

# 10 Tips To Be A Great Au Pair

WHAT'S AN AU PAIR? IT'S A PERSON WHO MOVES TO A FOREIGN COUNTRY TO LOOK AFTER A FAMILY'S CHILDREN PART-TIME IN EXCHANGE FOR A PRIVATE ROOM AND MEALS. AU PAIRS ARE NOT SERVANTS OR NANNIES, THEY USUALLY STUDY ANOTHER LANGUAGE WHILE THE CHILDREN ARE AT SCHOOL AND EXPERIENCE AND LEARN A NEW AND DIFFERENT CULTURE.



## 1) Choose a family whose expectations are in sync with yours

Before being an au pair, choose a location and the type of family that you're going to feel comfortable with. Talk to the family a couple of times on the phone or by Skype and develop an in-depth email with all the details about the family's members because they're going to be your own family for some months.

It's also important to find out what the family expects from you not to disappoint them.

## 2) Spend time with your host family:

You should spend as much time as you can with your host family, not only while you're working but also in your free time. In this case, you will get to know them and you will let them get to know you.

But you must know that no matter where you move, you should understand that as an *au pair* you will undoubtedly be spending a lot of time alone and must ask yourself what to do in your free time. If learning the local language or any other language is your goal, try to find a language school or some native people who you can practice with. This is really important because you may get bored if you only work. Facebook can be a really good solution because there are millions of pages about au pairs around the world.

### **3) Share your culture with your host family**

You should share your culture with your host family by talking about your country, teaching the family some words in your own language or teaching the children some games or songs. This will help alleviate any homesickness and your host family will appreciate your efforts.

### **4) Be clean and do housework as if you were at home:**

Keep everything as clean as you can. Make your bed and tidy up your room everyday. If you use the kitchen, the car or the toilet, clean them so your host family wouldn't even notice you're there.



### **5) Be polite and nice to the children:**

Don't forget to be polite and to have a big smile. Don't use bad or rude words because children can learn them. Say "good morning" and have fun with your work. Your attitude is going to be really important so try to stay positive and happy during your time as an au pair.

Children will have bad days, they will make mistakes and they will do wrong but you should remember that they're not adults and try to keep calm with them.

### **6) Keep an eagle eye with the kids:**

Don't leave the kids alone under any circumstances especially in the bathroom, pool or car. Be on time and talk about the children's duties after school but don't do anything before asking their parents. During your work, don't forget that it's the time of your host family so don't do personal things, don't be on Facebook and don't answer personal calls. You will be the one who hears what the kids say when they come home from school so make sure you tell your host family.

## **7) Have good communication with your host family:**

Host parents are usually very busy but don't feel bad if they don't talk with you as much as you'd like. If you have questions about your work or your responsibilities with the kids, find the right moment to ask them. If you don't communicate with your host family, problems can grow and get out of hand until they become bigger issues that will not go away.



## **8) Don't gossip about your host family:**

Do not talk with other au pairs or your friends and family about your host family's private life. Things in your host family need to stay in the host family. You're another member so act like a

family member and respect them. Also, do not tell your host family about things other au pairs tell you about their host families.

## **9) Look after the house and the family's properties:**

If you use the host parents' car, do it carefully and act as if it was your own car. The house needs to be clean and nice so keep it tidy as much as you can although it isn't part of your duties. Your attitude will be appreciated by them and you will feel more at home.

## **10) Enjoy this experience:**

Don't forget to enjoy your au pair experience. Learn as much as you can and try to convert this experience into something unforgettable.