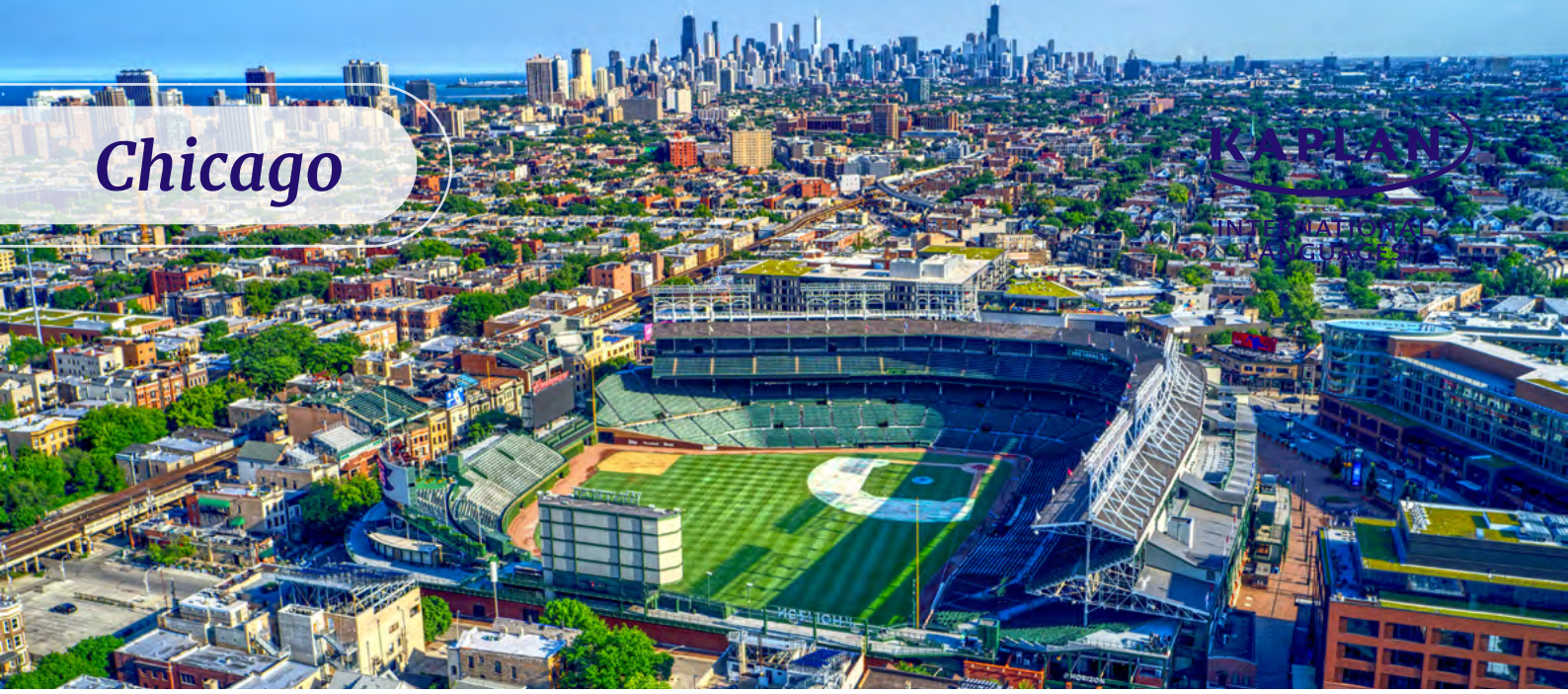
**Top 5 reasons to choose this city:** Full of historic and contemporary architecture, home to an exciting sports culture, one of the best cities for cutting-edge cuisine and a thriving jazz scene, enjoys the diversity of all four seasons

**What makes this city unique?** Chicago has all the action and excitement of a big city, but it also offers a uniquely friendly and relaxed atmosphere

**Alternative things to do:** Bike along the lakefront trails on Lake Michigan, kayak down the Chicago River, indulge in a variety of food tours

**City personality:** Active, architecture, artistic, big city, charming, coffee haven, cosmopolitan, entertainment capital, foodie scene, friendly, iconic landmarks, museums, picturesque, vibrant

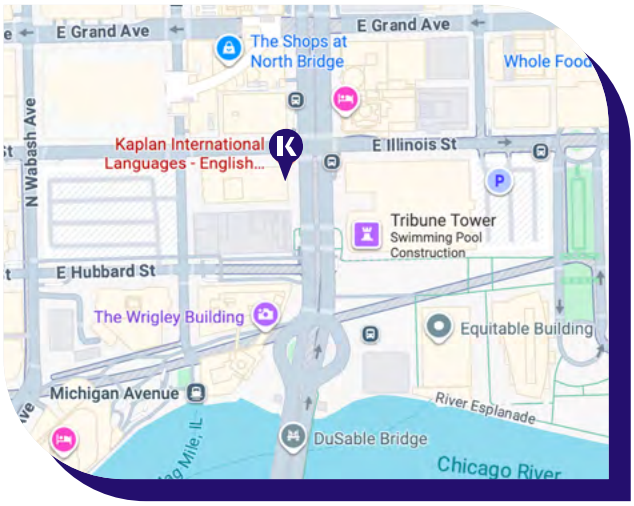
**Examples of nearby cities to visit:** Milwaukee (Travel time: 2.25 hours, price of return ticket: $50); Minneapolis (Travel time: 1 hour flight)



# Chicago

# Why choose to study at our Chicago school?

- Located on the Magnificent Mile, a famous shopping district in downtown Chicago.
- Situated just a short walk from the parks that line Lake Michigan.
- Surrounded by a variety of entertainment, from dining options and museums to sporting events.
- Easy access to Millennium Park and the Art Institute of Chicago.




## *Location and contact information*

**Address**
444 N Michigan Ave Mezzanine Level, Chicago, IL 60611
**Phone**
+1 (312) 962-2460
**Emergency contact**
+1 (877) 404-9976
**At this address since**
2014
**Providing English courses since**
2006

## *School information*

**School Director**
Lillian Bartels
**Total numer of teachers**
11-15
**Languages spoken by staff**
Spanish, French, Italian, Korean
**Teacher qualifications**
Bachelor's (or equivalent) in combination with TESOL, CELTA, TEFL certificate (including practicum) or six months of ESL/EFL teaching experience

*Accreditations and memberships*

ENGLISH USA EnglishUSA.org LEARN · EDUCATE · ENGAGE

ACCET

Disclaimer: All the information on this school guide is for reference. Please contact your advisor for the latest information

# About the School

- **Number of buildings:** 1
- **Number of floors:** 1
- **Total number of classroom:** 15
- **School facilities:** Elevator, air conditioning, heating, Wi-Fi, computer lab/ multimedia center, vending machine, prayer room, student lounge/ common room, wheelchair accessible
- **Wheelchair / disabled access:** Yes
- **Extra cost of facilities:** No

## School materials

- **Materials provided for students:** K+ Course Books, K+ Learning Space, K+ Extra
- **Is there a book deposit?** No

- **Other services provided:** Accommodation, Airport transfer, University Placement Service, Medical Insurance
- **Extra cost of other services:** Please see our price list
- **Number of computers available:** 12
- **Levels of English offered:** All levels
- **First day of school:** Students should plan to attend class on their first day

Be sure to check your email the week before your start date for your class and orientation schedule! Also, don't forget to complete the placement test and send in any required documents before you arrive.

## Samples

### Class timetable

| | Morning | Afternoon |
|---|---|---|
| Class | 08:30 - 10:00 | 14:15 - 15:45 |
| Break | 10:00 - 10:15 | 15:45 - 16:00 |
| Class | 10:15 - 11:45 | 16:00 - 17:30 |

### Specialist skills class timetable

| Morning class (Monday to Friday) | Afternoon class (Monday to Thursday) |
|---|---|
| N/A | 12:30 - 14:00 |

## School location and transport

| Time to... | By foot | By bike | By bus | By subway/train |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The nearest café / restaurant | On-Site | On-Site | On-Site | On-Site |
| The nearest supermarket | 5 minutes | 2 minutes | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest post office | 5 minutes | 2 minutes | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest ATM / bank | 1 minute | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest sports center | 45 minutes | 15 minutes | 30 minutes | 15 minutes |
| The nearest hospital | 15 minutes | 5 minutes | 10 minutes | N/A |
| The city center | 1 minute | N/A | N/A | N/A |

For the most up-to-date transport prices, please visit the CTA Website

## *Regular social activities*

International Day: Free
Sports Game: $25 - $100
Holiday Party: $20
Architectural Boat Tour: $20
Ice Skating: $20
Beach Volleyball On Lake Michigan: Free

## *Living cost*

(sample prices for items in this city)

Bottle of water: $1 - $2
Coffee: $2 - $3
Can of Coke: $1
Meal out for two: $40
Takeaway pizza: $12
Sandwich: $8
Local bus ticket: $2.25
Local train ticket: $2.50
Bike Rental: $20
Cinema ticket: $11

## *Typical 2-week social schedule*

| Days | First week | Second week |
|---|---|---|
| Monday | Welcome new students | Museum visit |
| Tuesday | Architecture tour | Game night |
| Wednesday | Bike ride | Beach volleyball |
| Thursday | Visit Millenium Park | Deep dish pizza tasting |
| Friday | Graduation party | Graduation party |
| Saturday | Boat cruise | Tour of Wrigley Field |

Number of social activities per week: 2-3

# Courses & Students

- **Courses provided at this school:** General English, Semi-Intensive English, Intensive English, Academic Year Abroad, Business Supplementary, TOEFL® Add-on
- **Special / extra courses provided:** Tailored Group Programs
- **Average number of students per class:** 14–17 (Maximum class size: 17)
- **Minimum age of students:** 16
- **Average age of students:** 26
- **Students per age group:** 18-21: 30% / 22-25: 16% / 26-30: 27% / Over 30: 27%
- **Top 10 student nationalities:** Turkey, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, France, Chile, Italy, Mexico, Japan, South Korea

# *Highlighted Programs*

## Professional Immersion Experience

The Professional Immersion Experience is designed for students aged 18 and above who want to enhance their language skills while gaining practical, real-world experience. This program combines classroom learning with an immersive placement at a local business, giving students valuable insight into professional life abroad.

Program features:

- Language classes in English
- A guaranteed volunteer placement (1– 4 hours per week) aligned with the student's interests and skills
- A wide range of opportunities in charity work, including senior support, animal care, food banks, community outreach, environmental conservation, fundraising, and event assistance
- Full academic and administrative support before and during placement
- Self-study sessions on career essentials
- A letter of recommendation provided at the end of the program
- Placement test and completion certificate
- Opportunities to build communication, cultural, and career skills in real-world settings

Students can start any Monday throughout the year and enroll for a minimum of 12 weeks. The structure includes four weeks of language preparation followed by an eight-week volunteer placement, allowing participants to apply their classroom learning in a professional and socially impactful context.

# Accommodation in Chicago

## Homestay information

- **Things students need to bring:** Personal items to make your room feel like home, prescription medication
- **Services included:** Bed linen, towels, telephone use for emergencies, students need to make sure to discuss laundry with their host family after arrival as laundry facilities will depend on your individual homestay
- **Extra cost of services:** No
- **Meals provided:** Depends on booking type
  **Breakfast:** Breakfast is usually a light meal consisting of cereal, fruit, toast, juice, or coffee. Hosts will usually ask you to prepare your own breakfast
  **Lunch:** You will be responsible for buying your own lunch at school, from a local restaurant, or the local shops
  **Dinner:** You will usually eat dinner with your host, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host
  NOTE: Meals provided will differ depending on whether you have selected 14 meals per week or 7 meals per week. If you have booked 7 meals per week, you are responsible for buying your own dinner and you may not have access to the kitchen at certain times (Depending upon your booking type)
- **Will the homestay arrange to pick up the student from the airport?** No
- **Tranport to school:** Your host will help you to find your way to and from school on your first day and will show you how to use public transport
- **Where are the homestays located?** Chicago & suburban areas
- **Additional information:** Homestays are 50–70 minutes of commute time to the school

## Private accommodation

Only students aged 18 and over are permitted to go into private accommodation. If you are 16 or 17 years old you will be housed in a homestay and should be home curfew to 22:00.

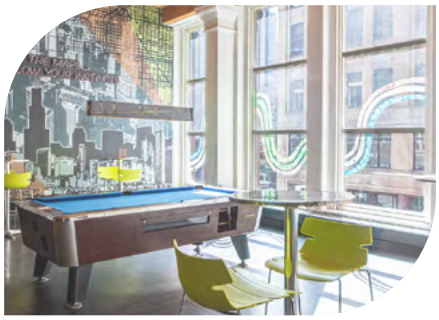
**If you are over 18 here are some tips if you want to find your own apartment or share a house with friends:**

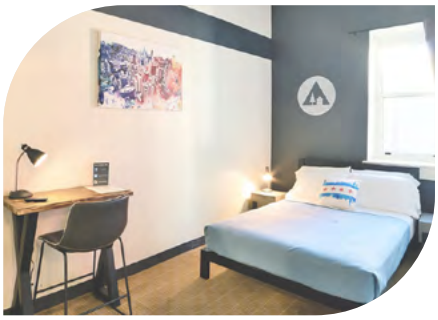
- Check whether the accommodation you are going to see is in a safe area
- Make sure the accommodation is safe and has current fire/safety checks
- Take a friend with you when you go to view any accommodation
- If you are sharing an apartment or house find out who has access to it
- Make sure the accommodation has a recent safety certificate – all cookers are electric fires are safe and smoke alarms are fitted
- Make sure your room is secure and that you have insurance for your laptop, camera, TV, and other valuable items
- Keep in mind that in addition to rent, you may be responsible for paying for additional fees and taxes

# Accommodation in Chicago

## HI Hostel

This is an Academic Year Abroad Residence





- **Address:** 24 East Ida B Wells Drive, Chicago, Illinois, 60605
- **Website:** HI Hostel Chicago
  Disclaimer: All the information on this residence file is for reference. Please contact your advisor for the latest information
- **Accommodation type:** HI Hostel offers two types of room choices for students. Studio rooms which offer private bathroom and private kitchen and single rooms with shared bathroom with a maximum of 4 students. The single room option offer shared kitchen and shared communal living area. Rooms will be in flats of 2 - 4 Kaplan students, mixed nationalities and mixed genders
- **Services available:** Wi-Fi, Laundry facilities
- **Extra cost of services:** $6 per load of laundry
- **Bedroom:** Queen bed, desk, chair and storage. All bedding is provided and included in the price. Towels and hairdryers are not provided
- **Kitchen:** Oven / hob / microwave, fridge, freezer and all crockery and utentils provided
- **Facilities:** Bike storage, ping pong table and pool table
- **Extra cost of facilities:** All included in the weekly price
- **Famous landmarks nearby:** Millennium Park, Crown Fountain, Chicago Theatre
- **Visitors or guests allowed?** Yes; no overnight guests
- **Noise restrictions?** Yes, after 23:00
- **Smoking allowed in the residence?** No, outside in the designated smoking area only
- **24-hour security?** Yes
- **Room cleaning:** Cleaned on arrival only; students can request fresh bedding sets at reception
- **Linen changing:** On arrival only
- **Availability:** Over 18s only - available from 29/08/2026 to 28/08/2027
- **Minimum number of weeks:** One week
- **Check-in and check-out times:** Check in from 15:00 on Saturday and anytime on Sunday. All check outs must be on Saturday by 10am.
- **Room deposit?** No, but all students must sign a Code of Conduct on their first day

| Time to... | By foot | By bike | By bus | By metro/train |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The school | 27 minutes | 11 minutes | 17 minutes | 5 minutes |
| The nearest café / restaurant | 4 minutes | 2 minutes | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest supermarket | 9 minutes | 3 minutes | 6 minutes | N/A |
| The nearest post office | 11 minutes | 5 minutes | 11 minutes | N/A |
| The nearest ATM / bank: | 4 minutes | 1 minute | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest sports center | 2 minutes | 1 minute | N/A | N/A |
| The nearest hospital | 50 minutes | 16 minutes | 17 minutes | 9 minutes |
| The city center | 30 minutes | 15 minutes | 16 minutes | 9 minutes |
| The main airport | N/A | N/A | 45 minutes | 14 minutes |

For the most up-to-date transport prices, please visit the CTA Website

KAPLAN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGES
Academic Year Abroad
STUDY ENGLISH LONGER
SUCCEED FOR LIFE

# Chicago

## Why choose an Academic Year Abroad in Chicago with Kaplan?

Academic Year Abroad students have access to exclusive benefits.

1. Achieve the **fastest English progression** with Kaplan's exclusive Guaranteed Progression, while mastering fluency across reading, writing, listening, and especially speaking, **with personalized academic guidance every step of the way.**
2. Internationally recognized curriculum aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference.
3. Study for **6, 9, or 11 months** and experience life in one of the world's most **vibrant English-speaking cities.**
4. **Engage with online guest experts** at exclusive online seminars hosted for Academic Year Abroad students.
5. **Start strong and finish proud** with a **bespoke orientation** and **graduation ceremony.**
6. Enjoy **direct and free access** to morning classes.
7. Keep learning beyond the classroom with **12 months of access to K+ Learning Space** after your course ends.
8. Feel at home abroad with **total support from our team: personalized academic guidance from day one, accommodation services tailored to your preferences,** and a lively social calendar.
9. **Get to know the city from day one** with a warm welcome and guided tour.
10. Join a **global community of over 1.2 million learners** who choose Kaplan each year.
11. **Upgrade your academic and professional CV** by investing in a trusted institution since 1938. Kaplan is widely known worldwide for **educational excellence and student success.**

# What programs are available in Kaplan Chicago?

## Language & Culture

- Intensive
- Semi-Intensive
- Multi-Destination Year




# Your course timeline

| Start dates | End dates | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *6 months* | *9 months* | *11 months* |
| 5th January 2026 | 19th June 2026 | 11th September 2026 | 20th November 2026 |
| 30th March 2026 | 11th September 2026 | 4th December 2026 | 12th February 2027 |
| 22nd June 2026 | 4th December 2026 | 26th February 2027 | 7th May 2027 |
| 21st September 2026 | 5th March 2027 | 28th May 2027 | 6th August 2027 |
| 9th November 2026 | 23rd April 2027 | 16th July 2027 | 24th September 2027 |

| Start dates | 1st Holiday Start (All courses) | 2nd Holiday Start (9 month courses) | 2nd Holiday Start (11 month courses) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 5th January 2026 | 30th March 2026 | 8th June 2026 | 14th September 2026 |
| 30th March 2026 | 8th June 2026 | 14th September 2026 | 21st December 2026 |
| 22nd June 2026 | 14th September 2026 | 21st December 2026 | 21st December 2026 |
| 21st September 2026 | 21st December 2026 | 29th March 2027 | 24th May 2027 |
| 9th November 2026 | 21st December 2026 | 29th March 2027 | 24th May 2027 |

Methodology

# How do we help you learn English quickly?

**We are proud to offer English programs built on a solid, research-based methodology designed to help you improve your English confidently and quickly. With our carefully structured syllabus, you can join at any point and continue progressing smoothly, with teaching materials tailored to your level and learning style.**

Each Academic Year Abroad program is structured with carefully designed lessons aimed at achieving your specific objectives:

***Language Foundation*** (20 lessons, 15 hours)
Build your core English skills with 15 hours of General English per week, using our spiral, blended curriculum aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference. Lessons are topic-based and communicative, designed to boost fluency, confidence, and real-world language use.

***Language in Action Workshops*** (4 lessons, 3 hours)
Take your English beyond the classroom with interactive workshops each week focused on communication, collaboration, and real-life tasks. These sessions help you practice spoken English in creative, practical contexts.

***Specialist Skills*** (8 lessons, 6 hours)
Enhance your learning with focused classes, tailored to your needs and objectives. Ideal for students looking to improve in targeted areas, these sessions focus on specific skills like pronunciation, writing, exam preparation or Business English.

***K+ Extra*** (3 lessons, 2.25 hours)
Students enhance their fluency with K+ Extra online resources supporting personalized language learning.

# *Learn about every program*

# Language & Culture

**Discover the joy of learning English abroad like never before.** Transform your language skills as you embark on a program designed to immerse you in one (or more) exciting destinations around the world. This is more than just a course. During this enriching year, we blend expert language training with cultural immersion, global friendships, and unforgettable experiences.

## *Intensive*

**35 lessons per week = 26.25 hours**

Want to master every aspect of English? This course sharpens your skills in speaking, reading, writing, listening, grammar, and pronunciation, while also expanding your vocabulary for effective communication in real-world settings.

| Lessons | Number of Lessons | Total Hours |
|---|---|---|
| Language Foundation | 20 lessons | 15 hours |
| Language in Action Workshops | 4 lessons | 3 hours |
| Specialist Skills | 8 lessons | 6 hours |
| K+ Extra Online | 3 sessions | 2.25 hours |

## *Semi-Intensive*

**27 lessons per week = 20.25 hours**

Strengthen your foundational English skills while enjoying plenty of free time to explore your new city and have fun with friends! Join our social activities, dive into local culture, and make the most of every moment on this unforgettable adventure.

| Lessons | Number of Lessons | Total Hours |
|---|---|---|
| Language Foundation | 20 lessons | 15 hours |
| Language in Action Workshops | 4 lessons | 3 hours |
| K+ Extra Online | 3 sessions | 2.25 hours |

## *Kaplan Multi-Destination Year*

**12 weeks Chicago, 12 weeks Boston, 12 weeks Vancouver.**

Study English in a 6, 9, or 11-month program spanning your choice of school locations.

Students travel the globe to create their own dream Academic Year Abroad by combining two, three or four locations, each destination with a minimum of twelve weeks.

In each location, students are immersed in comprehensive language development focusing on improving all language skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, while living the language through a variety of cultural immersion activities.

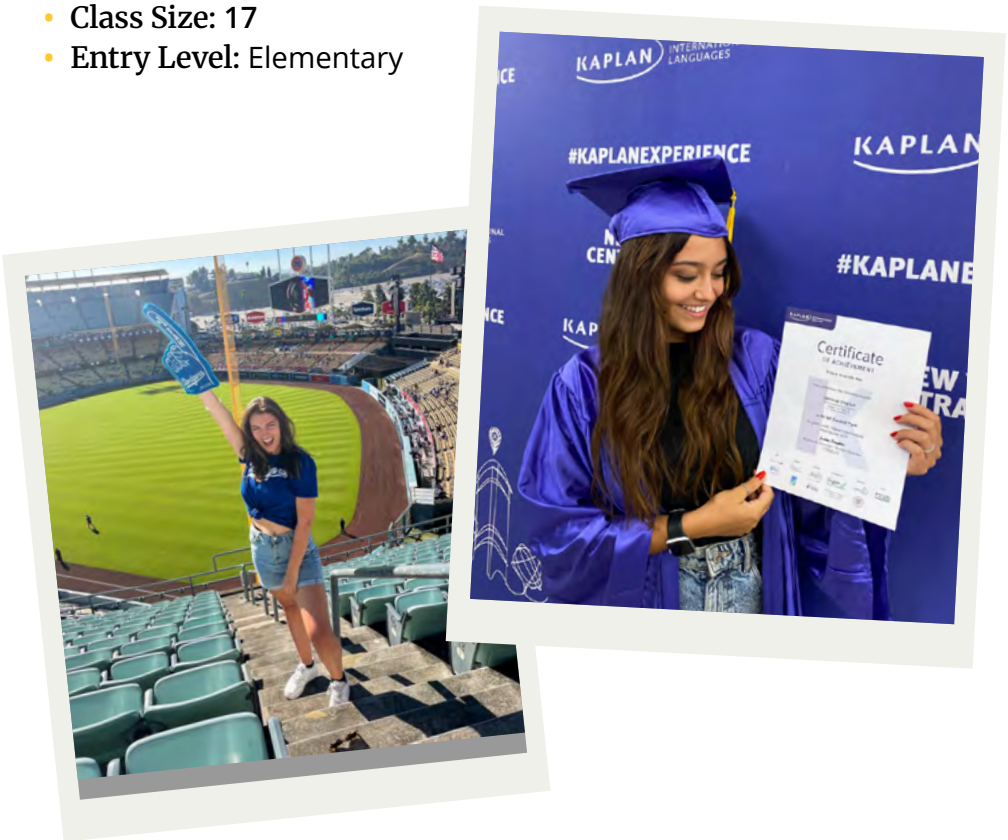
Visa regulations permitting, students can opt to build their own vacation breaks between 12-week quarters to experience even more of what the destination has to offer.

Example Multi-Destination Year itinerary: Nine months North America Coast to Coast

Discover Chicago's iconic lakefront skyline, the cobblestoned charm of historic Boston, and the natural wonders of British Columbia.

### *Key facts*

- **Minimum Age:** 16
- **Class Size: 17**
- **Entry Level:** Elementary



Accommodation

# Accommodation Options

**This program offers special accommodation packages.**

Get in touch with our team to get a personalized quote depending on your preferences, whether you choose a residence apartment to live with other Kaplan international students, or host families, making the most of integrating into the lives of our local families in the city.

***Follow the hearts and explore our previous accommodation section for more details.***

*«I gained a lot of friends from different parts of the world, and I enjoyed every activity from Kaplan, especially the outdoor activities such as picnics by the beach."*

- **Gerald R, Kaplan Chicago student from the Philippines.**

# Health & Safety

**Medical insurance** | All students must have travel and medical insurance for the duration of their stay in the US. Kaplan offers you a low-cost Travel and Medical Insurance Plan that we advise you to take. If you are not taking Kaplan Insurance, you are required to show proof of alternative medical insurance. If not taking Kaplan Insurance, please make sure your insurance includes evacuation and repatriation.

**If you get sick** | If you get sick while in the US you should visit a doctor. You can ask the Kaplan staff or your host where the neareset doctor is. If you have a minor illness you can ask staff at a local pharmacist for advice. Remember to bring any relevant insurance or medical documentation with you. You may be required to register with a doctor.

**Protecting your belongings** | We strongly recommend you take out insurance for your personal belongings, especially cameras, music players, mobile phones and laptops. Personal items cannot be covered by Kaplan homestay or residence insurance.

**Prescription medication** | Remember to bring enough of your prescribed medication with you as US pharmacists will not fill a foreign prescription. International customs agents may ask you questions about your medication upon your departure or arrival, so be sure to pack it carefully. Bring any important medical records (blood type, prescriptions, x-rays) that might be useful for medical care abroad as well as contact information for your health care providers at home.

### *Medical costs*

Medical costs are at the discretion of your local doctor or hospital. Minimum medical costs are as follows:

- **Consultation with a doctor:** $60
- **Prescriptions at a pharmacy:** $25 per item
- **Dental treatment:** $150
- **Eye test or new glasses:** $150

### *Emergency services*

Call **911** in case of fire, medical emergency or if you need the police.

## *Laws*

- No one under the age of 21 in the US may buy or consume tobacco or alcohol, including beer and wine. It is against the law to buy tobacco or alcohol for someone you know is under the age of 21
- Driving under the influence of alcohol is a very serious crime and police make regular random checks
- You will need international ID to enter bars, clubs or pubs (e.g.passport, ID card, driving licence)
- Buying, selling and using drugs is illegal

# Local Customs

- Women in the US are equal to men and should always be treated fairly
- American people talk to strangers in public areas. This is a great way to practice English, but caution should be taken. You should not give out your address and telephone number, or accept inappropriate invitations
- "Please" and "thank you" are very important words! Always use them if you ask someone to do something for you, or if they help you or give you information
- The US is a culturally diverse nation where people of all ethnic backgrounds are treated equally
- People in North America leave a tip for good service in restaurants, hair salons and other places. The tip rate at most restaurants is about 20-22% of the bill and is not usually included. Fast-food is not tipped unless it is delivered. Porters in stations, airports and hotels should be tipped approximately $1 per bag. Taxi drivers are generally given a 15-20% tip

# Kaplan International Languages Rules

- If you leave your Kaplan International Languages course without informing us, your Form I-20 (if applicable) will be terminated and you may fall out of status
- You must attend all classes. If you do not attend your representative will be informed. If you do not then improve your attendence you may be issued a notice of expulsion
- Be on time for all your lessons
- Always tell Kaplan International Languages if you are going to be absent from school for any reason and tell your host if you are going away overnight
- If you commit a criminal offence or have to be severely disciplined you will be sent home. We will also inform the immigration authorities

## US public holidays

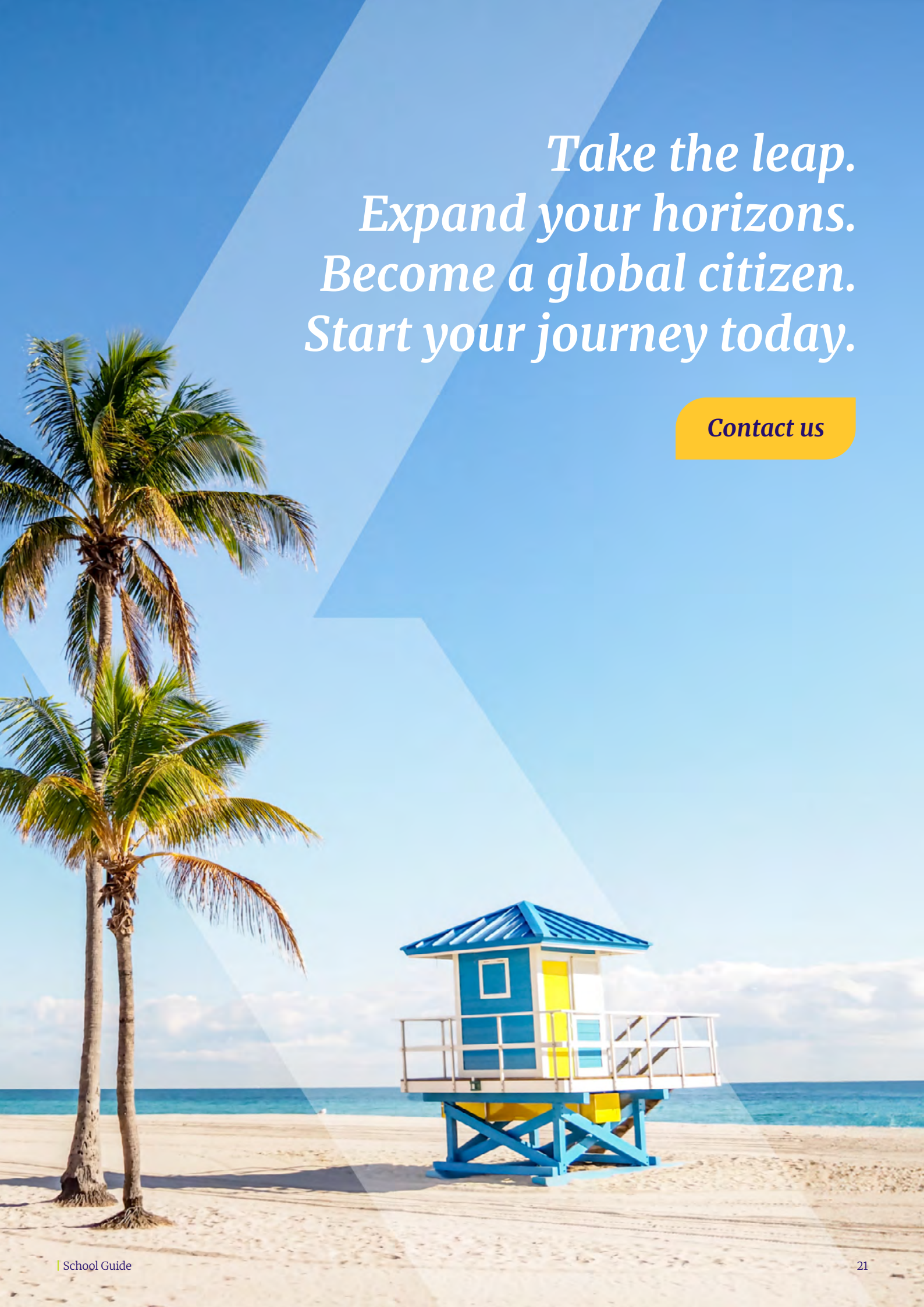
| | |
|---|---|
| New Year | 1-Jan-26 |
| Martin Luther King Day | 19-Jan-26 |
| Memorial Day | 25-May-26 |
| Juneteenth | 19-Jun-26 |
| Independence Day | 3-Jul-26 |
| Labor Day | 7-Sep-26 |
| Thanksgiving | 26-Nov-26 |
| Day after Thanksgiving | 27-Nov-26 |
| Christmas Day | 25-Dec-26 |
| Day After Christmas Day | 28-Dec-26 |

The above dates are observed as holidays in the year. If you arrive on a week where the Monday is a holiday, your first day of school will be a Tuesday

# Holiday Policy

**Academic Year Abroad students** | There are preset session breaks for all Academic Year Abroad students. These dates depend on your start date and cannot be changed. Please check with the school if you are not sure when these are.

**School closures** | The school will be closed from December 21st 2026 to December 28th 2026 with an additional closure for New Years on January 1st 2027.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Expand your horizons.
Become a global citizen.
Start your journey today.
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