

K12 ACADEMICS — TEACHING ABROAD SERIES

Teaching in Thailand

A guide for aspiring & qualified teachers — how teaching in Thailand works, the routes and requirements, the Non-B visa and work permit, pay, and how to find the right role.



Find Your Community
2026 EDITION

ABOUT K12 ACADEMICS

The world's largest education resource.

Online since 2004, K12 Academics has helped millions of families, students and educators **find the right school, college, camp, business and program in their community** — for every kind of learner.

THE CLASSIC LIFESTYLE MARKET FOR NEW TEACHERS

Thailand is one of Asia's **classic lifestyle destinations** for English teachers: high demand, the region's largest expat teaching community, and a superb **salary-to-lifestyle ratio**. Roles span **government and private schools, language centres, and international schools**. This program-neutral guide covers the **routes, requirements, the Non-B visa and work permit, and pay**, and points you to the K12 Academics directory to find roles.

General guidance, not legal, immigration, or employment advice. Thai rules, pay, and requirements change and vary by employer. The details here are recent examples and **must be confirmed with the Thai Ministry of Labour, the Teachers' Council of Thailand, the Thai mission, and each employer**. K12 Academics does not run or endorse any specific program — use the K12 Academics directory to find and compare your options.

Understand Why Teachers Choose Thailand

WHAT TO KNOW

Thailand offers **high demand, the region's largest teaching community, a warm and relaxed lifestyle, and a clearly defined visa pathway** — a classic first-timer market with an excellent salary-to-lifestyle ratio, though savings are more modest than in some neighbours.

BY THE NUMBERS

Largest community

+ high demand

Lifestyle

warm & relaxed

Clear pathway

Non-B → work permit

HOW TO HELP

Weigh Thailand's **lifestyle and easy entry** against modest savings — for a first teaching job with sunshine, community, and a defined visa route, it's a top choice.

WATCH OUT

Thailand's **salary-to-lifestyle ratio** is the real draw — a modest salary funds a comfortable, travel-rich life, especially outside Bangkok.

Understand the Types of Teaching Roles

WHAT TO KNOW

Route types include: **government/public schools** (children aged 6–18, nationwide, with benefits), **private and bilingual (English-program) schools**, **private language centres** (which hire year-round), **international schools** (the best pay and benefits), **universities**, and **rural or provincial placements**. Browse and compare options in the **K12 Academics directory**.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public schools

ages 6–18 (+ benefits)

Language centres

year-round

Int'l schools

best pay + packages

HOW TO HELP

Match the **route to your profile** — a public school or language centre for entry, a bilingual school, or an international school if licensed — then find options in the K12 Academics directory.

GOOD TO KNOW

Find and compare **specific schools, language centres, and recruiters** in the K12 Academics directory — this guide stays program-neutral.

Check the Requirements

WHAT TO KNOW

The core requirements: a **bachelor's degree (any subject)** is required for the work permit and teacher's licence; a **120-hour TEFL/TESOL certificate** is the industry standard (increasingly expected); and a **clean criminal background check**. Native English (from the "Big 7" countries) is often preferred, but **fluent non-native speakers can qualify**. A **teacher's licence or waiver** is arranged via the employer.

BY THE NUMBERS

Degree

required (+ teacher's licence)

TEFL

120-hr (industry standard)

Native

preferred, non-native possible

HOW TO HELP

Line up your credentials — a **degree, a 120-hour TEFL, and a background check**; native English is preferred but fluent non-native speakers qualify, and a teacher's licence is arranged via your employer.

GOOD TO KNOW

A bachelor's degree is required for the **work permit and teacher's licence** — the TEFL is the expected industry standard.

Understand the Visa & Work Permit

WHAT TO KNOW

Thailand has a **clearly defined legal pathway**: your employer sponsors a **Non-Immigrant B visa before you arrive**; after entering, the school helps you obtain a **work permit (from the Ministry of Labour) and a teacher's licence or temporary waiver**. The Non-B is then extended to a one-year stay. **Tourist visas do not permit teaching**, even voluntarily. Confirm with the Thai authorities.

BY THE NUMBERS

Non-B visa

sponsored before arrival

Then

work permit + teacher's licence

Tourist visa

no teaching (ever)

HOW TO HELP

Know your route — your employer sponsors a **Non-B visa before arrival**, then helps with the **work permit and teacher's licence**; never teach on a tourist visa.

GOOD TO KNOW

Never teach on a **tourist visa** — even voluntarily; the legal route is a Non-B visa plus a work permit and teacher's licence.

Know the Pay & Benefits

WHAT TO KNOW

Pay by school type: **government/public schools ~฿30,000–45,000/month (~\$870–1,300), private and language schools ~\$1,000–1,600, and international schools ~\$2,000–5,000+.** Public-school benefits (the “hidden salary”) include visa sponsorship and generous paid holidays; international schools often add **free housing, flights, and insurance.** Savings are modest (~\$300–700/month), but far better outside Bangkok.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public schools

~฿30,000–45,000/mo

Int'l schools

~\$2,000–5,000+ (+ housing)

Savings

modest; better outside Bangkok

HOW TO HELP

Set expectations — public schools ~฿30,000–45,000/month, international schools far more (with housing and flights); savings are modest but stronger outside Bangkok.

GOOD TO KNOW

A salary in **Chiang Mai or a provincial city stretches much further** than in Bangkok — often meaning better real savings.

Understand Contracts & What to Watch For

WHAT TO KNOW

Public-school pay is modest but comes with **visa sponsorship and generous holidays**; international schools offer **comprehensive packages** (housing, flights, insurance); **housing isn't otherwise standard**. Confirm **hours, pay, holidays, and teacher-licence support**, and that the employer arranges the Non-B and work permit. Favour reputable employers and written terms.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public schools

modest pay + holidays

Int'l schools

full packages

Housing

not otherwise standard

HOW TO HELP

Read every offer for **hours, pay, holidays, and licence/visa support**; public schools add holidays, international schools add housing and flights, but housing isn't otherwise standard.

GOOD TO KNOW

International-school packages (housing, flights, insurance) are the **most valuable** — public schools trade lower pay for holidays and visa support.

Get Qualified & Prepared

WHAT TO KNOW

Ensure you have a **bachelor's degree** and an **accredited 120-hour TEFL**, and prepare your **documents (degree, a clean background check)**. Your employer will support the **Non-B visa, work permit, and teacher's licence**. Business-English or young-learner skills, and some patience with paperwork, help.

BY THE NUMBERS

Degree + TEFL

accredited

Documents

degree + background check

Employer supports

visa & licence

HOW TO HELP

Get your **degree and an accredited TEFL**, prepare your documents, and let your employer support the **Non-B visa, work permit, and teacher's licence**.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your employer arranges the **Non-B visa, work permit, and teacher's licence** — choose a reputable one that handles this well.

Plan the Hiring Timeline

WHAT TO KNOW

Public and private schools hire around the two peak seasons — **ahead of the May and October term starts** (the Thai school year begins in May); **language centres** hire **year-round** (especially in Bangkok and Chiang Mai); **international schools** recruit **January–May** for an August/September start.

BY THE NUMBERS

Public/private

May & October terms

Language centres

year-round

Int'l schools

Jan–May

HOW TO HELP

Plan around the calendar — public and private schools hire ahead of the May and October terms, language centres year-round, international schools Jan–May.

GOOD TO KNOW

The two main hiring peaks track the Thai school terms — **May and October** — while language centres hire continuously.

Prepare for the Move

WHAT TO KNOW

You **don't need Thai to teach** (classes are English-only), but **basic Thai helps daily life** (especially in rural areas). Popular bases include **Bangkok (the biggest market, higher pay and cost)**, **Chiang Mai (lifestyle and value)**, **Phuket and the islands**, and **Isaan (the affordable northeast)**.

Thailand offers superb food, travel, and modern-city infrastructure.

BY THE NUMBERS

Thai

not needed to teach

Bases

Bangkok, Chiang Mai, coast

Value

best outside Bangkok

HOW TO HELP

Prepare practically — teach in English, but learn **basic Thai** for daily life; Bangkok has the most roles, while Chiang Mai and provincial cities offer the best value.

GOOD TO KNOW

Chiang Mai and the northeast (Isaan) offer the **best value and a slower pace** — many teachers find them more sustainable long-term.

Find Your Role & Thrive

WHAT TO KNOW

Once you know your route, **find and compare specific schools, language centres, international schools, and recruiters in the K12 Academics directory**. Apply to several, verify each contract and that the employer arranges the Non-B, work permit, and licence, and build toward international schools. Confirm current rules with the Thai authorities.

BY THE NUMBERS

Find & compare

schools & recruiters

Verify

visa & licence support

Build

toward int'l schools

HOW TO HELP

Use **the K12 Academics directory** to find and compare schools, language centres, and recruiters, verify each contract and visa/licence support, and build toward international schools.

WATCH OUT

Browse **the K12 Academics directory** to find the specific schools, centres, and recruiters that fit your route and goals.

Teaching in Thailand: The Essentials

A snapshot — program-neutral. Confirm details with the Thai Ministry of Labour, the Teachers' Council, and each employer.

The market

One of Asia's most popular, accessible markets and a classic first-timer choice: high demand, the region's largest expat teaching community, and an excellent salary-to-lifestyle ratio, especially outside Bangkok.

The routes

Government/public schools (ages 6–18, with benefits), private and bilingual (English-program) schools, private language centres (year-round), international schools (best pay), universities, and rural placements — find and compare specific ones in the directory.

Requirements

A bachelor's degree (any subject) for the work permit and teacher's licence; a 120-hour TEFL (the industry standard); a clean background check; native English is often preferred, but fluent non-native speakers can qualify.

Visa & licence

A clearly defined pathway: an employer-sponsored Non-Immigrant B visa before arrival, then a work permit (Ministry of Labour) and a teacher's licence or waiver; tourist visas do not permit teaching, even voluntarily.

Pay & move

Public schools ~฿30,000–45,000/month (~\$870–1,300), private/language ~\$1,000–1,600, international ~\$2,000–5,000+ (often with housing and flights); savings are modest but better outside Bangkok.

YOUR TEACHING-IN-THAILAND JOURNEY STARTS HERE

Find Your Community.

Explore our other Teaching in [Country] guides, and find and compare programs, schools, and recruiters in the K12 Academics directory — among **1,297 free resources**.

tools.k12academics.com →

