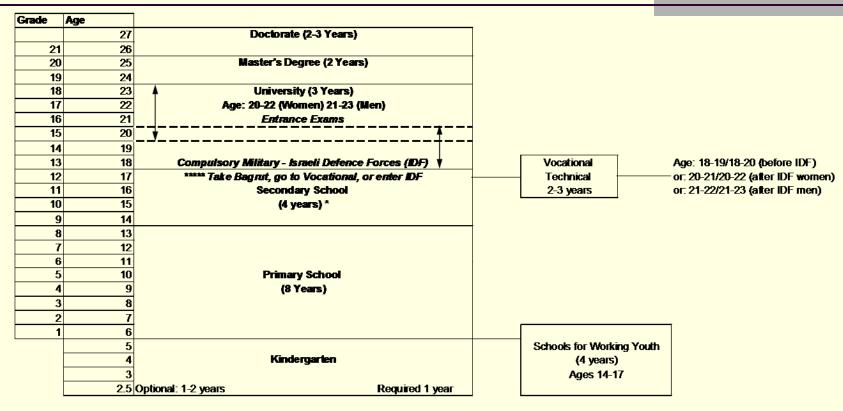
The Education System of Israel

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Israel Education System

Old System (Prior to 1975)

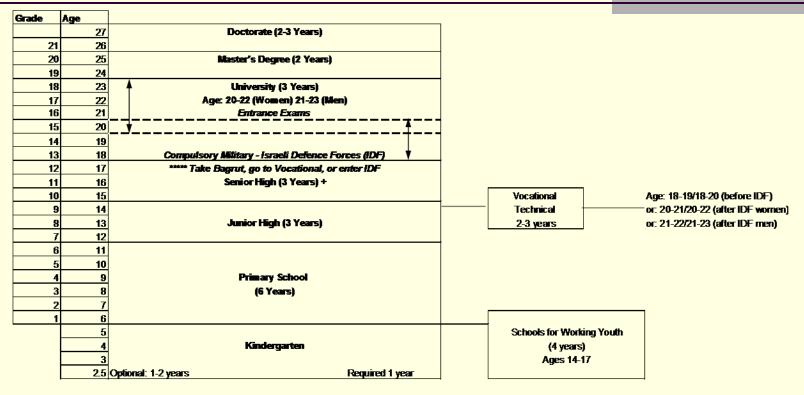


Key:

*	A few vocational schools offer only three years of secondary education		
+	A few vocational schools offer only two years of high school education		
Bagrut	Academic Secondary School Leaving Examinations		
*****	Israeli Defense Forces (2 years compulsory for women, 3 years compulsory for men: entered upon completion of secondary school,		
	before entrance into University, or after completion of certain post-secondary vocational/technical programs which warrant a deferment,		
	or entered after secondary school either before entering vocational/technical programs or before passing the bagrut examinations and		
	entering a university.		
Exams	Examinations designed by individual university faculties		

Israel Education System

New System (Since 1975)



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Country Overview

- The state of Israel is a country in western Asia on the southeastern edge of the Mediterranean Sea. It is the world's only Jewish state based on the parliamentary democratic system. Jerusalem is the capital city of Israel. The country is about the size of the state of New Jersey with a population of 6.8 million. It is the home to immigrants from more than seventy countries, including Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, France, India, Iran, Mexico, Morocco, Russia and the United States.
- Although Israel is a Jewish state and observes all major Jewish holidays, it does promote freedom of religion and residents can practice according to their own faith. The three major religions are Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Following World War II, the British withdrew from their mandate of Palestine, and the United Nations partitioned the area into Arab and Jewish states. Political struggles continue between the two sides.

Educational Overview

- Israeli schools today may be classified in general either as a state school, a state-religious school, an Agudat Yisrael school or an Arab school (Christian, Druze or Islamic).
- The state and state-religious schools are under the supervision of the Ministry of Education Culture and Sport.
- A separate educational structure is maintained for Arab students, though some Arabs study in the Jewish system.
- The language of instruction in Jewish Schools is Hebrew and in the Arab schools is Arabic.
- Higher education is under the control of the Council for Higher Education. The Council has the power to recognize institutions of higher education and to grant authority to award degrees. Although no accreditation system operates in Israel as in the United States, the Council serves a similar purpose.

Kindergarten

- Compulsory education in Israel begins at age 5, but many parents send children at the age of 3 or 4 to Kindergarten.
- Private Kindergartens charge but the public ones are free.
- It is estimated that over 50% of 3 year olds & 75% of 4 year olds attend Kindergarten.
- Kindergarten gives children an introduction to numbers and the Hebrew alphabet.

Primary Education

- All primary schools offered eight-year programs prior to 1969. (Resources differ with year, some say 1975)
- Post-1969 primary school is six years and postprimary is six years (three years junior or intermediate schools & three years high schools)
- There are separate schools for Jewish & Arab students
- The basic curriculum in Jewish & Arab schools is relatively the same.

Primary Education

- Reading, writing, arithmetic and related activities are taught in the first two grades; after the initial two years geography, history, science, foreign languages, etc. are added.
- Foreign languages in Hebrew schools will either be in English or French. Foreign language training begins in sixth grade.
- In Arab schools all students begin to study Hebrew in third grade. A second foreign language such as English or French may be added in the sixth grade.
- Religious studies are required in all types of school.
- Teaching methods are determined by principals, teachers, and local authorities, but content of overall curriculum is strictly laid down by the Ministry of Education.

Special Education

- There are separate schools maintained for handicapped children, those with learning disabilities and special courses for immigrant children with special needs.
- There are also special primary schools for older children between the ages of 14-17.
- These schools feature Israel's concerns with absorbing immigrants & bridging the educational gap between Jews of European and non-European origin.

Secondary Education

- Secondary education in Israel is based on European models, largely because of the influx of Eastern Europeans after World War II and Great Britain's earlier occupation of Palestine.
- The years of secondary education find students categorized into academic and vocational tracks.
- The last three years (grades ten through twelve) are neither compulsory nor free.
- In academic schools, students take general courses and then specialize during their last two years. In vocational schools students engage in technical, maritime, domestic or business studies.
- The content of the curriculum is laid down by the Ministry of Education Culture and Sport, although there is more leeway in secondary schools than at the primary level.

Bagrut Examinations

- National school-leaving examinations called Bagrut examinations, resulting in credentials required for higher education, are offered in the twelfth grade.
- Candidates who pass a certain number of examinations and meet subject requirements are awarded matriculation certificates. Almost all graduates of academic schools and agricultural schools take the Bagrut, which is comparable to European maturity examinations. Graduates of vocational schools normally do not take the Bagrut, although there are exceptions.

Bagrut Examinations

- The Bagrut Examination covers material learned from the entire secondary school syllabus. There are five exams, four of them at a lower level (general) & one at a higher level (intended focus).
- A single subject pass in the Bagrut would equate to an entire sequence of courses of a US high school student.
- Result slips are sent to students two months after the examinations. Only statements of results sent by the Ministry of Education should be considered as official. Results sent by schools or other authorities are unofficial.

Bagrut Examinations

■ The grading scale for the Bagrut is between 0-10, with 10 being the highest grade obtained and 6 being the passing grade.

Grades	Percentages	Remarks	Suggested US Equivalent
10	95-100%	Excellent	A+
9	85-94%	Very Good	A
8	75-84%	Good	В
7	65-74%	Almost Good	C+
6	55-64%	Satisfactory	С
5	45-54%	Almost Satisfactory	D
0-4	0-44%	Fail	F

Regulations for Bagrut Candidates

- Any student who has completed the 12th academic year and has been presented or recommended by his/her school to enter the Bagrut examination.
- All secondary schools, with the exception of a few vocational and kibbutz schools, enter their students.
- Many students in non-academic schools enter as external candidates. Although there are exceptions, graduates of vocational schools normally do not take the Bagrut.
- In order to qualify for the Bagrut, a student must pass with a grade of six or higher each of the five Ministry subjects.

Military Service

- Either before or after taking the Bagrut examinations, both genders are eligible for military service. Military service is compulsory for all Jews and Druzes, but voluntary for Christians, Circassians and Muslims. Service usually begins at the age of eighteen and is three years for men and two years for women. Credentials are issued by the Ministry of Education Culture and Sport.
- As a result, many students entering Higher Education are traditionally older than their American university counterparts. This also translates into a more intense nature of Higher Education in Israel. Students are more mature and more is demanded of them by faculty. Students have a fall and spring semester as well as an examination period during the summer months.

Higher Education

- Higher education in Israel is designated as either postsecondary or higher education.
- Some post-secondary programs do not lead to degrees and are supervised by the Ministry of Education & Culture. Higher Education is under the supervision of the Council for Higher Education
- Higher education is offered by three types of institutions:
 - Non-university institutions of higher education offering instruction in fields of technology, the arts & teaching training.
 - Regional colleges
 - 3. Universities

Higher Education

- Higher Education follows 12 years of primary and secondary education.
- There are eight universities in Israel, all autonomous institutions but are recognized by the Council for Higher Education. Universities are governed by their own boards of governors and the Ministry and Council are not directly involved in running these institutions.
- Israeli degrees present no special problems for US admission officers because the nomenclature is similar, with one exception: professional degrees are first degrees in Israel, not second degrees, e.g., the LLB in Israel and the JD in the United States. The basic first degrees are the BA and the BSc, followed by the MA, the MSc and the PhD.
- Credentials are issued in English by Israeli universities, especially if the student is applying to a US university. Universities in Israel have a great deal of experience in supplying information such as transcripts to US institutions. As with most foreign universities, transcripts are usually processed faster when the US institution, rather than the student, requests them.

Bachelor's Degree

- Completion of the Bagrut, psychometric examinations and a possible personal interview are required for admissions consideration to the bachelor's degree. This degree is completed at universities and other authorized postsecondary institutions under the Council for Higher Education. This degree grants access to further tertiary study.
- Most bachelor's programs are awarded upon completion of three to four years of postsecondary study.
- Bachelor programs in the arts and sciences are often based on a threeyear curriculum, but four-year programs also exist in these fields. This also includes professional degree programs in disciplines such as agriculture, law and nursing.
- The Bachelor's degree represents attainment of a level of education comparable to a bachelor's degree in the United States.
- Grading scales may be expressed in letters, numbers or words and all three scales are provided in the university's documentation. The most common scale is 0-100 with the pass mark of 50, 55 or 60.

Master's Programs

- Master's degrees require two years of advanced course work and research beyond the bachelor's degree.
- Admissions consideration to the master's degree requires completion of the bachelor's degree, a grade average of seventy-five to eighty (in some cases), an entrance examination and an interview.
- Some institutions have two streams in their master's programs. Track A requires coursework only and does not give access to PhD studies. Track B requires coursework and a thesis and permits access to doctoral programs.
- The Master's degree represents attainment of a level of education comparable to a master's degree in the United States.
- This degree is offered in most academic fields. The degree requires completion of coursework and, in some cases, a thesis.

Doctoral Programs

- The doctorate is usually awarded upon completion of a master's degree, plus two to three years of postsecondary study.
- The Doctorate represents attainment of a level of education comparable to an earned doctorate in the United States.
- The doctorate is a research degree awarded for original research as demonstrated in a dissertation.

Medical Degrees

- Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Dental Medicine & Doctor of Veterinary Medicine represent attainment of a level of education comparable to a first professional degree in medicine/dental/veterinary medicine in the United States.
- Awarded upon completion of Bagrut, plus six years of postsecondary study.
- This is the first professional qualification in the medical field and the academic requirement for practicing in Israel. It is considered to be the equivalent of a master's degree in Israel.

List of Israel Universities

Bar-Ilan University	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
Ben-Gurion University of the Negev	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
Technion – Israel Institute of Technology	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
Tel Aviv University	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
The Open University of Israel	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
University of Haifa	Bachelor's, Master's & Doctorate Programs
Weizmann Institute of Science	Master's & Doctorate Programs

Post-Secondary Technical Education

- Training for technical professions usually encompasses engineering & technology fields. These technical fields usually supplement the trained graduates of university faculties of engineering & technology. This credential is similar to technical and vocational programs offered at U.S. junior/community colleges. These programs are offered at specialized technical and vocational colleges.
- Technai is awarded after the first year of education and the qualification is that
 of a "technician". This degree is usually considered comparable to one year of
 U.S. university study.
- The Handassai degree is awarded after two years of engineering education and the qualification is that of a "practical engineer". This degree is usually considered comparable to two years of U.S. university study.
- A Bagrut is not required for entrance into these vocational programs. The usual admission qualifications are the MASMAR & MASMAT which are technical/vocational diplomas required to obtain the Handassai. Completion of these programs in conjunction with the Bagrut allows access to higher education.

Teacher Training

- Teacher training in Israel is accomplished through teacher training colleges & university faculties of education.
- Teaching training colleges are either two or three year programs. Teachers preparing for kindergarten or primary education must complete a two-year program. Teachers preparing for secondary education must complete a threeyear program.
- The Teudat Horahah is a qualified teacher certificate/diploma best equating to two years of university study in the United States. This constitutes the minimum qualification for teachers in daycare centers, nursery schools and kindergartens.

Teacher Training

- The Teudat Horaha Bachir is a senior qualified teacher certificate/teacher's diploma comparable to three years of university study in the United States.
 - Lower secondary teachers may complete this three-year program and be qualified to teach grades kindergarten through ten, or they may undertake a four-year integrated program at a teacher training college, earning both the bachelor's degree and the teacher's diploma.
- Upper secondary school teachers must hold both a university bachelor's degree in a field other than education and the teacher's diploma, which may be completed either in a one-year program following the award of the bachelor's degree or as a four-year integrated program.

Education in Occupied Territories

- Israel has four occupied territories. These territories are not part of Israel, but they are under the supervision of the Israeli military.
 - The four territories are Gaza Strip, Golan Heights, Sinai Peninsula & West Bank
- Due to conflict in these four territories, education is usually provided by private, rather than governmental, sponsorship.
- There are relatively few openings in Israeli universities for students from the occupied territories' educational systems. Therefore, the majority of these students must obtain their higher education abroad.
- The four territories' educational systems are influenced by those of the Egyptian & Jordanian educational systems with the exception of the Golan Heights. The Golan Heights follows the same curriculum that Arab Schools use in Israel.

Resources

In Print:

- Foreign Educational Credentials Required. AACRAO, 2003.
- A Guide to Education Systems Around the World. NAFSA, 1999.
- Handbook on the Placement of Foreign Graduate Students. NAFSA, 1990.
- International Handbook of Universities. IAU, 2005.
- Israel: A Guide to the Academic Placement of Students in Education Institutions in the United States. AACRAO and NAFSA, 1976.
- The New Country Index. IERF, 2004.

Web sites:

- AACRAO EDGE http://aacraoedge.aacrao.org/ Subscription Required.
- CIA: The World Factbook: https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/is.html
- The Council of Higher Education: http://www.che.org.il/
- Embassy of Israel: http://www.israelemb.org/default.html
- Fulbright Organization: http://www.fulbright.org.il
- Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs: http://www.mfa.gov.il/MFA/Facts%20About%20Israel/Education/Higher%20Education
- Jewish Virtual Library: http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/ishisttoc.html
- Ministry of Education Culture and Sport: http://cms.education.gov.il/EducationCMS/UNITS/Owl/Hebrew (Hebrew Only)
- Ministry of Education Culture and Sport: <u>http://cms.education.gov.il/educationcms/units/owl/english/about/ministry+structure.htm</u> (English Site)
- World Education Services: http://www.wes.org
- World Higher Education Database: http://www.unesco.org/iau/onlinedatabases/

Where to find me?

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Thank you!!!