

BASIS®

Charter Schools

Grades K–12

Getting Ready for **Kindergarten:**

A Complete Guide for Parents



Getting Ready for Kindergarten: A Complete Guide for Parents

Kindergarten serves as the foundation for your child's future.

In kindergarten, your child will:

- Learn foundational academic concepts
- Develop social and emotional skills
- Become more confident
- Get into the routine of attending school
- And ultimately, fall in love with learning!

In this guide, we discuss everything parents need to know about kindergarten. Learn how to determine if your child is ready for kindergarten, how to choose a school, and how to prepare for your child's first day. We're here to help you start your child off strong with a positive, nurturing kindergarten experience that sets them up for success.



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Is Your Child Ready for Kindergarten?

As your child approaches kindergarten-age, it's natural to feel a bit apprehensive. What if they have a hard time being away from home all day? What if they don't make friends? What if they're behind other kids in their class?

While these fears are normal, it's important to remember that kindergarten is designed to be a transition into formal schooling. Kindergarten teachers are well-equipped to provide children with the individualized support they need to be successful.

That said, here are a few things to consider before you begin looking for a kindergarten program near you.

KINDERGARTEN AGE REQUIREMENTS

Children typically begin kindergarten when they are 5 years old. However, specific age requirements vary from state to state. In Arizona, for example,

children must be 5 years old before September 1 of the year in which they wish to start kindergarten. In Louisiana, children must be 5 years old before September 30.

Can children start kindergarten early?

Some states offer early admission into kindergarten in certain instances. Typically, your child's birthday must fall within a certain range of the age cutoff. Your child may also need to

pass a readiness assessment. Be sure to check with your state's department of education to see if early kindergarten is available where you live.

BASIS Charter Schools is proud to offer an early kindergarten option in Arizona. To be eligible, your child must turn 5 years old between September 1 and December 31. For specific questions about early kindergarten enrollment, [contact your local BASIS Charter School](#).



KINDERGARTEN READINESS CHECKLIST

Children who start kindergarten have a wide range of experiences and skill levels. Other than meeting your state's age requirement, there are no true prerequisites for starting kindergarten. However, there are certain signs that indicate your child is more than ready to start going to school!

If you're trying to decide between enrolling your child in kindergarten right away or waiting another year, ask yourself if your child meets the following criteria.

Your child...

- Is used to spending time away from you (at preschool, daycare, a babysitter's house, etc...)
- Follows simple directions
- Interacts well with peers
- Can complete simple self-care tasks on their own (using the bathroom, washing their hands, putting on their shoes, zipping up their coat, etc)
- Can clearly communicate their needs
- Speaks in complete sentences
- Retells stories or past experiences
- Can write their name
- Shows an interest in learning how to read
- Can recognize most of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make
- Can name and recognize basic colors and shapes
- Can sort objects by shape, color, and size, and recognize matching objects
- Can count from 1–10 and understand the amounts these numbers represent
- Is excited about starting kindergarten

If you answered yes to the majority of indicators above, what are you waiting for? It's time to start looking into schools!



How to Choose a Kindergarten Program

Choosing where your soon-to-be kindergartner will go to school is a big decision. A school's curriculum, culture, and teachers can all have a significant effect on your kindergartner's experience.

If you're unsure where to start, we recommend taking some time to think about what factors are important to you in a school. From there, you can start touring different schools and weighing them against each other.

IDENTIFY YOUR WANTS AND NEEDS

Is there something specific that would make you choose one kindergarten program over another? Write down a list of priorities or "wish list" items that you would ideally like to find in your kindergartner's new school. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

Location

How important is it that your child's school be close to your home or work? Think about how far you would be willing to drive to drop off and pick up your child.

Public vs. private

Are you only considering public schools, or are you looking into private schools as well? What about charter schools? [Public charter schools](#), like BASIS

Charter Schools, are schools that are publicly funded but independently run. This unique operation model gives charter schools more flexibility in terms of curriculum, staffing, and budgeting.

For a full breakdown of different types of schools and the pros and cons of each, read our [Parent's Guide to School Choice](#).

Full-day vs. half-day

Would a full-day or half-day kindergarten program work better for your family? Depending on where you live, you may find that schools near you offer both options.

[Read about the pros and cons of full-day vs. half-day kindergarten here.](#)



"I was a little worried going into kindergarten, as I knew BASIS was an academically rigorous school and I didn't want my daughter to fall through the cracks. But her teachers did a great job keeping the lessons fun and engaging. My daughter came home from school every day excited to tell me about what she learned."

– Kristen K.,
BASIS Chandler
Primary North
Parent



Curriculum and teaching approach

Are there particular subjects you hope your child is able to study? Does your child learn best in a specific type of environment? Be sure to ask about the academics in upper grades, too—not just kindergarten!

Extracurricular activities

How important is it that your child's school offers a variety of extracurriculars? Think about what types of sports, clubs, and other activities you would want in a school and keep this in mind when researching.

TOUR SCHOOLS NEAR YOU

Touring schools near you is key to finding the right school for your kindergartner. During a school tour, you'll experience what the campus is like and meet teachers and staff. You may also have the opportunity to observe a classroom, which can provide insight into teaching styles, student engagement, and the dynamics between teachers and students.

As you research and visit schools, make note of what you like and don't like about each school. After a school tour or two, you'll start learning more about your preferences.



"It's critical to see the teachers and students in action before making that important decision for your kindergartner. I highly recommend going on a tour."

– Adette Sulit, BASIS
Scottsdale Primary East
Kindergarten Expert Teacher



Questions to ask while touring a school

School tours are the perfect time to ask questions! Questions like the ones below can help you make an informed decision about your child's future school.

Program details

- When does the school year begin and end?
- Is your kindergarten program full-day or half-day? What are the hours?
- Do you provide transportation to and from school?
- Do you offer any before- or after-school programs?
- Do you provide lunch to students?
- Do kindergartners have nap time during the day?

Academics and classroom environment

- What is your average class size and student-to-teacher ratio for kindergarten? How does this change as students get older?
- What is your school's philosophy and mission?
- What sets your school's kindergarten program apart from other schools in the area?

- What types of subjects do kindergartners learn about?
- Can you give an example of an activity my child might participate in while learning about _____ (history, science, math, etc.)?
- What is your approach to literacy and reading in kindergarten?
- How are fine arts incorporated into kindergarten?
- How is movement and physical education incorporated into kindergarten?
- How much of a typical day is dedicated to free play vs. structured activities?
- How do you help kindergartners develop social and emotional skills?
- How do teachers support individual student's strengths and weaknesses?
- What kind of support do you offer to students who are struggling?

"Our accelerated curriculum sets our students up to be strong readers. Our goal is for our kindergarten students to be reading at a first grade level. Raising this bar really challenges the students and encourages them to achieve their very best."

– Amanda Vance, BASIS Scottsdale Primary West Kindergarten Expert Teacher

Community

- What opportunities are there for parents and families to get involved with the school?
- How can parents communicate and collaborate with kindergarten teachers?
- What kind of community events or activities does your school hold throughout the year?
- Are there any extracurricular activities available for kindergartners? What about for other grades?

"Our son's kindergarten teacher communicated with us regularly and always let us know right away if our son was struggling with a lesson. I liked that I was kept in the loop about what was going on in the classroom."

– Kai L., BASIS Mesa Parent

Safety

- What are your school policies regarding bullying and other behavioral issues?
- What security measures are in place to ensure a safe learning environment for children?
- How are teachers trained and certified?

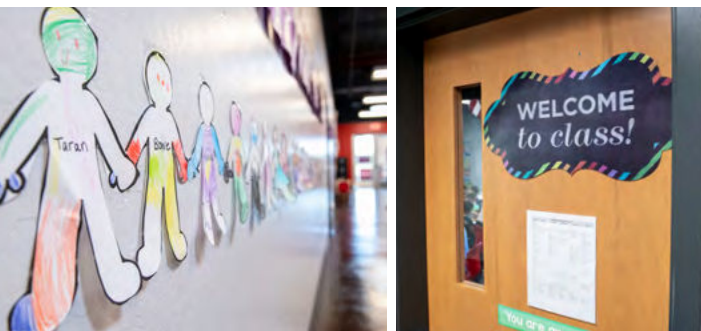
"Going on a tour convinced me that BASIS was the right fit for our family. It gave me the peace of mind that my daughter would be getting a great education in a safe and nurturing environment."

– Madison D.,
BASIS Baton Rouge
Materra Parent



Enrollment and tuition

- Are there any prerequisites for enrolling at your school?
- Will I have to pay tuition? If not, are there any other fees involved?
- Are there financial aid options available to cover fees and tuition (if applicable)?
- How does enrollment work? Is there a lottery?



Preparing for the First Day of Kindergarten

After you've chosen a school for your kindergartner, it's time to get them ready for their first day! This is an exciting milestone, but it can also be intimidating for both kids and parents. Here are a few ways you can make your child's transition to kindergarten as smooth as possible.

MAKE THINGS OFFICIAL BY ENROLLING IN A KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM

If you haven't already, you should officially enroll your child in a kindergarten program. Enrollment processes vary from school to school, so be sure to reach out to the school directly if you have any questions.

Enrollment at BASIS Charter Schools

At BASIS Charter Schools, our [enrollment process](#) is completed through an online application portal.

Every year, we hold an Open Enrollment period for the following school year. If the number of applications received during Open Enrollment exceeds the number of openings at

a school, enrollment is determined by a lottery. Families that do not receive an enrollment offer during the lottery are then added to a waitlist.

While applying during Open Enrollment gives you the best chance of securing an offer, we continue to accept applications year round. Applications submitted outside of the Open Enrollment period are added to the school's waitlist, following any applications received during Open Enrollment.

For frequently asked questions regarding enrollment at BASIS Charter Schools, [click here](#).

"My advice is to not let the lottery system scare you. When Open Enrollment started, I applied to three different BASIS primary schools and was initially waitlisted at all three. Luckily, there was a lot of movement on the waitlist over the summer and I was able to get my daughter into our top choice of school."

– Allison B., BASIS Scottsdale Primary West Parent

VISIT YOUR CHILD'S NEW SCHOOL

Your child will feel much more comfortable on their first day if they are already familiar with the general layout of the school. Maybe your child already visited the school when you originally took a tour—if so, great! If not, call the school and ask if you could come by and visit before the new school year begins.

Many schools also host events over the summer specifically designed for new families to mingle and become familiar with the new campus. Events like these are a great opportunity for your child to meet teachers, staff, and fellow students.

BRUSH UP ON BASIC SKILLS

Use the last few months before kindergarten to practice any basic skills that your child is not comfortable with yet. Examples include counting from 1–10, holding a pencil, and writing their name. This is also a great time to practice social skills like sharing, taking turns, and listening quietly while someone is speaking.

READ BOOKS ABOUT STARTING SCHOOL

Visit your local library and check out a few picture books about starting school. Books can be a great way to start a conversation with your little one about what kindergarten will be like.

PRACTICE YOUR MORNING ROUTINE

Your child's day-to-day life will change considerably when they start kindergarten. To get them ready for the transition, teach them about what they will need to do in the mornings to get ready. You can practice morning tasks like getting dressed, eating breakfast, brushing teeth, and heading out the door at a certain time.

FIGURE OUT THE LOGISTICS

Now's the time to ask any last-minute questions regarding school policies and procedures. Make sure you know where to drop off and pick up your child for the first day of school, and that you have a plan for how to get there on time. If you plan to take advantage of any before-school or after-school programs, check with the school to see if you need to sign up in advance.



“When my student first started kindergarten, it was definitely an adjustment. If your child gets really tired in the afternoon or struggles with something in their classroom, don't feel like you're doing anything wrong. Remember that this is a big transition for your child and it will take a few weeks to get into a routine.”

– Ashley L., BASIS
Scottsdale Primary
West Parent

Learn More About Kindergarten at BASIS Charter Schools

We hope the information in this guide is useful as you get ready for your child's first day of kindergarten. No matter where your family is in your kindergarten journey, we wish you all the best!

At BASIS Charter Schools, we give our kindergartners the strongest start possible. We are dedicated to creating a positive classroom environment that inspires a love of learning. To maximize student engagement and support, we follow a co-teaching model with two teachers in each kindergarten classroom.

Throughout the day, students engage in dynamic, hands-on lessons that encourage them to explore, question, and discover the world around them. In the afternoon, our full-day kindergartners participate in enrichment courses like Engineering, Visual Arts, Music, and Mandarin.

You can learn more about kindergarten at BASIS Charter Schools by [finding a school near you](#) and [scheduling a tour](#). We're excited to meet you!



Read our article
[“Preparing Your Child
for the First Day of
Kindergarten”](#) for
more tips and advice.

