

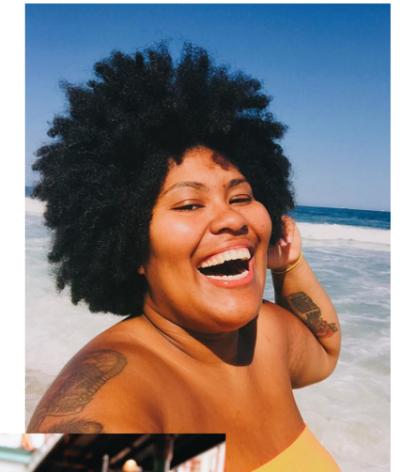
Au Pair Life



Adventures
in America



CULTURAL
CARE
AU PAIR



What does it mean to be an au pair?



Is it road-tripping across the USA with your best friends? Is it eating pancakes with your host family on a Sunday morning? Is it slowly growing into a more complete version of yourself—more confident and capable than you ever could have imagined?

The truth is: it's all of these things and more. Being an au pair is an opportunity to travel, learn and grow in a new country. It's a chance to push yourself outside your comfort zone and face new challenges, head on. It's about forming connections, making memories and experiencing the moments—big and small—that add up to a year you'll never forget.

Every au pair is different, but every one has a story to tell.

Welcome to Au Pair Life.

5 Things You Learn

by **Nathalia**
au pair in Tennessee



Life lessons you can't get
in the classroom

as an Au Pair

01 You got this.

When I first arrived in the USA, I was afraid of failing. My host family was very helpful and supportive, but after a couple of months, I realized that I had to learn to trust myself and let the fear go away. Now, I apply this thought to every rough situation that I go through... "I got this!"



02 Enjoy the opportunities you have now.

Living far away from my family has not been easy, but I've learned that I need to fully enjoy the present. My time here in the USA will end one day, and the memories will be all that I can take with me. So all I need to do right now is stay calm and enjoy every single day I have here.



03 The world is yours.

As an au pair, I've been to beautiful places, met amazing people, and experienced a lot of different cultures. I feel like the world is exactly the size it needs to be for me to explore it. I learn more about myself with each trip that I go on, and I've learned how to make plans, stay focused and save money for my next steps—because I'm not done exploring this world yet!

04 Keep asking, "What's next?"

One of my goals for this adventure was to learn as much as I could to be ready for the next phase of my life. Since becoming an au pair, I've taken classes at art schools in Nashville; I've studied interior design, abstract painting, and graphic design. I never thought I could get this far with my studies or my English—and now, look where I am!

05 Don't be shy!

The people you meet as an au pair change your life forever. My host family has made me a better and more compassionate person—and some of the au pair friends I've made here, I can easily call a part of my family. I've learned that if you go out of your way to meet new people and open your heart to them, your life will never be the same again.

Meet My Host Family

by Gaelle
au pair in Utah

Do you know what love at first sight is?

It is weird to say but I kind of felt that way. I just knew it was them. After several months of searching online, I had found the most amazing people. Adrienne and Jason are the parents, and Steven and Jack=son are the sweetest 3-year-old and 19-month-old boys ever; together, they are my host family. I have a hard time calling them my “host” family, though, because they aren’t my hosts—they’ve become my family. Adrienne is one of my closest friends; Jason is the best at making me laugh; and Ven and Jax have filled a place in my heart that I could never explain.

At the end of the day, what really matters the most are the little things they do to show me they care. For me, this has meant not only including me on vacations both large and small and being supportive when I want to do something, but them moving heaven and earth to find me an authentic “bûche de Noël” for Christmas; driving all the way downtown to buy me a brioche when I’m sick because that’s the only food I really want; picking up a Starbucks for me when Adrienne stops to get one for herself; or throwing me a 21st birthday celebration that lasted for a week with so many different surprises. I guess you could say it is about the time they take to

really connect with me, whether through conversations around a campfire, watching shows together, on a hike or doing any other activities together.

It is Jason taking as much time as needed to explain something to me that I don’t know or don’t understand. It’s him being protective of me, while always doing his best to build me up and give me confidence. It’s Adrienne telling me she is happy to have her ‘personal French stylist’ who also has the right to ‘shop’ in her closet, and calling me the ‘French version’ of herself. You can regularly find us singing—or I’d rather say screaming—all possible songs, even Disney songs, once in English once in French.



My heart feels full when I hear Ven call me his best friend, or when both boys ask me to scratch their backs while singing to them; when they crave my crepes for breakfast or get excited when we get a box full of French clothes, food, books and goodies. They always make me feel special and a part of the family.

Beginning when I first arrived, and throughout every situation since, my host family continues to help me, share with me, teach me as much as they can, and push me to fulfill my dreams. They love me. Today, I feel like you don’t really know me until you’ve heard about them. We believe that we were meant to be in each other’s lives for good.

I believe that home is more of a feeling than a place, and they are my perfect example of this. They are my home.

“We were meant to be in each other’s lives for good.”

A Day in the Life of an Au Pair

by Lucia
au pair in Texas

MORNING

After I wake the kids up, feed them breakfast and drive them to school, I'm usually back home around 8:30am. My host mom and I spend an hour every morning working out together and chatting about life—it's one of my favorite parts of every day.

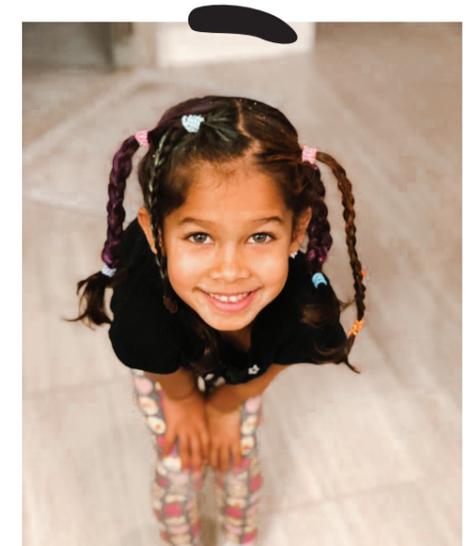
AFTERNOON

Once I eat lunch, I'll either take a nap or meet up with friends in my neighborhood to play games, grab a coffee, go to the cinema, or rollerblade outside. Then I take some time to tidy up and prepare snacks at home before picking up my host kids from school around 3:00pm.



EVENING

When the kids' after-school activities are done, we'll play outside together or do some art projects before I start preparing dinner. We usually eat as a family around 6:30pm—then, it's time for baths and maybe a movie or board game before I put the kids to bed around 8pm!



Your inside look at an average day for an au pair in the USA.



Au Pair Perspectives

by **Vanessa**
au pair in New York

I never planned to be an au pair.

Frankly, I never saw myself working with kids full-time either. What made me decide to become an au pair? I personally believe it was my destiny. A path already paved for me—an opportunity for me to discover who I was meant to be.

I personally gained a lot from this experience. Not only the work with children, but also the life here. I have always been super independent but now I feel like I am capable of doing anything by myself. Furthermore, I've changed and matured personality-wise so much as well. Not only because children make you learn a lot about yourself, but also because I have been blessed with all the people I have met. I had a wonderful relationship with my host family, and I found two new best friends that I feel connected to on a whole new level—they are like family to me.

“Now I feel like I am capable of doing anything by myself.”

Despite the fact that my English and pronunciation has always been good, I have improved my English a lot. Usually people do not believe me when I said that I was German and just moved to New York recently. I might be more a New Yorker at this point than I am German!

To anyone who is considering becoming an au pair, I'll say this: Do not overthink it, just do it. It is the best decision I have ever made in my entire life so far. And one day, if you embark on an au pair journey like mine, you will understand why.



“I've learned more about myself than I ever thought possible.”

by **Tarni**
au pair in Virginia

Being an au pair is not easy.

We leave behind everything we know, all the people we love, and get on a plane on our own to pursue some crazy dream. We have this picture in our heads of this perfect, fun-filled year of travelling. The reality of being an au pair is that we take care of kids for 45 hours a week. I personally do four kids' laundry, wash their sheets, clean up the play room, look after them when they're sick, etc. And on top of that I'm trying to take care of myself, making sure I travel and find time to see my friends.

Being an au pair is not just playing with kids all day and travelling in the USA every weekend; and we are not just babysitters. We are family—a big sister or an older brother—and we play a major role in helping to shape the lives of the children we look after. We spend a lot of time every week with our host kids, and that makes a difference in their lives.



I honestly think that being an au pair is one of the best decisions I've ever made. Sure, there are things I planned that didn't happen, but also things that happened that I didn't plan—like travelling to 17 states, meeting such incredible people, and learning more about myself than I ever thought possible. I've learned that au pairs are some of the strongest, most courageous, open-minded, accepting, interesting, compassionate, and adventurous people I've ever met.

And I've learned that the things I've discovered about myself, about the world, and about what I want in my future will be with me for the rest of my life.

The Au Pair Training School

by Alessandra
au pair in Arizona



My first week in the USA was spent at the Au Pair Training School in New York. I took au pair classes, explored the city, and made new friends from around the world!

Taking Classes

I had a great time learning how to make this year a successful one, and how to make time with my host kids safe and perfect. The best thing that I learned was absolutely the first aid. I was also surprised about discovering a lot of American rules like the mandatory stop near the school busses! My teacher was really kind, she tried to involve everybody, even the most shy person was involved in activities and useful discussions about educating and raising kids in the USA.



Exploring NYC

The trip downtown to NYC was amazing. I was there in December, which was the most magical time of year—and the Christmas atmosphere made the city look perfect. First we went on a guided bus tour around the city, and then we had the opportunity to visit Times Square, Fifth Avenue, Rockefeller Center, the Empire State Building, Central Park and the Brooklyn bridge! My favorite part was the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree and, of course, Times Square. That day, everything seemed like we were living in a movie!



Making Friends

At first everybody was shy and a little bit nervous but we soon discovered that “Hi, where are you from?” is the easiest way to start a conversation and, before you know it, a friendship! The meal times were also great opportunities to try and get to know new people. I would make an effort to sit at a different table and make new friends every day!



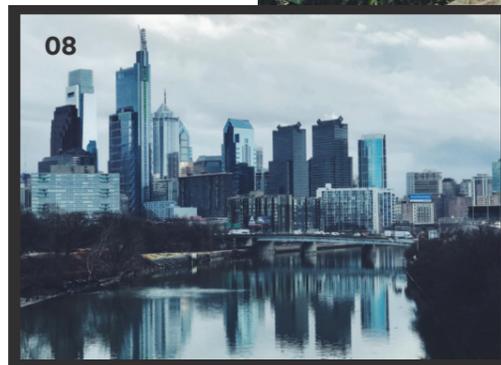
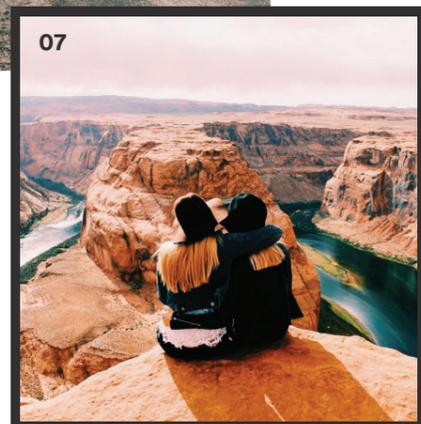
On the Road

by **Swaantje**
au pair in Colorado

Living in Colorado and travelling through the USA was the best experience I've ever had! During my two years as an au pair, I was able to visit 21 states and I got to see a lot of what the USA has to offer. Every state has its own charm and there's something beautiful to see wherever you go.

Saving half of my paycheck every week made it possible for me to go on a lot of weekend trips or road trips with my friends. Colorado and its surroundings are beautiful and offer gorgeous scenery, which is why it was easy for me to see a lot of places by doing road trips. My favourite thing to do was exploring the National Parks because the views are breathtaking! But I also loved going to big cities like New York, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, or Seattle. They are so overwhelming and make you feel like you are in a movie.

It doesn't matter if you're outdoorsy or more of a city person—in the USA you'll find a destination for everyone.



01 Bryce Canyon, Utah **02** Big Sur, California **03** Manhattan Bridge, New York **04** Maui, Hawaii **05** Monument Valley, Arizona **06** Canyonlands National Park, Utah **07** Horseshoe Bend, Arizona **08** Chicago, Illinois **09** Yosemite National Park, California



Shaping My Future as an Au Pair

Au pairs across the country are attending American universities—and setting themselves up for personal and professional success

Tjara

former au pair in Washington, D.C.

I studied Business Communication at the American University in Washington D.C., and we learned how to build our own company! It was great working together with people of all nations. In the end, our professor offered to write us references that we could use to apply for colleges or jobs—it helped me to get my dual student job at the biggest German bank!



Alicia

former au pair in Connecticut

I took a community college class called “working with kids with special needs.” It was really interesting to learn about, and has helped me to this day because I’m now studying to be a teacher! The class also gave me friends for life. I met some people there who aren’t au pairs and we still talk a lot. Taking classes in America was one of the coolest things I’ve ever done.

Alvaro

former au pair in Massachusetts

As an au pair, I took “Corporate Strategy” at Harvard Business School. I was able to expand my education in the field I like the most through very dynamic sessions and colleagues with a high level of business knowledge. And today I can say that I’ve attended one of the most prestigious universities in the world. It’s simply amazing!

Verena

former au pair in New Jersey

On a whim, I signed up for a Computer Science course at Princeton University, because I was curious. I quickly learned that it fascinates me to create my own computer programs, and I decided to make it my career. Back home, I applied for an undergraduate program in Computer Science and they accepted me right away. They told me they were impressed by the fact that I had a class from Princeton on my CV!

“The class also gave me friends for life. I met some people there who aren’t au pairs and we still talk a lot. Taking classes in America was one of the coolest things I’ve ever done.”

— Alicia



Elena

former au pair in Washington, D.C.

I got the chance to study effective communication, speaking, and presenting. After this class I felt like a different person! It taught me how a good presentation should be, as well as the importance of your presence and confidence when speaking to others. This has helped me a lot to find a job back in my country—I’ve been able to interview without all the stress!



Nathalie

former au pair in Massachusetts

I was able to attend a psychology class at Harvard Extension School and finished that with an A. This was one of the reasons why I got my internship last summer—and besides that, I realized that I wanted to continue learning about psychology, so now I’m taking more classes in that field and I’m loving every second of it!



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Your au pair experience



CULTURAL
CARE
AU PAIR

What is an au pair?

An au pair is a cultural exchange participant between the ages of 18 and 26 who lives with an American host family and cares for their children. In exchange, they receive free room and board, a weekly stipend, and opportunities to travel and study in the USA.

The term “au pair” means “on par” in French, which reflects the kind of relationship an au pair has with their host family: one that is equal and mutually enriching. If you love children and want to take at least a year off to grow personally and professionally, the au pair program could be the perfect next step for you.

Why be an au pair?



Cultural Exchange

Discover an exciting new culture while sharing your own



Personal Growth

Develop the confidence and independence you need to succeed



Travel Opportunities

Explore the USA and create memories to last a lifetime



Educational Development

Study at an American college and learn a new skill

Do you have what it takes?

To become an au pair, you must be able to answer “yes” to the following questions:

Age

Are you between the ages of 18 and 26 years old?

Experience

Do you love children and have at least 200 hours of experience caring for them?

Education

Have you completed (or are you about to complete) secondary school or equivalent?

Driving

Do you have a driving licence or can you obtain one during the application process?

Criminal Background

Is your past free of any criminal activity?

Health

Are you in good health? Can you keep up with young children?

Time Commitment

Are you ready to commit to at least 12 months abroad?

What does an au pair do?

Being an au pair gives you the opportunity to explore a new country and a new culture — but the most important part of your au pair experience will be caring for your host children.

Here are some common responsibilities of an au pair:

Meal Preparation

Prepare meals and snacks for the children

Morning Routine

Help the children get dressed and ready for the day

Transportation

Help get the kids to school and other activities

Playtime

Engage the children in fun games and activities

Washing

Wash and fold laundry for the children

Homework

Help the kids with their homework

Tidying Up

Help ensure that the kids' rooms stay clean

Bedtime

Help the children get ready for bed

What are the benefits?

Being a Cultural Care au pair is a unique opportunity to learn, grow and experience the USA — and as a participant of our program, you're entitled to special benefits:



Global Support

Cultural Care will provide comprehensive, global support through every phase of your training, preparation, application completion and visa process.



Room & Board

Your host family will provide room and meals as well as a weekly stipend of \$195.75 — this is simply pocket money for you!



Time Off

You are entitled to 2 weeks of paid, off-duty holiday — your J-1 visa also allows you a 30-day grace period at the end of your au pair program, during which you can travel the USA.



Travel Arrangements

Airfare and travel arrangements to and from your host family are covered — and you'll start the program with a five-day training course just outside New York City.



Educational Opportunities

You will study at a local university or college — your host family will contribute up to \$500 per year towards classes of your choice.

Choose Cultural Care

Creating cultural exchange experiences for au pairs is our speciality — and with the largest and most experienced au pair network in the world, we're here to help you feel confident, safe and excited as you begin your journey to the USA.



1. Au Pair Training & Preparation

We provide extensive pre-departure materials as well as formal training courses at our Au Pair Training School outside New York City to help you prepare for this once-in-a-lifetime experience.



2. Host Family Screening & Matching

Cultural Care has the largest pool of host families to choose from, as well as a carefully-screened, customized matching process.



3. Strong Support Structure

We offer round-the-clock support both in the USA and in your home country, making it easy to contact representatives with any questions or concerns.



4. Official U.S. Department of State Sponsor

Our team in the USA strictly adheres to the U.S. Department of State's guidelines to ensure that all program participants are given a quality experience during their time abroad.



5. Comprehensive Travel Insurance Coverage

For over 20 years, Cultural Care has teamed up with Erika Travel Insurance to provide au pairs with a comprehensive group insurance coverage, so that you have the assistance you need during your au pair term.

culturalcare.co.za

Our Pricing

Our program fee covers everything you'll need during your stay in the USA. Your one-time payment includes a comprehensive group insurance policy for your initial au pair term, your round-trip airfare, global support 24/7 and all additional program benefits.

Rest assured there are no hidden fees on our program. You won't have to pay anything until you've been matched with your American host family.

Program Fee: R13,700

Pricing correct at time of printing, please refer to our website for most up-to-date information.

Get Started

Join us for an info meeting in a location near you. Learn about the program and find out if being an au pair is right for you!

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