

## Title: Preparing for Boarding School

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Going to boarding school is truly rewarding. You get a chance to live with students from all over the world, which is an excellent way to learn about new cultures. Traveling to interesting places near the school on weekends is another way you can broaden your cultural perspective. Of course, there is always a risk of feeling lost in this new environment and wishing you had never left the familiar comforts of home. But here are some ways you can prepare for the experience of being away from home that will allow you to make the most of this great opportunity.

The number one rule for a student who is planning to go to a boarding school is to be as outgoing as possible. Plan on taking the initiative when you meet people and as you go to make new friends. Even if you are normally quite shy, put some effort into overcoming your apprehension. It will help you to be less homesick if you have someone you can share new experiences with. And if you still miss being home, you can always prepare food from home or watch some of your favorite movies with the new friends you've made.

Tolerance is another important quality to cultivate. You are going to share the school, and perhaps even your living space, with students who have different belief systems. Being able to accept these differences gracefully is an important part of adjusting to an international boarding school environment. Having an open heart goes a long way toward making friends.

You also need to be tolerant of the school environment itself. In order to take care of students who are far from their parents, a boarding school establishes rules that everyone must follow. You will have regular check-ins and study hall time; depending on your current grade, you will also have "lights out" where it is required for you to go to bed. The rules apply to everyone, and students who fail to obey will face restrictions. It is a good idea to read the school's rules of behavior and general conduct in the student handbook before you leave for boarding school.

It's also important to be prepared academically. You and your parents should discuss the course of study you want to follow at boarding school and be aware of what diploma and individual subjects the school offers. For instance, I knew I wanted to pursue an International Baccalaureate Diploma at Leysin American School. I also knew what subjects I wanted to take, which made my life much easier because I did not have to plan my schedule while adjusting to the social life and atmosphere of the school for the first time.

I will conclude with a bit of practical advice. I encourage you to arrive for boarding school few days before classes start. This way you will not have to unpack all of your suitcases in a rush while trying to arrive on time for the orientation activities. It will give you more time to acclimate to the new environment and the other students before you have to begin adjusting to a new schedule and new responsibilities.

And last, but not least: Have fun and enjoy every moment. Not every person gets the chance to go to boarding school. It is an incredible opportunity that will never come around again. Try something new, be active and develop as a person. It is one of the best things that I have experienced, and I hope it will be the same for you.

Thank you,  
Veronika