



## Welcome, new families!

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# Welcome to Canada



## PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION IN CANADA



In Canada, parents and guardians must make sure their children get an education.

### TYPES OF SCHOOLS

Each of Canada's provinces and territories runs its own education system. The schools in these systems are called public schools, and they are free (funded by taxes).

Public schools are available in both English and French in many areas.

There are also private schools, which are usually not funded by governments. There are fees to send children to private schools.

### THE SCHOOL YEAR

The school year starts in late August or early September, and finishes in June, with holiday breaks during the year.

Children attend school from Monday to Friday. Schools close on public (statutory) holidays.

Contact your local school or provincial ministry of education to learn how to register your child in school.

A list of provincial ministries of education can be found at [www.cmeec.ca](http://www.cmeec.ca).

### HOW TO REGISTER A CHILD FOR SCHOOL

To register, you will need to show documents that prove

- the child's age (such as a birth certificate or passport)
- your guardianship
- where you live (your home address)
- that your child's vaccines are up to date (a record of immunizations)

### SETTLEMENT WORKERS IN SCHOOLS

Many schools have settlement workers to help children, youth and parents who are new to Canada. Ask your school about these resources.



## AT-HOME EDUCATION

Some parents choose to teach their children themselves. This is called at-home education or home schooling. If you wish to teach your children yourself, you should contact your provincial or territorial ministry of education or your local settlement service provider for more information.



## LANGUAGE OF EDUCATION – ENGLISH AND FRENCH SCHOOLS

English-language and French-language schools are available in many communities across the country. Some English-language schools also offer immersion programs in French. This means that children are taught in French for most of the school day.

For information about schools in Canada that offer courses in French, visit [www.elf-canada.ca](http://www.elf-canada.ca).

## YOU CAN GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION BY

- volunteering at your child's school
- meeting your child's teacher(s) at parent–teacher evenings
- becoming a member of the school council (which contributes to managing the school)
- asking the school, or your child's teacher, for more information on how you can get involved

## OTHER IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW

**Elementary or primary education:** This is the first 8 grades of school. It usually starts with kindergarten at age 4 or 5.

**High school or secondary education:** This usually runs from grades 9 to 12 in most Canadian provinces and territories, except Quebec, where it starts in grade 7 and ends in grade 11.

**Mixed classes:** In most schools, boys and girls learn together in the same classroom. Some private schools offer schooling for boys or girls only.

**Religion:** Some provinces and territories have separate Catholic public schools. Some communities also have private religious schools.



**Additional school activities:** In Canada, students can participate in additional activities at schools, outside of classes. These are called "extracurricular" activities, and they can include sports, clubs, drama, arts and music programs, and school-organized trips and special events.

For example, many schools recognize Orange Shirt Day on September 30. Participants wear orange shirts to commemorate and raise awareness about the impacts residential schools had on Indigenous children, and how they continue to affect Indigenous communities in Canada to this day.

## MORE INFORMATION



For more information about education, including a video, visit [canada.ca/newcomers-education](http://canada.ca/newcomers-education).



To find newcomer settlement services in your area, visit [canada.ca/find-newcomer-services](http://canada.ca/find-newcomer-services).



## Grade/Year Born

Grade/Sept 2025	Year Born	Grade/Sept 2026	Year Born	Grade/Sept 2027	Year Born
<b>K</b>	2020	<b>K</b>	2021	<b>K</b>	2022
1	2019	1	2020	1	2021
2	2018	2	2019	2	2020
3	2017	3	2018	3	2019
4	2016	4	2017	4	2018
5	2015	5	2016	5	2017
6	2014	6	2015	6	2016
7	2013	7	2014	7	2015
8	2012	8	2013	8	2014
9	2011	9	2012	9	2013
10	2010	10	2011	10	2012
11	2009	11	2010	11	2011
12	2008	12	2009	12	2010

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?

Here are a few ideas to support your child at home:

- \* Continue developing first language at home through songs, stories, and conversations. Ask what they are learning about in the classroom, and talk about it in your home language.  
*Research shows students who continue to use their home language typically develop a rich vocabulary and strong academic skills in English.*
- \* Look at these websites for a great selection of bilingual stories:  
[WorldStories](http://worldstories.org.uk) (worldstories.org.uk)  
[Unite for Literacy](http://uniteforliteracy.com) (uniteforliteracy.com)  
[Storybooks Canada](http://storybookscanada.ca) (storybookscanada.ca)
- \* Play board games, e.g. Scrabble, Bingo.
- \* Read daily in any language. Talk about the story, then draw or write about a favourite part.
- \* Encourage writing— grocery lists, stories, emails to friends and family, a journal etc.
- \* Get involved with the school community: attend parent teacher meetings, join the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) participate in school events.



## ELL SPECIALIST TEACHERS:

- \* have specialized education and are trained in ELL methodology
- \* assist students through the various stages of second language acquisition, in their growth toward bilingualism
- \* collaborate regularly with classroom teachers, school staff, parents and community agencies
- \* may be included at school-based team meetings that involve ELL students as needed

## ACCESS COMMUNITY SERVICES

### The Inter-Cultural Association of Victoria (ICA)

Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) Program  
[www.icavictoria.org](http://www.icavictoria.org)

### Victoria Immigrant/Refugee Centre Society (VIRCS)

[www.vircs.bc.ca](http://www.vircs.bc.ca)

### Vancouver Island Counseling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees (VICCIR)

[www.viccir.org](http://www.viccir.org)

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING Language and Communication Hub

**District Vice-Principal, Marlys Denny**

[mdenny@sd62.bc.ca](mailto:mdenny@sd62.bc.ca)

**District ELL Coordinator, Lindy Kovacik**

[lkovacik@sd62.bc.ca](mailto:lkovacik@sd62.bc.ca)



## English Language Learning (ELL) Support For Families



**The primary goal of the British Columbia school system is that of student success through intellectual, social-emotional and career development.**

**The purpose of ELL services is to support student success and inclusion in school and society.**

**(MOE—ELL Policy Guidelines—2018, p.4)**

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING (ELL)

### Benefits of ELL:

SD62 schools value diversity. Schools welcome and celebrate families that speak a variety of languages. ELL services help students to reach their full, individual potential. We encourage students to continue to develop their home language(s).

### ELL support can help...

Promote a sense of pride and understanding of various cultures and languages

Provide a safe, nurturing learning environment

Develop social and academic language skills

**Social language** that is used everyday to communicate, usually emerges quickly. It takes up to 2 years for this to develop.

**Academic language** that is found in textbooks and the curriculum, takes at least 5-7 years to develop. ELL support is essential for academic success.

**For more information, please contact the ELL teacher at the school.**

## PROGRAM GOALS

- \* to develop social and academic English language skills
- \* to provide support for students to achieve the provincial curriculum
- \* to provide an orientation to the societies and cultures of British Columbia
- \* to bridge cultures and facilitate referrals to Settlement Workers In Schools (SWIS) through ICA as needed
- \* to value students' diverse cultural backgrounds, many languages and wealth of knowledge and experience
- \* to work to eliminate racism
- \* to welcome students and ease their transition into Canadian life and culture
- \* to provide a safe, nurturing learning environment

### ELL service may look like:

- \* Individual or small group instruction
- \* In-class support (through consultation with the classroom teacher)

### Documents kept by ELL Specialist:

- \* Annual language assessment
- \* B.C. ELL Standards (continuums of descriptors for oral, reading, writing)

## HOW CAN I GET ELL SUPPORT FOR MY CHILD?

- \* The BC Ministry of Education recognizes the important contributions of newcomer families and provides funding and support to school districts.
- \* If your child's primary or home language is not English, and you think that they may need support, please speak with your child's teacher or the English language specialist teacher at the school.
- \* English language specialist teachers will assess your child's language proficiency levels for speaking, listening, reading and writing. This will help to determine the type and frequency of support that best suits them.
- \* Language learning can take many years to develop. Every child progresses at different rates. Some students may require less time and others more. There are many factors that impact language acquisition. Some factors are:

Age of arrival  
English proficiency upon arrival  
Extent of schooling in first language  
First language proficiency  
Work habits  
Motivation  
Exposure to English outside of school



## Play, Songs Painting, Stories!

and More!



# STRONG START

AGE 0-5 YEARS OLD

- Free drop-in program for children 0-5
- Parent participation required
- bring child's birth certificate or passport to register.
- Space is limited each day until filled.
- Dress your child for indoor and outdoors play, especially for outdoor programming days.

The Strong Start follows the [SD62 Calendar](#).

Please contact the individual school for questions about programming, closures and registration

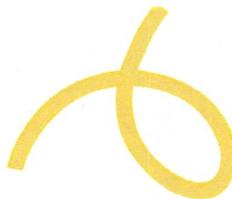
**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION VISIT:**

<https://www.sd62.bc.ca/programs-supports/early-learning>

Strong Start is funded through the Ministry of Education and Childcare

\* SEPT- JUNE 2025-2026 \*





## WHAT IS STRONG START?

Free family drop-in program for children aged 0-5 years that provides play-based opportunities that support children's growth and development. Qualified Early Childhood Educators lead learning invitations where children find opportunities to build connections through play and interact with others of similar ages. This drop-in program for children aged birth-five years old requires parent participation. Children will engage in play-based activities including stories, music and art.



## Locations and Times- 2025/2026

### Colwood Elementary

Address: 3000 Wishart Road  
Office: (250) 478-2332

9:00 - 12:00 pm | Monday - Friday (indoors)

### Millstream Elementary

Address: 626 Hoylake Road  
Office: (250) 478-8348

8:30 - 11:30 am | Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday (indoors)

Gym Time: Tues 10:00 - 10:25 am

8:30 - 11:30 am | Thursday Goldie Park

### Willway Elementary

Address: 2939 Mt. Wells Drive  
Office: (250) 478-1213

8:50 - 11:50 am | Mon to Fri (indoors)

### Ruth King Elementary

Address: 2764 Jacklin Road  
Office: (250) 478-8368

8:35 - 11:35 am | Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri (indoors)

Tues 8:45 -11:45 am at Centennial Park on Carlow Road - (outdoors)

### John Muir Elementary

address: 7179 West Coast Road, Sooke  
Office: (250) 642-5427

8:30 - 11:30 am | Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri (indoors)  
12:00 -3:00 pm | Tues (outdoors)

### Hans Helgesen Elementary

Address: 4983 Rocky Point Road. Victoria  
Office: (250) 478-3431

OutReach 8:30 - 11:30 am | Tuesday (indoors)

12:00 - 3:00 pm | Wednesdays (outdoors)  
Dress to be outdoors!

Monthly Rotating Locations  
1st Wed of month: Witty's Lagoon  
Week 2: East Sooke Park  
Week 3: Devonian Regional Park  
Week 4: Matheson Lake

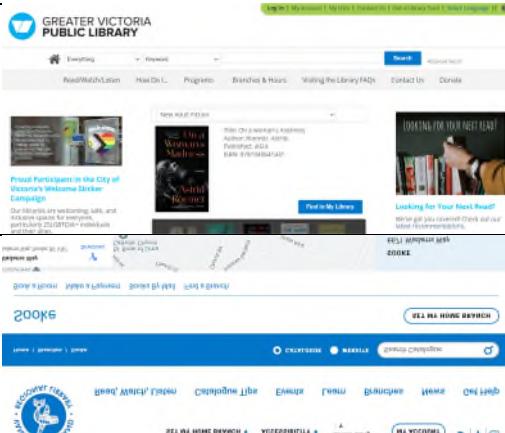
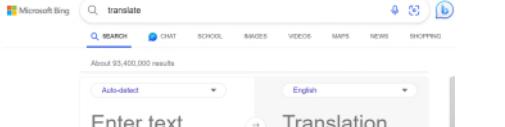




## CONTACTS FOR NEWCOMER FAMILIES

	<p><u><a href="#">Welcome BC</a></u></p>
	<p><u><a href="#">Welcome Canada</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">For New Immigrants</a></u></p>
	<p><u><a href="#">SERVICE BC</a></u></p> <p>Phone line: 1 800 663-7867</p> <p>*translation services 140 languages</p> <p>*available 7:30am-5pm (Pacific time) M-F</p> <p><u><a href="#">Victoria location</a></u></p>
	<p><u><a href="#">Health Link BC – Lunches to Go</a></u></p>
	<p><b>SD62 SCHOOL REGISTRATION:</b></p> <p><u><a href="https://www.sd62.bc.ca/schools/registration">https://www.sd62.bc.ca/schools/registration</a></u></p>
	<p><b>SD62 CONSENTS</b> to find PEN or pupil number and sign consent. Please wait up to 48 hours after the school registration has been confirmed as the PEN and Pupil number need to be assigned in the system:</p> <p><u><a href="#">SD62 Online Consents</a></u></p>

	<p><b>SD62 TRANSPORTATION:</b>  <b>BUS REGISTRATION.</b> You will need your PEN or Pupil #:</p> <p><a href="#"><u>SD62 Bus Registration</u></a></p>
	<p>Wait 1-2 business days until you receive an email (to the same email you registered with) containing a link for SD62 SCHOOL CASH ONLINE. Attach your children to your School Cash Online account to pay for the bus.</p> <p>See <b>INSTRUCTIONS on page 9:</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>SD62 School Cash Online Registration Instructions</u></a></p>
	<p>Link for payment of bussing fee will be available 2-3 business days after online consent is signed. Once you receive the confirmation email, submit the fee per rider.</p> <p><b>Link for SD62 SCHOOL CASH ONLINE REGISTRATION:</b></p> <p><a href="#"><u>SD62 School Cash Online Registration</u></a></p>
	<p><b>SETTLEMENT AGENCY:</b>  <b>ICA</b>  <a href="#"><u>Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria</u></a>  <a href="#"><u>Settlement Worker In Schools program</u></a></p>
	<p><b>SETTLEMENT AGENCY:</b>  <b>VIRCS</b>  <a href="#"><u>Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Centre Society</u></a></p>
	<p><b>COUNSELING CENTRE:</b>  <b>VICCIR</b>  <a href="#"><u>Vancouver Island Counseling Centre for Immigrants and Refugees</u></a></p>

 <p><b>Child Care Services for Families</b></p> <p>Are you a parent/guardian looking for child care?</p> <p>The Victoria Early Years Council (VEYC) is a coalition of early education and care providers in the Victoria area that care for children from birth to age 6. VEYC's mission is to support and advocate for the needs of children, families, and providers in the Victoria area.</p>	<p><b>CHILDCARE RESOURCE &amp; REFERRAL:</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.childcarevictoria.org/families/">https://www.childcarevictoria.org/families/</a></p>
 <p><b>10AM-2PM Sunday, October 29 Mini Pumpkin Patch &amp; Fall Pottery Sale</b></p> <p>Join us for Fall Fun - pick your own pumpkin, crafts, face painting, balloon art and more! \$10.00 entry, admission by donation to the Westshore Food Bank.</p> <p><a href="#">Learn More</a></p>	<p><b>RECREATION CENTRE (Westshore):</b></p> <p><a href="#">Westshore Parks and Recreation (Juan de Fuca)</a></p> <p><a href="#">LIFE Program</a></p>
 <p><b>CRD Making a difference... together</b></p> <p><a href="#">About Us</a> <a href="#">Admission &amp; Registrations</a> <a href="#">Activity Schedules</a> <a href="#">Programs</a> <a href="#">Facilities</a></p>	<p><b>RECREATION CENTRE (Sooke):</b></p> <p><a href="#">Seaparc Leisure Complex</a></p> <p><a href="#">LIFE Program</a></p>
 <p><b>Greater Victoria Public Library</b></p> <p><a href="#">About Us</a> <a href="#">Admission &amp; Registrations</a> <a href="#">Activity Schedules</a> <a href="#">Programs</a> <a href="#">Facilities</a></p> <p><a href="#">Read With Us</a> <a href="#">How Do I...</a> <a href="#">Programs</a> <a href="#">Branches &amp; Hours</a> <a href="#">Visiting the Library</a> <a href="#">FAQs</a> <a href="#">Contact Us</a> <a href="#">Donate</a></p> <p><a href="#">Practicing in the City of Victoria's Welcome Worker</a></p> <p><a href="#">Our libraries are welcoming, safe, and accessible spaces for everyone, including people with disabilities.</a></p> <p><a href="#">2006</a></p> <p><a href="#">ELL Home Device</a></p>	<p><b>LIBRARY (Westshore):</b></p> <p><a href="#">Greater Victoria Public Library</a></p> <p><b>LIBRARY (Sooke):</b></p> <p><a href="#">Vancouver Island Regional Library</a></p>
 <p><b>Google Translate</b></p> <p><a href="#">Text</a> <a href="#">Images</a> <a href="#">Documents</a> <a href="#">Websites</a></p> <p>Detected language: English Spanish French</p> <p>Korean English Spanish</p> <p>Translation</p>	<p><b>TRANSLATION:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Google Translate</a></p>
 <p><b>Microsoft Bing</b></p> <p>translate</p> <p>SEARCH CHAT SCHOOL IMAGES VIDEOS MAPS NEWS SHOPPING</p> <p>About 95,400,000 results</p> <p>Auto-detect English</p> <p>Enter text</p> <p>Translation</p>	<p><b>TRANSLATION:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Microsoft Translate</a></p>

# Google Translate

## Translate emails and websites



Google Translate is a free translation service that translates text, websites, and direct speech from one language to another, in 108 languages.

Click here to try! ↗

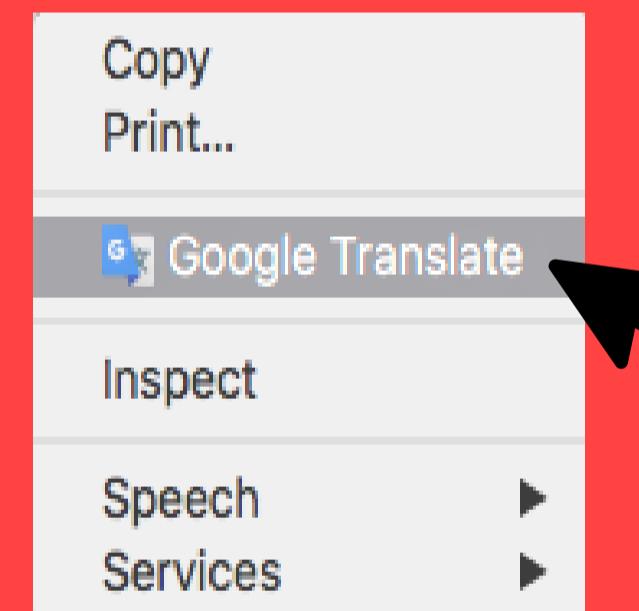
## Use speech and text features to communicate using different languages

### On the Computer

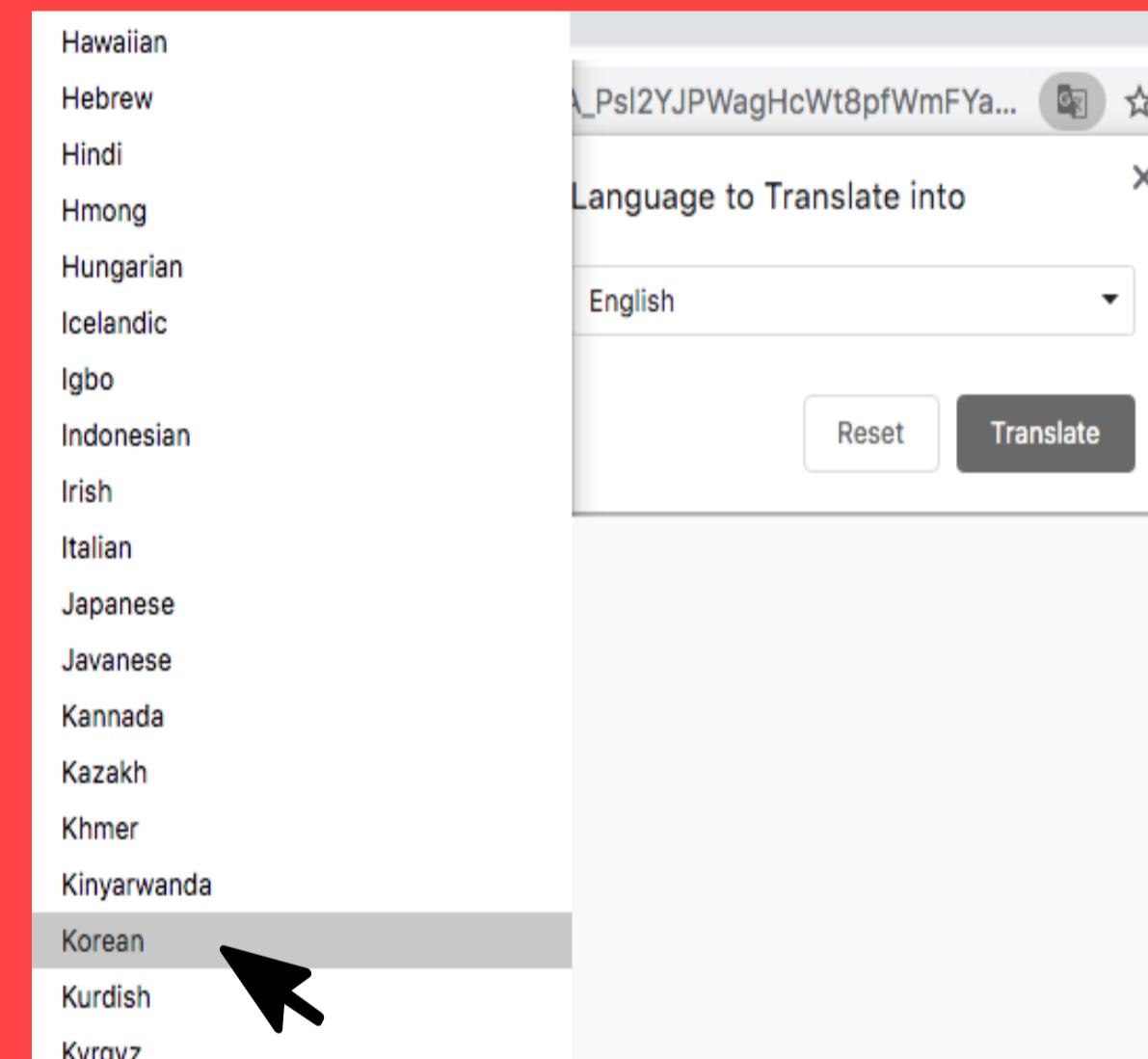
**1** You must use the Google Chrome internet browser



**2** Right click anywhere on your screen



**3** Choose your language and translate the entire webpage

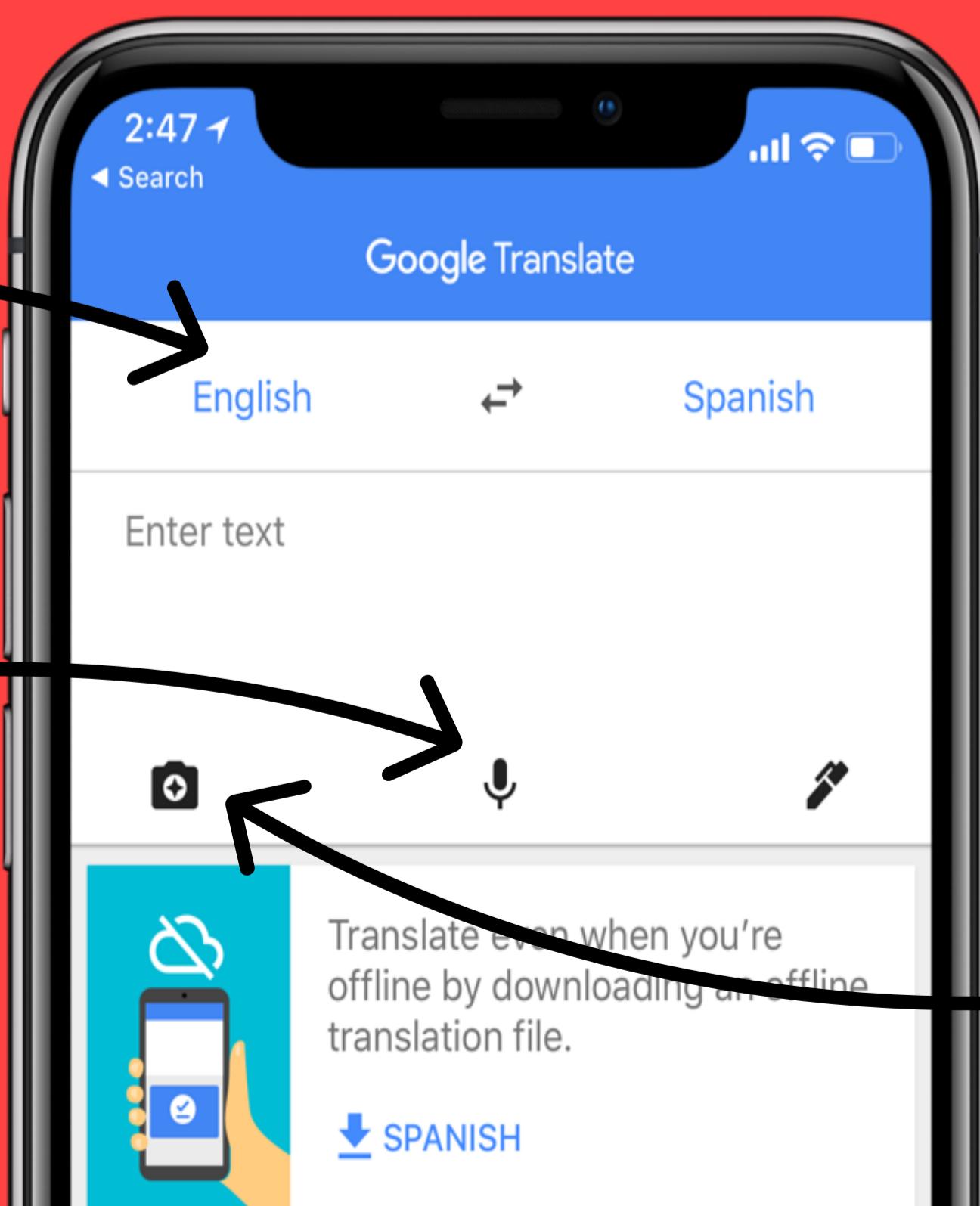


**TIP #1**  
You can also just highlight a word, right click, and translate that word (or phrase).

**TIP #2**  
You can download the extension for your Chrome browser.

### On a Cellphone

- Choose which language is the input language as well as the output translation language



- Type text or speak using the microphone feature and the language will be translated to your chosen translation

- Download from app store onto phone or tablet

- You can also use the camera feature to view text and change it to your desired language translation

