

Finding a Job Teaching English in Vietnam

The demand for native English speakers to teach English is extremely high in Vietnam. Most jobs in Vietnam will be found in private language schools teaching to either children, young adults or adults/business professionals in larger cities such as Ho Chi Minh City. As a private language school English teacher, teachers will typically work around their students school and/or work schedule. This means that English teachers may have morning, afternoon, and evening classes rather than being at school during a typical day such as from 8am – 4pm. English teachers in Vietnam also find that they need to work for at least 2 different private language schools in order to work full time, which is around 25 – 30 hours.

Finding a job in Vietnam typically requires that the English teacher is already in Vietnam and finds his/her job by visiting schools in person. See the section below titled Steps on Finding a Job in Vietnam for a guide on how to find a job in Vietnam. Jobs in Vietnam can be found year-round, except during the Tet holiday which falls in either late January or early February. A typical contract will be between 6 and 12 months, however, schools prefer to hire teachers that plan to stay on and teach longer term.

For more detailed information on finding a job and working in Vietnam, please refer to International TEFL Academy's [Job Search Guidance Manual](#).

The steps below should be followed in order to successfully find work as an English teacher in Vietnam.

Before you go....

1. ENSURE THAT TEACHING ENGLISH IN VIETNAM IS RIGHT FOR YOU.

...ask yourself the following questions

- **Are you OK with not having a job before you arrive in Vietnam?** *Jobs in Vietnam are typically found in person.*
- **Do you have approximately \$1,000 - \$2,000 USD to support yourself in Vietnam before you find a job and get your first paycheck?** *This does not include money you will spend on airfare.*
- **Do you have a 4-year degree from an accredited college or university?** *In order to obtain a work permit in Vietnam, teachers must present their college diploma.*

If you answered “no” to the above questions, it may be a good idea to rethink where you want to teach.

2. PREPARE YOUR COVER LETTER AND RESUME

- Review the [Job Search Guidance Manual](#) section on writing a resume and cover letter.
- Model your current resume after the sample resume in the Job Search Guidance Manual.
- Once your resume and cover letter have been updated, email them to Student Affairs to review and offer feedback.

3. CHOOSE ONE MAJOR CITY WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE AND WORK

Most teaching jobs will be found in larger cities such as Ho Chi Minh City. The demand for English teachers in smaller towns is much lower than it is in larger cities due to the amount of language schools there. If you are interested in teaching English in a small town we recommend giving yourself a certain amount of time to find a job. For example, if you want to teach in Hue, Vietnam and are unable to find a job after 2 – 3 weeks, we recommend moving to a larger city such as Ho Chi Minh City where the demand for English teachers is much higher and your prospects of finding a job are greater.

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4. RESEARCH AND FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE CITY AND LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Resources can include:

- International TEFL Academy's [Vietnam School Finder](#)
- [Teaching English Abroad](#) by Susan Griffith
- Online web searches and a Vietnam guidebook such as [Lonely Planet](#)

Preparation tip: Since jobs as an English teacher are found once you get to Vietnam, it's a great idea to plan out what schools you are going to apply to before you go and where they're located. Get a city map and map out where the schools are located. Each day you can visit schools that are located in the same vicinity so you're not travelling from one end of the city to the other in the same day. Use International TEFL Academy's [Vietnam School Finder](#) to research language schools.

5. DO YOU STILL WANT TO TEACH IN VIETNAM?

If the answer is YES, do the following:

1. Book Your Flight:

When purchasing your flight to Vietnam it is important to keep a few things in mind. Even though you are probably planning to live in Vietnam indefinitely, and perhaps don't know when and if you'll return home, many airlines may ask to see proof of a return ticket or onward travel in order to allow you to board your flight. Each airline has different rules so please make sure to check with your airline before making any purchases. When you arrive in Vietnam the customs agent may also ask to see proof that you have plans to leave the country before your tourist visa expires. In both cases, it is recommended to have either a return ticket or a ticket for onward travel. The date of the return or onward travel must be prior to the expiration of your tourist visa (typically 30 - 90 days after entering Vietnam). If you purchase a round-trip ticket, look into ones that have a flexible return date so that you may adjust the date after you've gone through customs. If you prefer to purchase onward travel, this can be in the form of a bus, boat, or flight ticket from Vietnam to another country.

What is a visa? A visa is simply a document (often in the form of a stamp in a passport) issued by a government that authorizes a foreign citizen to enter that government's country for residency, tourism, education and/or work. Read International TEFL Academy's article, "[What is a visa and do I need a visa to teach English abroad?](#)" for more information on visas.

If you do not have a job before you go to Vietnam, you will travel to Vietnam on a tourist visa. Once you have a job your school should assist you in obtaining a work permit. You can read more about this in the **Going Through Customs** section below.

- On what date should you fly to Vietnam:
 - There is no specific day that you need to be in Vietnam. Schools in Vietnam hire year round except during the Tet Holiday (Vietnamese New Year.) The date of Tet changes every year, so check online for the upcoming dates.

Review International TEFL Academy's [travel resources](#) for recommended resources to book your flight.

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2. **Book Your Accommodations** -
3. Most English teachers travelling to Vietnam stay in a hostel or other budget friendly accommodations while they are looking for a job. We highly advise against renting an apartment or giving anyone money for accommodations before you arrive. You want to be sure to see the apartment before you rent it and can't always trust people you meet on the internet. Please see the [accommodations section](#) of the travel resources page for recommended resources.
4. **Contact Schools** - Start contacting schools via email around 2 weeks before you will be in Vietnam. You can find a list of language schools to contact in International TEFL Academy's [Vietnam School Finder](#). Contacting schools ahead of time will let them know that you're interested! Even if you don't hear back from the school we also recommend contacting them again when you're in Vietnam. When you contact schools before you arrive, include the following information:
 - Resume (as a PDF attachment)
 - Cover Letter (as a PDF attachment)
 - In the body of the email include the following:
 - A brief overview of who you are and your qualifications and that you're looking for a position teaching English.
 - When you will be in Vietnam and available for an interview.
 - Ask if there is a time and day that you can come in for an interview.
5. **Packing and Travel Checklist** – Check International TEFL Academy's [Packing and Travel Checklist](#) for additional items to do and pack before you move to Vietnam.

Once you get to Vietnam...

1. GOING THROUGH CUSTOMS

If you don't already have a job lined up and haven't already secured a work visa, you will need to enter Vietnam as a tourist. It's not recommended to say that you are an English teacher and are there to teach English. Without the proper visa you could be turned away.

- **Don't** tell customs that you are there to teach English or work.
Why? *Since you don't have a work visa and are travelling on a tourist visa, you are not legally allowed to work in the country. Since you are travelling on a tourist visa you need to be a tourist when you go through customs.*
- **Don't** bring a suitcase full of teaching materials.
Why? *If you pack suitcase full of teaching materials and books titled "How to Find a Teaching Job in Vietnam" and your bag is randomly searched, customs will most likely know that you are not there as a tourist. Pack a modest amount of materials that will get you started as a teacher in Vietnam.*
- **Do** tell customs that you are there on vacation and that you are a tourist.
- **Do** have proof that you are leaving the country before your tourist visa will expire.

2. CELL PHONE

- Now that you live in Vietnam you should buy a cell phone and get a local phone number. Talk to the locals (people at your hostel, other expats, etc.) about where the best cell phone deals are. Once you have a cell phone be sure to update your phone number on your resume and cover letter.

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3. BE PREPARED

Once you've settled in it's time to start applying for jobs and preparing for interviews.

- **Dress and Look Professional** – Even if you don't have an interview set up you still want to look as though you are going in for an interview.
 - Men: Slacks/Collared Shirt
Be clean shaven
 - Women: Skirt/Collared Shirt/Slacks
 - Both: Take out any out of the ordinary face piercings and cover up any tattoos.
- **Get Organized**
 - Read the sample interview questions located in the [Job Search Guidance Manual](#)
 - Have printed copies of your resume and cover letter
 - Bring a sample lesson plan (you may also be asked to do a “demo teaching lesson”)
 - Bring copies of your TEFL Certificate
 - Some schools may also request:
 - Unofficial Transcripts
 - References and/or a letter of recommendation
 - Copy of your college diploma

4. APPLY FOR ENGLISH TEACHING JOBS

1. To get a job in Vietnam you need to visit schools in person (not by sitting in an internet café.)
 - Before you go, make sure you have checked the location and operating hours of the school.
 - When you get there, ask to speak with the person in charge of hiring English teachers – **Do not just drop off your resume and leave!**
 - If no one is there to speak with you, do the following:
 - Leave your resume and cover letter
 - Ask for contact information for the person in charge of hiring
 - Ask when he or she is typically in the office
 - Return to the school during his or her office hours
 - If the person in charge of hiring English teachers is there, do the following:
 - Politely ask him/her if they have time to speak with you about your qualifications and for you to find out more about their job openings for English teachers.
 - Tell him/her that you are there looking for an English teaching position and can start immediately.
 - If he/she does not have the time to talk with you then, schedule a time that he/she is available for a proper interview.

5. FOLLOW UP WITH THE SCHOOL

- Within 24 – 48 hours after your interview, send a Thank You email to the person you interviewed with. If you don't have an email, it is also appropriate to call.
 - Let them know how appreciative you are of them taking the time to interview you.
 - Let them know that you are interested in the position and that you want the job.

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- Let them know that you are a good fit for the job and give a few main reasons why!

6. REPEAT STEPS 4 – 5 UNTIL YOU ARE OFFERED A JOB!!