



# NORWEGIAN FOLK HIGH SCHOOL



folkehøgskolene  
[www.folkehogskole.no](http://www.folkehogskole.no)



Immerse yourself in something you're passionate about, or try something new, at the school that gives you the freedom.



# NORWEGIAN FOLK HIGH SCHOOL

## What is a folk high school?

A folk high school is a non-formal residential school offering learning opportunities in almost any subject. Most students are between 18 and 24 years old, and the length of a typical stay is 9 months. It is a boarding school, so you sleep, eat, study and spend your spare time at the school. There are no academic requirements for admittance, and there are no exams - but you will receive a diploma as proof of your attendance.

## Life at a folk high school

You live, sleep and eat at the folk high school. Rooms are normally shared, and while some have their own bathroom, it is most common to have a shared bathroom in the hallway. Some schools have a kitchen you can use.

All regular meals are served in the dining hall, where you eat with the other students.

We believe that living with your fellow students creates an outstanding learning environment. By sharing accommodations with people who are different from you, you learn to work together and handle problems. You also get to know your fellow students in a completely different way when you are with them around the clock.

Folk high schools are not just about academics and subjects. Student life also plays a big part in the folk high school calendar. The school organises student events, ice-breaker trips and other social activities. You are free to use the school's common rooms, classrooms and equipment after school. There is always something to do, and always someone with whom to do them. You can opt for a spur-of-the moment evening outing, play a volleyball game or a board game, watch a film, go to a birthday party in the dormitory common room, or simply cosy up with a cup of coffee, chatting or discussing things until well after supper.



*This year has been so important to me, both knowledgeably and socially. For example, I learned a lot from traveling so far from home on my own.*

— Silke Visser from Harleem, the Netherlands

Most schools also offer organised activities in the evenings, such as choir, football training, evening meetings, discussion groups or short courses in various fields.

## History

The concept of the folk high school originated in Denmark with the theologian N.F.S. Grundtvig as a means of providing the common people with knowledge of their history, religion, and cultural heritage. The model school for the movement was established by the young educator Kristen Kold in 1851 and was soon extensively imitated. These folk high schools served as a powerful instrument of national regeneration in Scandinavia.

The first folk high school in Norway was started in 1864. It was an important instrument in building the new nation state and allowing the people to take part in and build the young democracy.

There are no entrance qualifications, grades, or exit examinations. The schools are private but receive state subsidies, and a wide range of subjects are offered.

## If you don't Speak Norwegian

Most classes are taught in Norwegian. However, many schools offer Norwegian courses, and nearly all staff members and students speak English, which can be helpful in the beginning. After a year at a folk high school, you can expect to understand and speak Norwegian reasonably well.



## This is the Norwegian folk high school

- More than 80 folk high schools in Norway
- 7500 students
- 50 – 200 students at each school
- Schools all over Norway, in both urban and rural areas
- No exams



«It's much easier to learn Norwegian when you're surrounded by Norwegians all the time. The girl I'm sharing a room with is my best teacher».

– Aliya Pomerantz (21) from Vancouver, Canada

Your level of proficiency will, of course, depend on your own efforts, but living in a Norwegian-speaking environment gives you a great advantage when learning the language. At some schools, you may select Norwegian language and culture as a major subject or as an elective. If you choose Norwegian language as an elective, you are free to choose between the other major subjects offered.

## How to apply?

Each school has its own website where you can find more information about their courses and the school itself. Once you have decided which folk high school you are interested in, send an application to the school. You can apply to more than one school. Make sure you have the following documents ready when you start filling out the form. Your application must include:

- your contact information and
- information about yourself, your hobbies and interests, or any organisations or clubs of which you are a member. You should also briefly explain why you want to study at a folk high school.
- Some schools want you to provide a contact person and/or the name of the person who is financially responsible for you.

Once the school receives your application, they will get in touch with you within a few weeks. If you are accepted, you will have a few weeks to consider the offer and pay a registration fee (approximately NOK 2500). You will receive more information from the school concerning how to pay the registration fee.

## No application deadline

There is no deadline for applying to a folk high school. Students are admitted until the school is full or until the beginning of the school year.

However, if you are a student from outside the European Union (EU), schools strongly encourage early application, and they will give you an answer within a few weeks. As soon as you are admitted, you will need to apply for a residence permit. This can take up to several months.

Courses in Norwegian language and culture usually fill up quickly. We generally recommend an early application, especially for students outside of the EU who need to apply for a visa. To ensure that you can receive a residence permit in time, you can apply as early as November (for a school start in July of the following year).

## Price

The Norwegian state pays for the classes at the folk high schools, but the students must pay for their room and board, school trips and other expenses. These are all included in the price of a school year.

You pay between NOK 85,000 and NOK 170,000 a year to attend a folk high school. It is the major subject that you select that affects the cost the most. The cost also varies depending on what study trips you go on. On average, a folk high school year costs about NOK 125,000.

The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) requires that applicants from countries outside the EU/EEA make a security deposit (a “good faith payment”) in the school’s bank account before processing an application for a residence permit. This money will be refunded if the application is rejected.

Further information can be found at [www.folkehogskole.no](http://www.folkehogskole.no)

## Subjects

The schools offer subjects like sports, outdoor activities, music, theatre and arts, media, international solidarity and Norwegian language and culture.

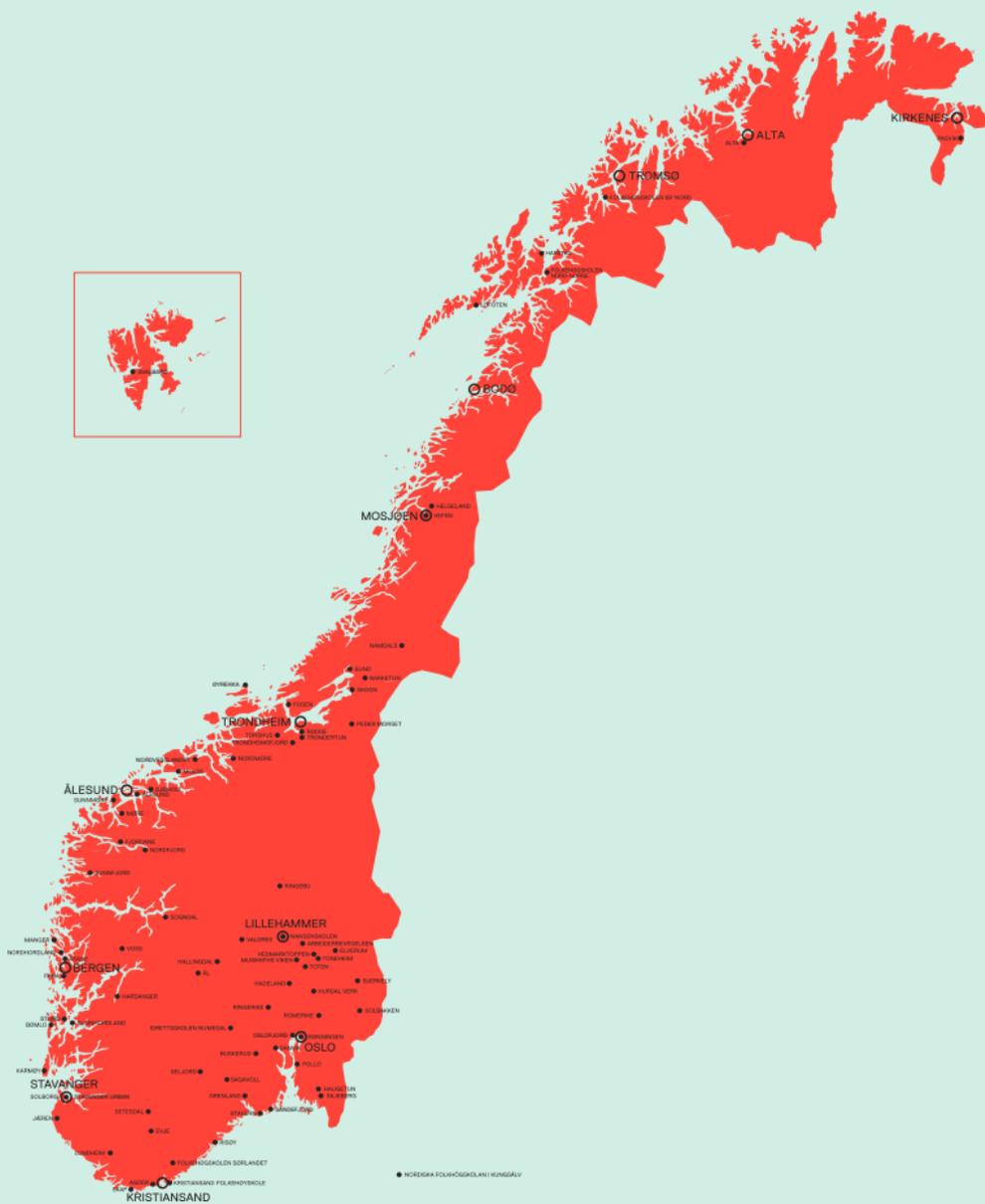
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## Ten reasons to attend a folk high school:

- Experience Norwegian nature and society
- Learn more in-depth and try your hand at subjects you care about
- Attend a school with students from all over Norway and outside Norway as well
- Learn about Norwegian culture and language
- Learn without the pressure of grades
- Become more involved and engaged in the world around you
- Receive a diploma detailing the subjects you have taken
- Receive personal guidance and counselling from teachers with relevant expertise
- Acquire practical experience
- Experience wilderness





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