

My experience working as an Au Pair in England with AuPairWorld

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<https://thelifestylehunter.com/my-experience-as-an-au-pair-in-england/>

Our Spanish friend Laura Plasencia worked as an Au Pair in Boxford, England. In this post she explains everything we need to know if we want to be an Au Pair anywhere in the world through AuPairWorld. We will learn the main features of this job, such as eligibility and funding, the steps of the application process, and how Laura's experience was, her conclusions and recommendations.

1. Au Pair: Characteristics

Type of program: work abroad

Location: my stay was in Boxford, England but there are projects all over the world.

Website: <https://www.aupairworld.com>

Requirements:

- **Age:** the ideal age is usually between 17-18 years old until the age of 30, although I have heard of a 40 year old Au Pair! There is actually no age limit (it all depends on the family preferences).
- **Nationality:** any nationality (although families usually specify preferred nationality as well as language).
- **Language:** some families choose Au Pairs, for example, from Spain because they want their children to practice Spanish, others have no preference.

Duration: I was there for 4 months but it can be from minimum 1 month to maximum 2 years (families specify in their profiles the desired time)

Application Fee: free

Financing: the stay and its conditions are to be agreed by the host family and the Au Pair, generally in the family profile you will have an idea of what the family looks for and offers. Some families pay for your plane or train ticket to get to their home and others will even pay for a language course at the place of destination (prior arrangement). Other families will pick you up directly at the airport or bus/train station. In England, Au Pairs get paid weekly (I got about 80-90 pounds). This weekly pay is negotiated in advance with the family and will depend on the standard of living of each country.

2. Application Process

(a) Create a profile

Enter the website <https://www.aupairworld.com/> and create your profile. Specify where you would like to live as an Au Pair, which languages you speak, what are your intentions (for example, if you want to improve a language or know the city – this is important for families so that you can set a schedule where you can go to classes or go sightseeing), your previous experience with children, your studies and your hobbies.

(b) Search for the ideal family

There are as many families as there are people in the world, some will be single parents, adopted children, families with animals, etc. So you can choose the family that most fits your personality and the ages of the children to take care of (they can be from infants to children of 10-12 years).

(c) Get in touch with the family and come to an agreement

Contact them via email or Skype and reach an agreement. Usually no contract is signed, the terms are only spoken (even though a contract is mentioned in AuPairWorld).

(d) Very important!

- **Agencies:** there are agencies that offer you to do all the procedures to find a host family. They usually charge you a commission and unfortunately many of them are scams. It's better that you choose the family you want according to your criteria and your intuition, that you have Skype conversations to clarify the conditions, and you ask for information about where you are going to live, photos of the family, the house, your room and the area and if possible, talk to previous Au Pairs who could tell you their experience.
- **Au Pair live-in and live-out:** the most common Au Pair option is live-in, which is when the Au Pair lives and works in the same house. But there is also the live-out option, as some

families prefer that the Au Pair lives outside and works with a fixed schedule. This is another way to find work abroad, although it is usually more common to find this kind of employment at pages in the country (not AuPairWorld).

3. My Experience

(a) Application

A few years ago I started looking at work abroad options and found the AuPairWorld website, so I decided to try my luck and find a family in England.

After several emails and some conversations by Skype, an English family chose me to live in their house. That summer, I took a one-way flight to London and the family picked me up at the station. I had to take care of two children (of 2 and 4 years), their father was a businessman and mother a housewife. I had to do "light" tasks at home like putting the dishes in the dishwasher, preparing tupperware for the children, placing the toys, ordering the rooms, folding clothes and vacuuming.

(b) Location

The village was located on the outskirts of London, it was called Boxford and the villagers around didn't know it existed. It was about an hour and a half from the capital by train, and there was almost nothing to do but private houses with gardens, not even shops or restaurants. The nearest town was 30 minutes away and I could get there by bus (but the bus had a reduced schedule and the last one that passed back was around 5 pm). I was lucky because I met another Spanish AuPair who lived a couple of houses down and we spent our free time together. She was able to borrow the family car, so we visited bigger cities nearby.

(c) General Opinion

Cons

- Sometimes, I worked more than my regular hours because the little girl used to go to my room in my free time and neither the mother nor the father told her anything to leave.
- Despite having your own room, you live in a foreign house so you should adapt to its rules and conditions. If you are looking for privacy or independence it's going to be a little complicated. Also you have the schedule that suits them best, modifying it according to their convenience or last-minute changes.
- You can not save a lot of money. Food, transportation and accommodation are covered but the monthly pay is usually low. If you have a larger expense, such as a plane ticket to see your family, you may have to pull your previous savings.

Pros

- The AuPair experience serves as a bridge to move to a foreign city because you become familiar with the environment, meet people and see what kind of future options you'll have. It is a good alternative because you do not have to spend so much money since you arrive with the uncertainty of when you will find a job while the expenses continue to run.
- In my case, my passion is not children (I discovered that a little later) so as soon as I could and I had improved my English a little, I looked for a contract job in an English company.
- If you like children, this may be an option for you in the long term, but you should also consider that the practices you make won't count as official for your CV.

4. Recommendations

My main recommendations are:

- **Research the place you are going:** what type of locality it is, what means of transportation you can use and which towns are nearby. There are people who prefer to be in contact with nature and find themselves more comfortable in small towns. But also, there are people who cannot be in this kind of environment and need to have more options for activities and social life.
- **Clarify with the family the conditions:** your weekly hours, tasks to be done, babysitting (watch children during night time) and what expenses you will have covered, some families will even pay for your language course.
- **As soon as something does not go as agreed, talk to the family and look for a solution:** it is supposed to be a good experience for you, as well as enriching, where you can improve the language, change and enjoy being in another country.