

90 days in 180, and what to do if you want more

How the count really works, what to keep from every trip, and the visa file step by step.

1 · The papers to gather first

Get everything together before you start. Almost every step in this guide stops dead for one missing document, and starting again costs more than waiting a day.

- The passport you travel on, valid. If you have renewed it, keep the old one too: the old stamps are in there.
- The exact entry and exit dates of every trip into the Schengen area, not only into Spain. Boarding passes, tickets or bookings will do.
- Any entry or exit stamp from before the electronic register, photographed.
- If you hold another nationality, or a residence permit from another Schengen country, the document that proves it: it changes the whole calculation.
- If you are going to apply for the non-lucrative residence visa, your own consulate's list. London asks for: national visa application, form EX-01, photograph, passport, proof of financial means, health insurance, criminal record certificate, medical certificate, proof of residence in the consular district, and payment of the fee (form 790, code 052).

2 · The order to do things in

- 1 Put every trip into the Schengen area over the last year in a table, in order: date in, date out.
- 2 Count backwards from the date you care about, looking at the 180 days before it. The day you arrive and the day you leave each count as a full day.
- 3 Check the result against the European Commission's official short-stay calculator before you buy a ticket.
- 4 Put the date when days become available again in your phone calendar, and a second alarm a week before you run out.
- 5 If you need to stay longer: go to YOUR consulate's page, because the requirements and the way to book an appointment differ from one consulate to another.
- 6 Have foreign documents apostilled and sworn-translated where the consulate asks for it, and book the appointment: at many consulates, London among them, the application is lodged in person.

3 · The mistakes we see again and again

- Counting only the days spent in Spain. Every Schengen country counts, including a day spent in transit.

- Believing that a few days outside resets the counter. It does not: those days simply stop adding up, and the window is still 180 days long.
- Applying the rule to yourself as an EU or EEA citizen. It does not apply to you; after three months your step is registering with the foreigners' register.
- Lodging the visa file at a consulate that is not the one for where you live: it comes back unopened.
- Bringing the criminal record or medical certificate without the apostille and sworn translation when the consulate asks for them that way.

4 · Where you can check it yourself

Official pages, checked on 22/09/2026. The administration changes its screens without warning: if something does not match, the official source wins, not this guide.

■ Entry/Exit System (EES), Unión Europea

https://travel-europe.europa.eu/ees_en

■ Comisión Europea, cruce de fronteras y calculadora de estancia corta

https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/schengen/border-crossing_en

■ Código de fronteras Schengen, Reglamento (UE) 2016/399

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/ES/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32016R0399>

■ Consulado General de España en Londres, visado de residencia no lucrativa

<https://www.exteriores.gob.es/Consulados/londres/en/ServiciosConsulares/Paginas/Consular/Visado-de-residencia-no-lucrativa.aspx>

If you would rather we did it

€120 the calculation, the calendar to 2027 and one year of reminders

€249 the complete non-lucrative visa file, ready for the lawyer

We do the counting, the reminders and the ordering of the file. We are not lawyers and we sign nothing for you: the person who signs and lodges the visa is you, or the lawyer you choose and pay.

A question? One message is enough

Write to us on WhatsApp at **+34 613 13 87 84** (wa.me/34613138784) and a person answers. Asking costs nothing and commits you to nothing.

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