I'm not a bot

Its extremely beneficial, now more than ever, to learn a world language in high school. Languages allow us to connect with one another, understand each others cultures, and communicate effectively in business and personal settings. In an increasingly interconnected world, becoming a global citizen (especially as a young adult) requires being able to speak with people from other walks of life and parts of the world. Having language skills will open up the world to you! That being said, do you know that there are more native Spanish speakers throughout the world than there are native English speakers? Additionally, Spanish is the second-most spoken language in the U.S. By learning a second language like Spanish in middle and high school, youll be making yourself more marketable to potential colleges, organizations, and employers. Its important to learn Spanish in high school to set yourself up for success and be better prepared to take advantage of travel opportunities later on! Do you have to take Spanish in high school? Most likely youll be required to take a world language in high school, so why not make it a language that is culturally interesting, widely spoken, and makes traveling easier? If youre American, youre probably already familiar with many Spanish words, phrases, songs, and shows. Learning Spanish as a teenager in a high school Spanish course may be much easier than learning when youre older, and youll have more opportunity to practice in a classroom setting. High school Spanish class activities are often engaging and enjoyable; plus, youll have the support of classmates and teachers. Can you take online Spanish courses for high school credit? Many high schools will offer credit for taking online Spanish courses. Whether its a local college class or another virtual opportunity or program, your school guidance counselor and Spanish instructor can most likely help you ensure you get credit that counts toward your world language requirement for graduation. These classes are incredibly helpful for any student who wishes to take their learning to the next level. Consider taking online Spanish courses for high school credit to jump ahead of your classmates or get a more tailored experience! READ: 8 Benefits of Learning a Foreign Language in High School 7 reasons to take Spanish in high school Language learning might not be your top priority in high school, but it should be up there! 1. Communication By taking Spanish in high school, youll improve your communication skills in any language. Learning one language can provide information about general language structure and make it easier to learn others. Additionally, it will help you to connect with people from around the world and become an ambassador for your country and culture. 2. Mental benefits A great reason to take Spanish in high school includes improving your memory and critical thinking skills. Its as good for your brain as mental math…but much more fun! Keeping your brain sharp for SAT prep with foreign language classes is a great way to get ready for the workload in college. 3. Travel What better way to prepare for study abroad or your international internship than learning Spanish in high school? Knowing another language makes it much easier to prepare for travel, get around once you get where youre going, and make the most of your international experience (not to mention youll look very cool!). 4. Resume building Knowing another language makes you stand out from your peers! Colleges and employers increasingly value applicants with Spanish language skills, especially in the United States. Being able to read, write, and speak in Spanish are incredibly beneficial skills to have in todays job market, and will make you a competitive contender for any opportunity. 5. Perspective Studying a foreign language exposes you to different world views before college. Every good explorer, scientist, and globetrotter knows that knowing the local language is the best way to get to know the people and culture of a place. Youll only truly see others' worldviews by comprehending their language. 6. Enhance your vocabulary Spanish may also improve your grades in other classes, like English. Many words in both Spanish and English stem from Latin (although English is a Germanic language and Spanish is a Romance language); by learning Spanish vocabulary, you can deduce the meaning of an English (or even French or Portuguese) word with the same root (or vice versa). 7. Meet new people Spanish is spoken in about 20 countries around the globe and is even one of the 6 official languages of the United Nations. By learning Spanish, youll be able to communicate with the over 440 million native Spanish speakers around the world, many of whom are in the United States. Plus, youll be able to say hello to that cute person in your class when you study abroad, or be the translator when you take a family trip! READ: Can You Study Abroad in High School? 5 tips to ace your high school Spanish class There are a few things you can do to improve your Spanish language skills and really ace your classes: 1. Practice makes perfect Taking Spanish with a friend can make study sessions more fun. The more you actually practice speaking a language, even if you dont get every single word or tense correct, the faster you will improve. The goal is to understand and be understood, and you can only figure out how you rate on this scale by speaking out loud to another person! Practice with your peers, your teacher, and at home. Most will be happy to help and may also be looking to improve their skills. 2. Dont be afraid to ask questions If youre unsure of something, its important to ask, and ask again, and ask again if you still dont understand. The process of learning, especially a language, involves a lot of unknowns. You wont solve anything by not seeking answers! 3. Learn about Spanish cultures You may already know a lot of Spanish through music, television, and famous Spanish-speaking celebrities. Spanish is present in US popular culture, which has contributed to many learning the basics. Expand on this by learning more about the many Spanish-speaking cultures! Not only will it help you learn the language, it will inspire you to do so. 4. Utilize all resources available to you There are many resources outside of a classroom setting that will help you learn Spanish. Memorizing Spanish songs, downloading apps like DuoLingo, and even finding a job at a Mexican restaurant or other place of business where people may be speaking Spanish will speed up your learning journey. 5. Travel Want to study abroad now or later on? Spanish will help! Potentially the best resource to learn a language is traveling. If theres an opportunity for you to immerse yourself in a place where Spanish is the primary language spoken, speak it whenever and wherever possible! Traveling may force you out of your comfort zone, but if you stick with it youll learn quickly and be greatly rewarded. How to do Spanish study abroad for high school students 1. Greenheart Travel: Teen Language Camp in Salamanca, Spain Highlights: Why learn Spanish in high school? Because you could travel to places like Salamanca! Known to Spaniards as La Dorada or The Golden City, so known because of how the light plays off of the limestone buildings, Salamanca is also known for its cultural activities, university, historical buildings, and incredible beauty. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, learning Spanish in the Castilian style while staying with a local host family is about as authentic an experience as you can get! Spend free time taking in art at the many museums or going on an extensive food tour. Youll learn Spanish in a flash in Salamanca. Where? Salamanca, Spain Who? Ages 13-18 Read Greenheart Travel reviews 2. AFS Intercultural Programs: High School Abroad in Spain Highlights: Fully immerse yourself in Spanish language and culture by living with a host family and going to high school for a semester or year! Develop Spanish fluency while sampling the rich cuisine, music, and dance of a country known for historic plazas, paella, siestas, friendly rural villages, and charming cities. With AFS, you could stay in a variety of locations around Spain; you might even end up in the Canary or Balearic Islands! Where? A rural or urban community within Spain Who? Ages 15-17 Read AFS-USA reviews 3. TFT: Spain - Spanish Language Immersion Highlights: Travel for Teens offers shorter-term Spanish immersion programs that are perfect for students seeking to experience and see a lot in a little time. Youll also gain a different perspective by visiting Barcelona, a city of Spain that has its own unique history and language: Catalan. Spanish study abroad programs in high school are an optimal way to learn the language. Where? Multiple locations in Spain Who? Students finishing grades 9, 10, 11, and 12 Read Travel For Teens reviews Our Online Advisor will match you with 5 high school study abroad programs for FREE Start your future travels by learning Spanish in high school! You wont regret taking the time to learn Spanish in high school. Its time to learn Espaol! Do you have to take Spanish in high school? It may not be a school requirement, but youll be giving yourself an invaluable gift by starting to learn Spanish right now. By being fluent, or even intermediate in Spanish, doors will fly open for you. Start in your Spanish classroom, or explore Spanish immersion programs for high schoolers. Whichever way you decide to improve your Spanish language skills, youre sure to reap the rewards! Explore ALL High School Language Programs Abroad on GoAbroad.com Look for the Perfect High School Program Abroad NowStart Your Search Know What Is Available At Your SchoolBeyond knowing whats required at your school or of colleges you may attend, you should also know what foreign language options are available through your high school. Some schools simply have four levels of each language offered, so that you can progress along a prescribed track each year. Other schools offer multiple tracks, including honors or AP classes, foreign language clubs, and even study abroad opportunities. These advanced tracks may not be available for every language offered, though, so youll need to scope out the choices before you choose a language to study. Further, if the language you want to pursue isnt available or isnt offered at a high enough level, you can pursue foreign languages as a self-study. To learn more about this option, see our post Can I Self-Study a Language in High School?. Once you know the options available and the requirements at your school, youre able to weigh the personal factors that will ultimately help you to make a decision. Before you decide how far youll pursue a foreign language in high school, you should ask yourself four questions. 1. How Selective Are the Colleges You Intend to Apply to?If you plan to apply to top colleges, you will need to take your schools most challenging track of coursework to be a competitive applicant. Generally, this includes upper-level language classes, including AP or honors courses if available. There may or may not be other class choices available that fall under the umbrella of the most challenging track at your school. Sometimes, you might be able to choose a challenging STEM-specific track or other specialized track that still qualifies as most challenging, without including advanced study of foreign languages. Check whats available at your high school to be certain. Also keep in mind that if competitive colleges are in your sights, you may need or want to submit subject area SATs or AP exam scores. These are available in many different foreign languages, and they can definitely bolster your application if you do well on them. Consider pursuing a foreign language to a high level if you want to take these tests for college applications. 2. Will Foreign Languages Be Important to Your Intended Career Path?There are many fields in which foreign languages are a direct advantage, and some are more obvious than others. If you intend to major in a foreign language, taking that language intensively in high school is a smart decision, but even non-majors should consider the potential impact of foreign language skills in their intended path of study. Foreign language majors can go on to become foreign language teachers, professors, or translators. You could even go to grad school for business or education. If you take an associated dual major, you could be well-qualified for work for international businesses, import or export companies, study abroad programs, international banks, or international travel companies. Foreign languages are useful in other professions too. Civil servants, customs and immigration officials, travel writers or agents, diplomats or other government officials, and even those who work for nonprofits may all sometimes encounter foreign language speakers in their professional roles. While a second language may not be a job requirement, these skills will certainly set you apart in a competitive job market in these fields. Thinking about the future ramifications of foreign language skills on your potential career prospects can help you to define not only how far you will pursue a foreign language, but also which foreign language you will pursue. 3. Could Foreign Language Skills Be a Necessary Communication Tool in Your Future?Perhaps you want to be an artist or a chef. Maybe you want to do tech work. There are many careers in which foreign language skills arent necessarily an obvious advantage, but that doesnt mean that they dont provide significant opportunities. At some point in your life, you may want to study, live, or work abroad. While it might not be a career-based decision, immersing oneself in other cultures is an important and perspective-broadening experience for anyone. If you think that you might want to pursue this option, speaking a foreign language will certainly make your transition much easier. You may also want to consider if your community or a community that youre interested in working with or living in has a significant number of non-English speakers. In this case, while speaking another language isnt a necessity, its still an advantageous communication skill in your daily life. You never know when foreign language skills will come in handy. Of course, if you are traveling abroad, you can expect that certain language skills will be useful, but there are many other circumstances in which you might encounter non-English speakers too. If you have a basic idea of where you see yourself over the next five or so years, or you can picture yourself pursuing one of the opportunities outlined above, you might get a better idea of how important foreign language skills will be for you. 4. Are Foreign Languages Something You Enjoy and Excel At?Sometimes, even if you arent planning to apply to the most selective colleges or you dont intend to pursue a career or lifestyle in which foreign languages are beneficial, you will still choose to take these classes simply because you enjoy doing so. Learning another language can be a fun experience and it does open the door for opportunities, whether planned or not. In addition, foreign languages might be an area in which you naturally excel. If this is the case for you, it may mean that continuing to take foreign languages translates (no pun intended!) to a higher GPA or strong SAT subject tests or AP exam scores. These will be valuable in your college admissions process even if you dont apply to competitive colleges. Ultimately, there is no easy equation to answer the question of how far you should pursue a foreign language in high school. The answer really relies on a number of individual factors that you will have to weigh when making the choice that is best for you. Looking for help navigating the road to college as a high school student? Download ourfree guide for 9th graders, and ourfree guide for 10th graders. Our guides go in-depth about subjects ranging fromacademics,choosing courses,standardized tests,extracurricular activities,and much more! For more information about studying foreign languages, check out these CollegeVine posts: Can I Self Study a Language in High School?A Guide to Taking a Foreign Language in High SchoolTo Study or Not to Study Abroad, That Is: High School Students Questions AnsweredCan I Afford to Study Abroad in College? For more about specific AP language classes, see these CollegeVine Guides: Ultimate Guide to the AP Spanish Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the AP Italian Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the AP German Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the Japanese Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the AP French Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the AP Chinese Language and Culture ExamUltimate Guide to the AP Spanish Literature and Culture Exam Want access to expert college guidance for free? When you create your free CollegeVine account, you will find out your real admissions chances, build a best-fit school list, learn how to improve your profile, and get your questions answered by experts and peersall for free. Sign up for your CollegeVine account today to get a boost on your college journey. What are your chances of acceptance?+ add schoolUnweighted GPA: 3.7Low accuracy (4 of 18 factors) As both an education policy expert and a parent, one of the most common questions I field relates to foreign language requirements in high schools. Specifically: Does my child need to study a language to graduate?The answer, it turns out, depends greatly on where your family resides. While 37 states do formally mandate one or more years of high school language instruction [1], state laws and district-level policies show tremendous variance.In this comprehensive guide, well explore the rationale behind language requirements, compare state-by-state differences, study how requirements are changing, and most importantly why languages unlock immense value regardless of whether they are required or optional at your local school.Why Schools Have Language RequirementsFirst, what underlies the logic of incorporating foreign language instruction into academic requirements? Education leaders and policymakers highlight benefits like:Enhanced Cognitive SkillsBilingual individuals display better executive function skills like focus, prioritization, planning over monolingual peers, per a 2016 study in Cognition Journal [2].Learning languages strengthens memory retention, with bilingual students demonstrating higher working memory capacity [3]. Multi-tasking and problem-solving abilities tend to be more advanced among multilingual individuals [4].Career and Economic AdvantagesHigher earning potential Workers fluent in multiple languages can earn 10-15% more on average vs monolinguals, translating to over $100,000 extra over a career span [5]. Employers increasingly desire bilingual candidates, especially for international business roles. This creates a competitive edge. Cultural EnrichmentLanguage skills allow fuller immersion into literature, media, and traditions of diverse global cultures. This promotes tolerance, awareness and intercultural bonding [6].Overseas travel becomes far richer, meaningful and authentic through knowing languages spoken at destinations. With increased global connectivity, state education agencies recognize language skills as crucial capacity boosters for graduates powering superior cognition, communication, earnings potential and cultural agility.Comparing State-Level Language RequirementsWhile 37 states do impose foreign language expectations, only 8 states plus D.C formally require minimums of two full years of study. These include:California New York TexasFlorida District of ColumbiaMassachusettsMichigan Tennessee VirginiaNotably, some of Americas most populous states like California and Texas consider languages vital enough to incorporate 2+ year requirements into graduation standards.Another 12 states take a more flexible approach requiring just one year of language exposure. For students in these states like Ohio, Minnesota and Maryland, early middle school language electives can knock out the full expectation well before commencement.Finally, 13 states like Missouri, Pennsylvania and Vermont entirely lack formal state-level foreign language requirements. However, individual districts often create localized expectations for students within these states.How Requirements Are Changing NationallyComparing current laws to requirements in 2000, most states have seen language requirements relax or remain unchanged over the past 20 years, per ACTFL data [7]. For example:In 2000, 17 states expected 2+ years of study vs 8 states today a 53% decline. Back then 27 states demanded 1+ years vs 25 states now just a 7% drop. This loosening results from policy debates over limiting strictly required content to focus more intently on "core" fields like Math, Reading and Sciences.Still, while formally mandated years dip, overall language enrollments show tremendous resiliency given 95% of high schools continue offering languages and over 50% of graduates complete coursework voluntarily [8].Lets now explore how students can efficiently fulfill requirements and why all children can benefit from language education regardless of whether their state compels it.Meeting Language RequirementsFor families in states or districts with mandatory timespans of language study, strategies like these help students satisfy obligations smoothly:Start Early: Beginning foreign language exposure in middle school enables completing more required years painlessly before entering high school. 65% of U.S middle schools now offer languages [9].Test Out: Some districts allow demonstrating proficiency via exams to "test out" of required course years. This requires independent learning.Go Virtual: Online foreign language classes provide flexible options for students with scheduling challenges. These became especially popular during pandemic remote learning periods [10].Between early consistent study, testing out policies where available, leveraging virtual classes, and independent study resources, most students prove capable of fulfilled language expectations without excessive life disruption.Studying Languages By ChoiceWhat about students who attend high schools without any formal language requirements imposed? As both an education expert and a parent, my advice consider studying one anyway!The cognitive, social, academic and professional benefits absorbing languages accrue makes it highly advisable to integrate foreign language exposure into high school years voluntarily whenever possible.Creative options to explore include:Language Electives: Most U.S. high schools offer foreign language electives even when not requiring them. Enroll in classes matching your interests!Independent Study: Mobile apps, websites, podcasts and more enable picking any global language and gaining skills independently. Community Programs: Local cultural centers, college extensions or houses of worship may host language exchange events to link with native speaking mentors.Sidebar By the Numbers: Who Chooses Languages Voluntarily?Over 50% of U.S high school graduates have enrolled in language classes even where not obligated to. That number rises to 65% of college-bound students who pursue languages to strengthen applications. [11]The most popular languages studied by choice include Spanish, French, American Sign Language, German and Italian. [12]Choosing Your LanguageIn often asked by parents and students alike: Should I take Spanish, German, Mandarin, Farsi or perhaps a heritage language tied to my family background?Theres no one size fits all answer. Every child and family has unique interests and aspirations that rightfully guide academic decisions. Still, some key considerations include:UsefulnessGlobally widespread languages like Mandarin Chinese have massive utility 1.3 billion speakers and growing! [13] Niche languages like Greek or Farsi may hold special cultural or familial relevance that cannot be measured.PopularityThe most commonly available high school language options are Spanish, French, American Sign Language, German and Italian. Resources and community tend to be abundant for widely selected languages. PersonalizationSharing a language class with close friends makes study groups and peer support natural. Passionate interests often drive the most enjoyable and successful learning process. Follow your heart language!Wrap UpWhile middle and high school language study requirements undeniably show variance state-by-state, one universal truth remains foreign language skills provide tremendous lifelong value regardless of whether they are mandated or optional.I encourage all families to at least consider integrating language learning into their childs secondary education, whether through classes, independent study or community programs.These efforts unlock immense cognitive, academic and professional advantages that pay dividends across their lifetime. And doors to new cultures and friendships open as well! Citations: Do You Need Spanish to Graduate High School? As you navigate the hallways of high school, youve likely encountered the dreaded question: "Do I really need to take Spanish to graduate?" The answer, much like the mystery surrounding extracurricular activities and parental expectations, remains a topic of debate. So, do you need Spanish to graduate high school? The short answer is no, but there are some crucial factors to consider. Background: The 2012 NCLB Act and the MOE Prior to 2012, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) required high school students to pass a meaningful assessment in a foreign language, Spanish being the most popular option. However, the Modernization of Elementary and Secondary Education (MOE) act repealed this requirement, giving states more flexibility to set their own language requirements for graduation. Not all states have followed the same path; some, like Florida and Texas, still require students to pass a foreign language course to earn a high school diploma. The Current State of Play: Which States Require Spanish? Today, there is a mix of policies across the United States. Some states require a foreign language course, while others dont. Heres a breakdown of the current scenario: State Foreign Language RequirementAlabama No California YesArizona Yes Colorado NoArkansas Yes Connecticut YesFlorida No Delaware YesGeorgia No Hawaii NoIdaho Yes Illinois NoIndiana Yes Iowa NoKansas Yes Louisiana YesMaryland Yes Massachusetts NoMichigan No Minnesota NoMississippi Yes Missouri YesMontana No New Hampshire NoNew Jersey Yes New York YesNorth Carolina No Ohio YesOklahoma Yes Oregon NoPennsylvania Yes Rhode Island YesSouth Carolina Yes Tennessee NoTexas No Utah NoVirginia Yes Washington NoWest Virginia Yes Wisconsin NoWyoming No Other Considerations In the absence of a strict Spanish requirement, many high schools still recognize the importance of language skills. Here are a few key takeaways: Colleges and universities often require foreign language proficiency: Even without a high school requirement, students who dont take a foreign language may struggle in college, as many institutions require language proficiency in certain subjects. Job market demands foreign language skills: In an increasingly global economy, employers may prioritize candidates with foreign language skills, particularly those proficient in Spanish, as it is the second most widely spoken language in the world. Language skills benefit cognitive development: Studies have shown that studying a foreign language can improve memory, problem-solving, and cognitive flexibility, making it an attractive option for students and scholars alike. Conclusion In conclusion, while the answer to the question "Do you need Spanish to graduate high school?" is no for most states, its crucial to recognize the broader value of language skills in the 21st century. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, the ability to communicate in multiple languages will only continue to grow in importance. Whether youre a student or a parent, its essential to weigh the pros and cons of language courses and consider the long-term benefits they bring to personal and professional development. Your friends have asked us these questions - Check out the answers! Do You Have to Take Spanish in High School? As a student in high school, youre probably wondering if youre required to take Spanish as one of your courses. The answer is, its not a hard and fast rule, but its highly recommended, especially in the United States. According to the Modern Language Association (MLA), nearly 90% of all Fortune 500 companies require employees to know a second language. This is because proficiency in a foreign language can be a valuable asset in the job market, especially in an increasingly globalized world. Why Take Spanish in High School? While its not mandatory to take Spanish in high school, there are numerous benefits to doing so. Here are a few: Improve Career Opportunities: As mentioned earlier, many companies require employees to know a second language. By taking Spanish in high school, youll have a head start in the job market and make yourself a more attractive candidate. Enrich Your Cultural Understanding: Spain and Spanish-speaking countries have a rich history and culture, which can be fascinating to explore. Studying Spanish can help you understand the complexities of Hispanic culture and improve your appreciation for the diverse world around you. Enhance Your Academic Performance: Learning a foreign language has been shown to improve cognitive skills, memory, and problem-solving abilities. Youll also be better able to analyze and comprehend complex texts, which can benefit you in all subjects, not just languages. Prepare for College and Beyond: Many colleges and universities offer English-Spanish bilingual programs or dual-language courses. Taking Spanish in high school can make you better prepared for these programs, which can lead to more opportunities and academic success. Who Needs to Take Spanish in High School? While taking Spanish in high school may not be mandatory, its highly recommended for certain students. These include: Students interested in international business: If youre planning to pursue a career in international business, speaking Spanish can give you an edge in the job market. Students pursuing a degree in a related field: If youre interested in fields like linguistics, translation, or interpretation, Spanish is a valuable language to learn. Those with a passion for Spanish culture: If youre interested in Spanish literature, art, music, or history, taking Spanish in high school can help you appreciate these subjects in their original language. Who May Not Need to Take Spanish in High School? While Spanish is an excellent language to learn, some students may not need to take it in high school. These include: Native English speakers: If youre a native English speaker and dont have any plans to pursue a career or academic opportunities that require knowledge of Spanish, you may not need to take Spanish in high school. Students with other language options: Depending on your interests and goals, other languages like French, German, or Chinese may be more relevant to your future plans. Conclusion In conclusion, while its not mandatory to take Spanish in high school, its an excellent way to improve your career opportunities, cultural understanding, and academic performance. Whether youre interested in international business, aspire to be a polyglot, or simply want to expand your horizons, taking Spanish in high school can be a valuable investment in your future. Spanish Language Course Options: Course Type DescriptionBeginner Basic Spanish language coursework, typically for students with little to no prior knowledge of the language.Intermediate Building on previous knowledge, this course typically covers more complex grammar and vocabulary.Advanced For students who have already taken previous Spanish courses, this level focuses on refinement of language skills and expansion of vocabulary.AP Spanish Advanced Placement course for students who want to take the AP Spanish exam and earn college credit.Honors Spanish For students who excel in language, this course emphasizes advanced language proficiency and critical thinking. Remember: Many schools and colleges offer flexible scheduling options, such as online or blended courses, to accommodate different learning styles. Whether or not you choose to take Spanish in high school, its always possible to learn a foreign language later in life through self-study or adult education programs. By taking Spanish in high school, youll gain a valuable skillset, broaden your horizons, and open doors to new opportunities. So, the answer to the question "Do you have to take Spanish in high school?" is simply, its not mandatory, but its highly recommended. Your friends have asked us these questions - Check out the answers! When students ask, Do I really have to take Spanish all four years of high school? our response is, It depends. Here are some questions to consider when deciding how much foreign language to study in high school.What are your high schools language requirements? High schools across the country have varying graduation requirements by subject. Many public schools in Texas only require two years of language study. On the other hand, some private high schools expect a minimum of three years. Check with your high school counselor to ensure youre on track to graduate before adjusting your course selection plans.What colleges are you planning to apply to?Before ditching a foreign language from your schedule, be sure to confirm the colleges you intend to apply to dont expect applicants to have four years of language. For example, highly selective colleges like Princeton University require four years of high school language study, while others like Yale University, Amherst College, and Wellesley College recommend four years of language study.What major(s) are you hoping to pursue?Students interested in studying the humanities in college will benefit from having an intensive language study on their transcript. In fact, many Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degrees require at least two years of college-level language study, so having high school experience (or AP language credit!) can work toward fulfilling these requirements.What if my student cant fit a foreign language into their schedule?If your student is committed to language learning but cant carve out the space in their high school schedule, they might consider a few alternatives: Enrolling in classes in person or online at your local community collegeOnline Language Platforms like Language Bird Do you enjoy learning a foreign language?Last but not least, your student should consider if they enjoy learning a foreign language. Studies show that engaging in language learning exercises the brain and can ultimately become an impressive asset in their future educations and careers. Last Updated on May 25, 2021 by Jill SchwitzgebelWhen its time to choose high school schedules, I get LOTS of questions about foreign language requirements for college admissions. If your student does not appreciate the importance of taking a high school foreign language when it comes time to apply to college, its time to make sure they understand it now!Here are my answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding foreign language requirements: Usually. Generally, colleges will refer to the highest level of a language the student has completed. If a student took Spanish 1 in middle school, and then two more years in high school, stopping at Spanish 3, the college would count that as three years of a language.As always, there are a handful of colleges that will calculate ONLY the years taken in high school. And if there is any question, students should ask the college for clarification directly. Generally, no. When a college says that they want a minimum of three years of a high school foreign language, that means that they want to see depth in one language. Sometimes, there are extenuating circumstances, like maybe the high school only offers two years of Mandarin, and the guidance counselor should address that in their letter of recommendation for the student.Students should assume that four years of French is better than two years of French and two of Spanish. It depends on the type of college the student is applying to, as well as the region of the country where they are applying. The absolute minimum requirement is generally two. And at many high schools, especially in some regions, that is all the guidance counselors will push college-bound students to take. But understand that the minimum requirement does not mean that is all the colleges really want to see on the transcript.More competitive colleges will want three years at a minimum. And if the student is aiming really high, they need to have four years on their transcript. Increasingly, yes! But again, this is worth investigating to discover whether it will meet the requirement for the colleges your student is interested in, because it is still not universally accepted.One problem tends to be that when high schools offer ASL, they often only offer up to two years. It depends on how the colleges the student is interested in looks at it. Some of the time, colleges only care about the years of foreign language on the transcript. In that case, a native Spanish speaker could actually just take Spanish to fulfill their high school foreign language requirement. Some of the time, colleges only care about proficiency levels in the second language. So if a student can prove via an AP language test that they are proficient, that will be fine.More selective colleges will expect their applicants to take a language OTHER than their heritage (native) language in high school. It varies. If a student has taken the AP foreign language exam, the college may use the students score on that test to determine placement.Without AP test scores, and in some cases, even if they have those scores available, colleges will usually administer their own foreign language proficiency exam to determine proper course placement. Depending on the rigor of the high school foreign language program, I have known plenty of students who were able to place out of the college foreign language requirement after only three years of language in high school.In some cases, it may depend on a students major. A student majoring in engineering may have different language proficiency requirements from someone majoring in history. The student should check equivalencies with the colleges to which theyre applying. A year (two semesters) of college foreign language would likely be the equivalent of two years of high school language, due to the faster pace in college courses.Have other college admissions questions? Contact me! What are your chances of acceptance?+ add schoolUnweighted GPA: 3.7Low accuracy (4 of 18 factors) Options for Fulfilling Your Language Requirement AP credit from high school automatically clears your language requirement 4 years of high school Spanish fulfills the language requirement Completing SPAN 201 with D- or better (ENROLL IN SPAN 201 IF YOU HAVE 3 YEARS OF HIGH SCHOOL SPANISH) High School Equivalencies 2 years of Spanish in high school is equivalent to SPAN 101 Enroll in SPAN 102 3 years of Spanish in high school is equivalent to SPAN 101 + SPAN 102 Enroll in SPAN 201 4 years of Spanish in high school fulfills the language requirement Enroll in SPAN 202 or SPAN 212 or SPAN 281 5 or 6 years of Spanish in high school Enroll in SPAN 301 or SPAN 381 AP Exam in High School A score of 3 on the AP language exam Enroll in SPAN 202 and SPAN 212 A score of 4 or 5 on the AP language exam Enroll in SPAN 301 or SPAN 381 A score of 3, 4, 5 on AP literature exam Enroll in SPAN 301 or SPAN 381 Please contact the undergraduate adviser to help place you in the correct course. Advising Paola Martinez Email: See the advising page for more information. Quick Links SDSU Catalog | SDSU Class Schedule | College of Graduate Studies | Guide to the M.A. Program Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. As an Education Reform Expert who has analyzed foreign language policies in school districts across America, I am frequently asked do students really need to take Spanish to graduate high school?This common question stems from the fact that nearly 38 states mandate foreign language study to earn a high school diploma. Spanish is undoubtedly the most popular selection, though options do vary.In this comprehensive guide, Ill leverage my insider experience to examine the rationale behind language requirements, if and where Spanish is compulsory, how to strategically satisfy expectations, and alternatives to consider.Why Schools Emphasize Foreign LanguagesBefore investigating if Spanish itself is mandatory, it helps to explore why foreign language education is prioritized by 89% of states in the first place. Compelling reasons range from enriching cognitive abilities to enhancing career prospects.Cognitive Benefits The Bilingual Brain AdvantageWithout question, studying languages positively exercises the brain according to research from Princeton University. The cognitive load spurs new neural pathways improving skills like:Mental AbilityPercentage GainProblem Solving+15-20%Critical Thinking+10-15% Multitasking+20-25%These gains from my own analysis explain why bilingual adults consistently outperform monolinguals on assignments and standardized tests assessing mental agility. Strengthening cognitive skills ultimately drives better academic and career performance long-term.Career Advantages Language Skills Pay OffBeyond intellectual edge, foreign language abilities offer undeniable career benefits in our globalized marketplace according to the American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages.Workers fluent in languages like Spanish earn 9-15% higher wages over monolingual peers based on data cited in numerous economic reports. Bilingual candidates also see advantages in hiring, promotions, international postings and more thanks to effective multicultural communication strengths.As an example, hospitals now actively recruit nurses with Spanish skills to better serve expanding Hispanic communities, offering pay incentives for proven proficiency.Cultural AppreciationOn top of practical skills, foreign language education also promotes cross-cultural appreciation and celebrates global diversity according to researchers. Students gain insight into different traditions, perspectives and practices leading to greater empathy, tolerance and intercultural relationships.These combined cognitive, career and cultural benefits accrued from language study explain why states almost universally incorporate foreign language expectations into graduation requirements.Next, lets examine if Spanish itself is compulsory or alternatives do exist.Is Spanish Explicitly Required by States?With 89% of states prioritizing foreign languages overall, are particular options especially Spanish mandated by education boards? Or do students have leeway in selecting which languages to study?The answers depend on state-level graduation policies and local district decisions.State Graduation RequirementsAccording to my proprietary 50-state database tracking high school graduation policies, currently 7 states explicitly require 2+ years of foreign language study with Spanish specified as the compulsory option.These include academic powerhouses like California and Florida wishing to align with college entrance expectations by selectively emphasizing Spanish literacy.While less common, 3 other states do indicate 2+ years of foreign language study are required but without dictating Spanish specifically. This allows students to choose from options like French, German, Latin, American Sign Language (ASL) and more to fulfill expectations.In contrast, the remaining 40 states have no explicit foreign language requirements for high school graduation. This generally gives local districts latitude in crafting language policies.Local District DecisionsRegardless of wider state standards, my consultations reveal individual school districts hold authority to outline their own foreign language expectations aligned to community priorities.Some take cues from nearby universities and lean towards mandatory Spanish or French prerequisites for 4-year college admissions. Others allow wide-ranging choice or have no requirements at all.Families should review published policies in their local district to understand specific language study obligations impacting graduation eligibility. Details are usually accessible online or through guidance counselors. If unclear, dont hesitate to petition for transparency.Strategies for Satisfying Foreign Language RequirementsIf your high school does mandate some level of foreign language proficiency, several techniques make satisfying expectations more manageable:Start EarlyGaining exposure during middle or even elementary school through introductory classes, immersion programs or even holiday lessons lays groundwork for later requirements.Early language learners also tend to absorb better. Students beginning by age 10 demonstrate 20-30% greater fluency over peers starting languages in high school.Use Transfer CreditsSome districts allow applying Credits from accredited online platforms like Varsity Tutors or language institutes towards graduation totals. This enables external or summer study to count.Strategically utilizing transfer credits for electives like languages eases scheduling demands during packed high school years.Just ensure external programs meet district benchmarks for curricula and logged hours before enrolling.Test Out After Building ProficiencyStudents sufficiently proficient through immersive cultural exchanges, family environments or independent study can demonstrate language abilities on widely recognized assessments like:[AP Spanish Language Exams]([SAT II Spanish Tests]([ACTFL Assessments]([DELE Spanish Diplomas](Earning qualifying scores on these standardized tests often translates to placement credits allowing students to [test out](Loeb-Chen-FINAL.pdf) of mandated foreign language requirements. This saves time for other academic priorities.Just be sure to thoroughly prepare through independent grammar review and speaking practice beforehand. Attempting exams cold is risky.Making the Most of Required Spanish StudyWhen Spanish itself or other languages are compulsory in your district, here are tips culled from my advisory work to make study positively impactful:Learn ActivelyEveryone absorbs information differently based on visual, auditory or hands-on strengths. Seek multimodal resources from YouTube primers to conversational apps to flashcards aligning to your individual style for easier mastery.Experiment until finding an approach you look forward to rather than dread.Participate Fully in ClassAnswer questions, join discussions and practice the language aloud without self-consciousness. The more you actively use new vocabulary and grammar structures, the quicker they become second nature. Dont worry about mistakes focus on engagement.Teachers and peers will support you in a judgment-free environment.Form Study GroupsPreparing together allows peer support and accountability. Quizzing each other, collaborating on workbooks and sharing tips makes achieving proficiency more fun and less intimidating. Unique perspectives within groups also improve critical thinking.Seek Immersive ExperiencesReinforce classroom lessons through movies, music, books, cultural events and Spanish-speaking communities. This exposure cements academic concepts with practical conversations and intercultural wisdom no textbook alone can provide.Consider Exchange ProgramsFor those truly seeking fluency, language and cultural exchange programs like Youth For Understanding USA provide total immersion with host families abroad. Over 95% of high school students return conversational after these fully-immersiveexperiences.Scholarships are readily available from sponsors like my organization to facilitate exchanges for diverse learners.Alternatives If Spanish Is Not Absolutely RequiredWhile foreign language study is near universally championed for its multilayered benefits, Spanish itself is not always mandated by states or districts. Viable alternatives do exist allowing personalized choice.Petition for Policy ChangesRally support from fellow students and families to lobby administrators and school boards explaining the benefits of flexible language requirements. Provide credible evidence on the advantages of studying in-demand languages like Mandarin, Arabic or Russian over potentially excessive Spanish mandates.Emphasize that customized policies enriching individual talents improve outcomes as validated bypedagogical studies. Offer to collaborate on solutions blending personalized options with rigors needed for college entrance.Substitute Spanish for a Language Matching InterestsResearch other language choices and articulate reasons for studying one matching personal academic or professional goals. Local school boards are often receptive to well-supported proposals aligned to community needs whether building Spanish skills to serve health care roles or Japanese for engineering careers.Document how your preferred language aids required competencies like cultural literacy for a well-rounded transcript.Focus on Alternate Graduation PrioritiesFor less language-inclined learners, emphasize mastery of core subjects like STEM, economics, humanities or arts playing directly into college majors or career paths over a potentially unnecessary language like Spanish.Earning solid grades here plus volunteering and testing convey well-roundedness without overextending capacities.The Bottom LineWhile most states recognize foreign language abilities as vital for global citizenship, only ~15% explicitly require Spanish or any single option rather than promoting choice. With early planning, strategic use of transfer credits and immersive experiences, requirements are manageable for motivated students.For those less interested, constructive conversations with local education decision-makers can often open alternate, equally enriching pathways towards high school graduation through personalized policies I would be honored to help develop as an expert in this arena. David Mendez, Education Reform Expert

Do you have to take spanish class in high school. Do you have to take spanish in high school to go to college. Do you have to take spanish in high school to graduate. How many spanish classes do you have to take in high school. Do you have to take spanish 3 in high school. If you take spanish in middle school do you have to take it in high school. Do you have to take spanish in high school to get into college. Do you have to take spanish in college if you took it in high school. How long do you have to take spanish in high school. Do you have to take 2 years of spanish in high school. Do you have to take 3 years of spanish in high school. Do you have to take spanish 2 in high school. How many years do you have to take spanish in high school. How many times do you have to take spanish in high school.