

The on-the-go Classroom

presented by



My name is Robin Chacon and I am a certified English as a second language teacher. With a knack for helping students understand complex ideas, I have been teaching adults and children since 2015. With a unique approach to virtual learning, I have developed a system that allows me to teach while traveling throughout Mexico. I help other educators live their best life by mastering the on-the-go classroom using my tested methods.

As an Amazon Associate I may earn a commission from qualifying purchases made through the links in this eBook. I own and have tested each of the products recommended. I currently use them and they have withstood time and travel. Thank you for the support!



In 2017, my husband Marty and I made a big move—literally and figuratively. We said goodbye to the USA and our corporate jobs to start a drone photography and video business in Cozumel, Mexico. As an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher, I was able to teach online and supplement our income.



Then Covid hit. As an almost 100% tourism-based economy, our little island was devastated, as was our business. Suddenly, my little side-hustle was forced to go big time to keep us afloat.

Today I work from the road, traveling and earning money simultaneously as an online ESL instructor. I get to spend more time exploring this beautiful country while reading on the beach and working on my photography hobby. I'm not going to lie—it doesn't suck!



As an online teacher on-the-go, I've made my fair share of mistakes. I've been suspended for poor internet. I've wasted money trying to figure out the proper lighting, backdrops, and setups. But these hard-won lessons mean you can experience the benefits of living this extraordinary lifestyle without all the hiccups.



Because I'm going to teach you everything you need to know about making a living while traveling the world.



What you'll learn:

- How to find free or cheap places to stay 09
- The setup and props I use 30
- Technology tips and tricks 45

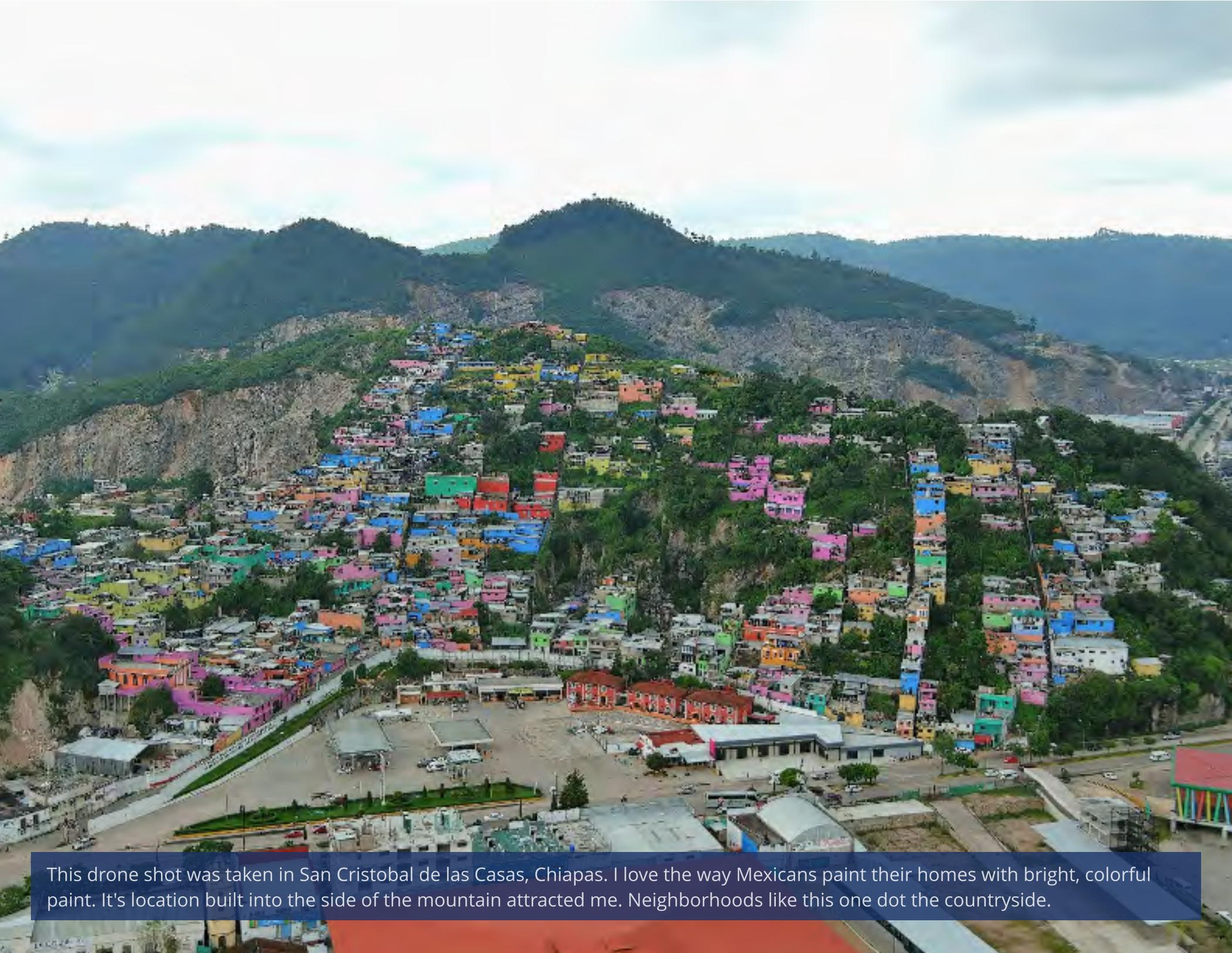
The photos in this ebook were taken by Mexico Living the Dream, our drone photography and video business. We love to photograph churches, nature, landscapes, animals, street art, and anything related to teaching kids. We hope you enjoy looking them as much as we love taking them.

Connect with Mexico Living the Dream:

 [@mexicolivingthedream](https://www.facebook.com/mexicolivingthedream)

 [@mexicolivingthedream](https://www.instagram.com/mexicolivingthedream)

 [Mexico Living the Dream](https://www.youtube.com/MexicoLivingtheDream)



This drone shot was taken in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas. I love the way Mexicans paint their homes with bright, colorful paint. It's location built into the side of the mountain attracted me. Neighborhoods like this one dot the countryside.

So, grab your passport and your packing essentials because we're going on a journey that will change your life.

Are you ready?



Valle de Bravo



San Cristobal de las Casas

An aerial photograph of a hillside town in Atlixco, Puebla, Mexico. The buildings are densely packed and feature a variety of colors, including reds, oranges, yellows, and greens. The town is built on a steep hillside, with some buildings appearing to be built on the natural rock formations. In the foreground, there is a street with a colorful mural on the wall, a blue car, and some trees. A semi-transparent red text box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "How to find free or cheap places to stay".

How to find free or cheap places to stay

House and/or house and pet sitting is a great way to live in wonderful places rent-free. We currently travel in Mexico and there are many homeowners that split their time between Mexico and their country of origin.



San Cristobal de las Casas



San Cristobal de las Casas

Set up business Facebook and Instagram pages to advertise your free services in exchange for rent. Create your posts to highlight any experience with pets, maintenance skills, languages you speak, and anything else that would be attractive to a homeowner and make you stand out.



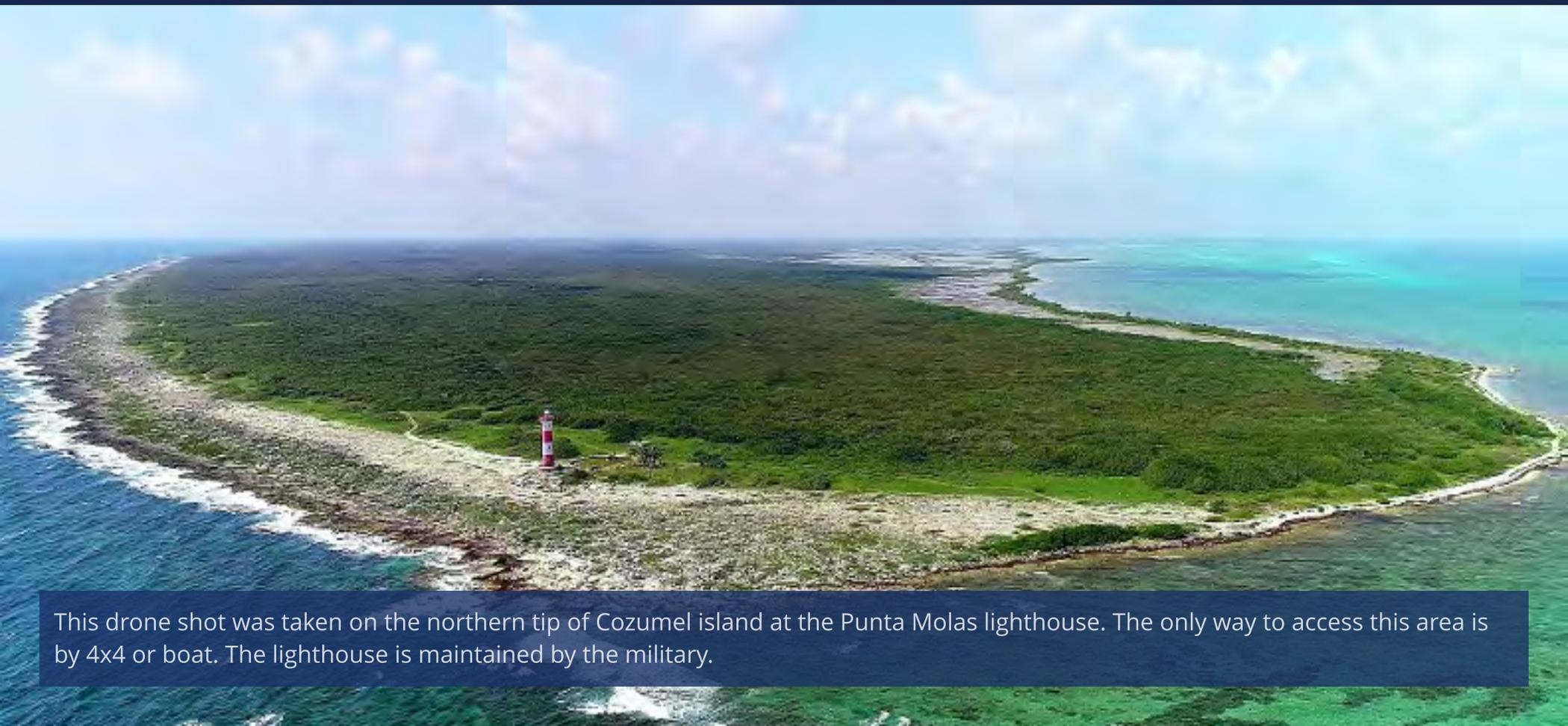
Free and paid house sitting resources

- Join Facebook groups dedicated to bringing homeowners and house sitters together. Search for house sitting in Facebook groups, there are options for specific countries.
 - Post up your dates and areas where you'd like to sit. Add your picture and tag your Facebook page!
 - Create notifications for these groups so as not to miss a potential sit.
- Join a paid site. Since we are currently traveling in Mexico, we chose to join **www.housesitmexico.com**.
 - There are larger, international sites like **Trusted House Sitters**, **Nomador**, **House Carers**, **Mind My House**, and **House Sit Match** featuring homes around the world. You can view the openings to see what's available before you decide to pay for something.
 - **Pro Tip:** Google the site and 'promo code' to see if the site has a coupon before you pay.
 - I'll be honest though, I have yet to get a sit from a paid site and am sitting more regularly on the free Facebook groups.

This drone shot was taken in Valle de Bravo, Estado de Mexico. The lake is manmade as a result of an earlier hydroelectric project. This Pueblo Magico is a vacation spot for Mexico City's wealthy and famous. This picture is above one of the dams (presa in Spanish). I love the purple flowered trees dotting the landscape of this area!



Know what you need as a house sitter. And be firm! Never sit without having written expectations from the homeowner as well as for yourself. We use Facebook as our website and we highlight first steps and a base contract on our page. It has attracted homeowners to us as serious and responsible. Write a base contract for your Facebook page or website.



This drone shot was taken on the northern tip of Cozumel island at the Punta Molas lighthouse. The only way to access this area is by 4x4 or boat. The lighthouse is maintained by the military.

Takeaways:

1

Create a business Facebook and Instagram page

If you've cared for a friend or family member's home or pets, ask for a review.

Write a base contract for

2

Join free Facebook groups and / or a paid site

Add a picture and tag your Facebook page on free Facebook groups.

Google promo codes for paid sites before you

3

When considering a house sit:

Ensure the internet speed is enough to teach and that all expectations on both sides are clear and in



This drone shot was taken in Valle de Bravo, Estado de Mexico at La Peña, a rocky lookout located in town. It's a 30 minute hike to the top for 360 degree views of the lake. Behind us is a statue of the Lady of Guadalupe and cross. There were several offerings of plants and flowers. The homes below are spectacular.

If you don't have the desire to sit for others, I have only one suggestion: Airbnb! I do not work for Airbnb and I don't get paid to endorse them. I hate their fees but I love their filters. When we're looking at a particular city or town, we go straight to Airbnb to see if we can afford the rent.



There are many hosts that offer weekly and monthly discounts. We usually go for the monthly discounts, sometimes up to 80% off their daily rates. I love the map feature so I can see where the rentals are located.

If you're teaching to Asian students as I am, we're teaching as early as 3:00am and sometimes after midnight, so I prefer to have the Entire Place. Then I filter by price. Slide the right-hand bubble or type in your max price. It's a great way to stay within budget while traveling!

300+ stays · Jan 10 - Feb 7

Stays in Valle de Bravo

Type of place Price Instant Book More filters

Entire place
Have a place to yourself

Private room
Have your own room and share some common spaces

Hotel room
Have a private or shared room in a boutique hotel, hostel, and more

Shared room
Stay in a shared space, like a common room

Price Instant Book More filters

The average monthly price is \$5,192



min price \$ 150 max price \$ 15000+

Save

I don't use the Instant Book feature because I ALWAYS have questions for the host before I book! Most of the time the host will answer my questions and send me an invitation to book. Check the language of the host and do your best to message them in their language.



This drone shot was taken in Bacalar, Quintana Roo. It's a pirate ship that's great for jumping off and relaxing.

- Next click the More filters tab. For online teaching, click Wi-Fi and dedicated workspace and don't forget your personal needs. We like to cook so a kitchen is important to us.
- Read descriptions carefully and look at the pictures.
- **Pro Tip!** In certain areas of Mexico hosts offer the Entire Place with a separate entrance but the room is part of their home. This means rooms like the bathroom or the kitchen may be shared with the homeowner or other residents.

Amenities

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kitchen | <input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heating | <input type="checkbox"/> Air conditioning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Washer | <input type="checkbox"/> Dryer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wifi | <input type="checkbox"/> Breakfast |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor fireplace | <input type="checkbox"/> Hangers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Iron | <input type="checkbox"/> Hair dryer |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dedicated workspace | <input type="checkbox"/> TV |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crib | <input type="checkbox"/> High chair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Self check-in | <input type="checkbox"/> Smoke alarm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon monoxide alarm | <input type="checkbox"/> Private bathroom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Piano | <input type="checkbox"/> Beachfront |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterfront | <input type="checkbox"/> Ski-in/ski-out |



This drone shot was taken during one of our drives. I love the colorful cemeteries in Mexico. If you wander through, families keep the graves of loved ones tidy and leave offerings of flowers and other trinkets.

I filter for a dedicated workspace because the host generally has a space conducive to working remotely. If you can't find an apartment that has this, try removing this filter and looking at the pictures. Most times you can get an idea of the apartment to see if there is an area suitable for work. The pictures will also be helpful to ensure the background is also suitable. If the pictures don't show enough to get an idea of the space, it's been my experience to move on.



San Cristobal de las Casas



San Cristobal de las Casas

Lastly, we have a rescue cat named Lily, so we need to find a place that allows pets in the House rules. Make sure to review all of the potential amenities and rules to ensure you have all of your needs met such as a kitchen, pool, air conditioning, parking, etc.!



Once I add all of my requirements, I now have 10 places which is so much more manageable than 300+. Now I can look at neighborhood, pictures, reviews, and contact the hosts of my favorites to ask my questions.

Most online teaching companies prefer that teachers have an ethernet connection. Wi-Fi can be unstable or a high ping to your students which makes their lesson suck. Sometimes the download speed is pretty good but the upload speed is slow and the materials won't load for class. Upload speed is just as important as download speed, make sure it's at least 5 mbps. Check the listing to see if the host mentions the Internet speed and also read the most recent reviews for other guests' experiences but don't take their word for it.

Contact the host and ask:

- Is there a modem in the apartment to connect my ethernet cord?
- Is the modem dedicated to the apartment or shared with others?
- Is the Internet high speed or fiber optic?
 - If it's not fiber optic and they don't know the speeds, can they do a Speedtest for you (<https://www.speedtest.net/>) and text you a screenshot of the results. Know your company's ping, upload, and download speed requirements and have the host change the Speedtest to the region where your students are located.



This drone shot was taken in Cozumel. The old plane was turned into a library and surrounded by a beautiful park. I love the creative use of repurposing this plane to benefit the children of Cozumel!

Airbnb tips

- Stay with a Superhost whenever possible. You can filter it under the More filters tab as you're entering your amenities. I have found Superhosts to be extremely responsive to my questions and truthful in their answers about Internet speed. I have had other hosts never respond to my requests but you shouldn't get that from a Superhost.
- If you find you like a city and the apartment, get a method of communication for your host and negotiate to stay longer. Many hosts are open to renting outside of the Airbnb platform but not at the expense of losing their privileges with Airbnb.
- If you like the city but not the apartment, take your time to look at other apartments. I've had luck using local Facebook groups and calling phone numbers on the for rent signs.

If you're new to Airbnb, I would be grateful if you use my link: www.airbnb.com/c/robinf855. You will get a discount off of your first booking and I will get a credit on my next stay. Win-win!



Takeaways:

1

Considering an area or section of town

Do your research on the area as there may be specific reasons why rents are so low (crime, poor infrastructure, etc.)

2

Listings

Read the apartment description carefully!
If the pictures don't show enough to get an idea of the space, move

3

Hosts

Stay with a Superhost whenever possible. You can filter it under the More filters tab as you're entering your amenities.

An aerial photograph of a vast, green valley filled with low-lying vegetation. A herd of horses and cows is scattered across the landscape, grazing. The animals include several dark horses, a few brown horses, and a mix of black, white, and brown cows. The terrain is a mix of green grass and brownish soil, with a dirt path visible in the center. The overall scene is a peaceful, natural setting.

The setup and props I use

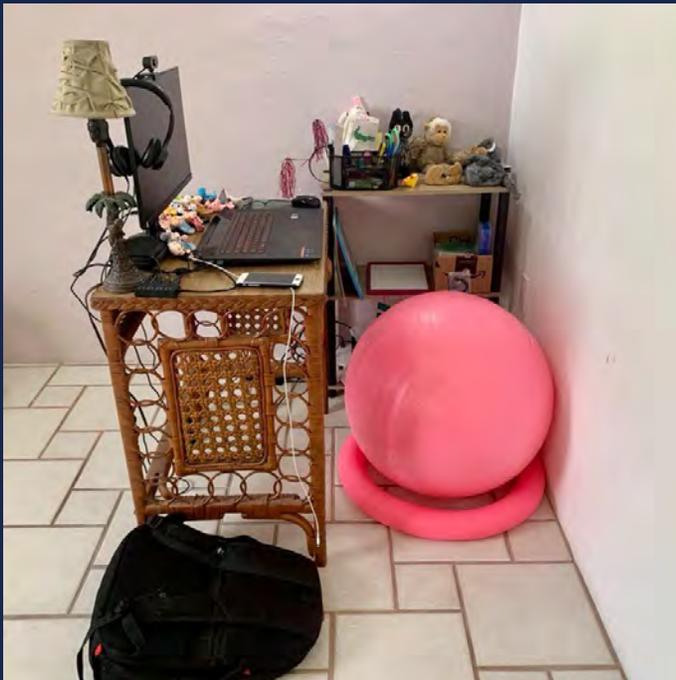
Marty, Lily, and I travel in a SUV with a rooftop Thule so we have to be choosy with our belongings. These are the items that I've purchased to make teaching comfortable and easy to set up and break down.





This is our car driving along the east side of Cozumel, a 12 mile stretch of amazing beaches. This side of the island is government owned and free of large hotels and homes. There is one small, eco hotel and some tiki style, family owned restaurant/bars. There is no electricity and wifi is limited to the hotel and one of the larger beach clubs. Sea turtles return every year to lay their eggs and there are opportunities to support the organizations that keep the beaches clean for them, mark their nests, and keep track of the eggs. Currents are strong on this side of the island so one won't find boating, snorkeling, or swimming but there is surfing. The waves here are not huge so it's a perfect place to learn if surfing is on your bucket list!

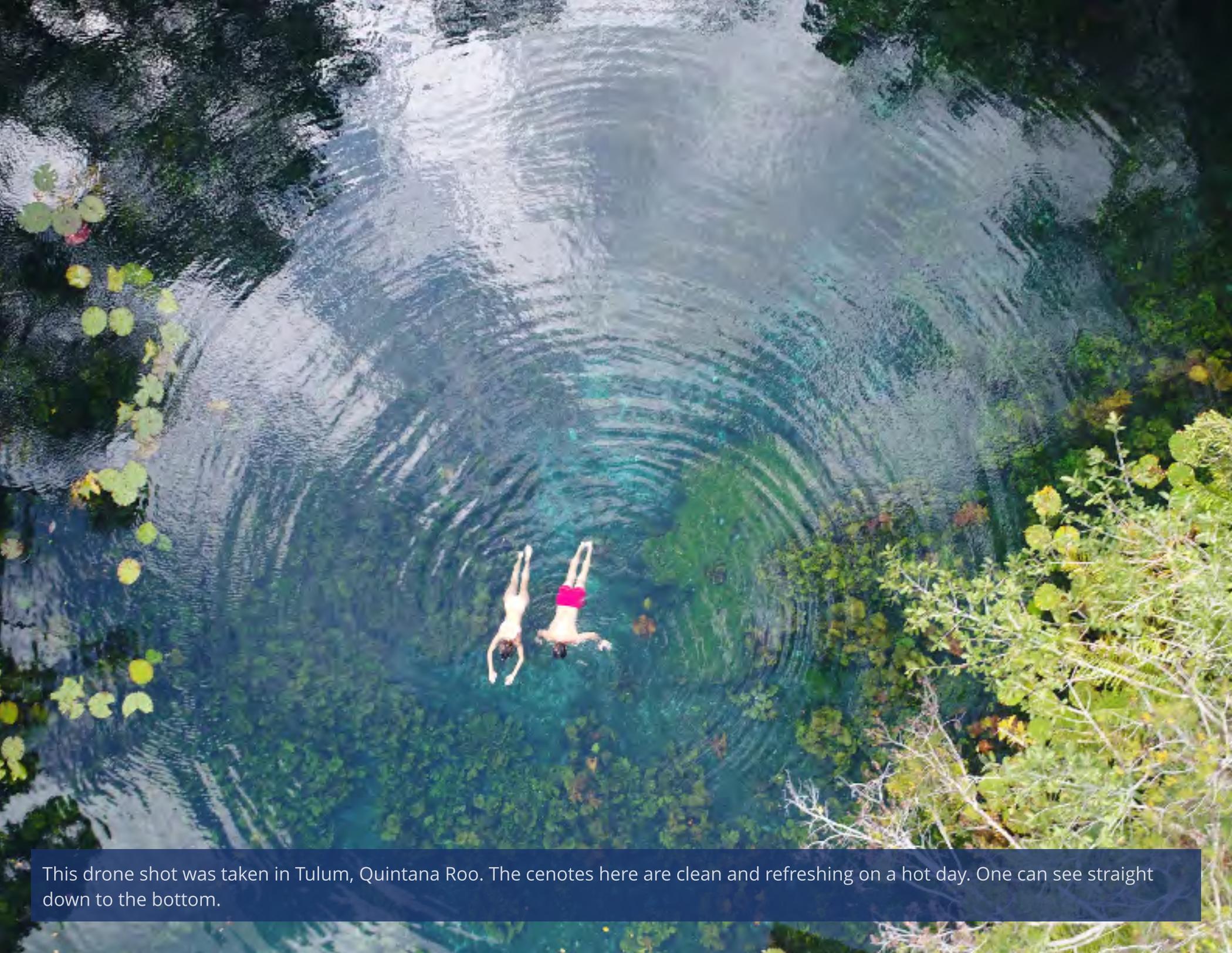
A comfortable chair! The majority of places I have rented have not had a chair suitable for long hours of work. I use a yoga ball chair that blows up and flattens out for my move and includes a blow up air base for stability. It also has resistance arm bands so I can use it for exercise - win win! My chair came with a measuring tape, a foot pump, and extra plastic plugs in case one gets lost.



The only option for seating in this one bedroom casita was a small wooden chair. No way! We were here for a 6 week house and pet sit. The outdoor pool and the gardens in this space were absolutely amazing!

Get your yoga ball chair on Amazon!

<https://amzn.to/4b6GTM9>



This drone shot was taken in Tulum, Quintana Roo. The cenotes here are clean and refreshing on a hot day. One can see straight down to the bottom.

Game changer: easy organization!

This rolling mesh cart is perfect for props, whiteboards, and any other item needed to teach. I love that it doesn't require tools and is easy to put together and tear down. The baskets fit together and the entire unit takes up very little space.

Get yours on Amazon! <https://amzn.to/45za89a>





Bacalar, Quintana Roo

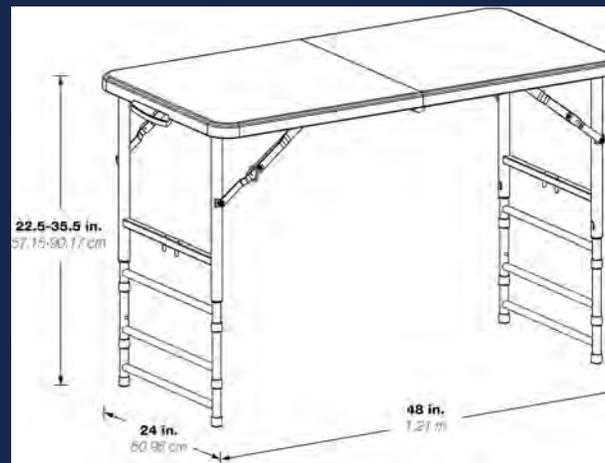
Lighting! We all know how important it is for your students to see your mouth and face without shadows. I use the existing lighting and supplement with this clip light. It sits on top of a laptop and is moveable to either side of your webcam wherever additional light is needed. It has 3 light modes and 10 levels of brightness. It swivels 360 degrees and plugs into the laptop's USB port.

Get your clip light on Amazon! <https://amzn.to/3RyQfJM>



A Table is optional but I'm excited about this one because it's height adjustable! It's a 4-foot folding table that allows me to work standing up. My computer takes up half which gives me space to set up my props on the other half.

<https://amzn.to/3nyTwth>





This drone shot was taken in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas where there are over 300 beautiful churches. On this day we hailed a taxi to drive us to all of the best out of the way churches. He was a wealth of information and at 50 pesos (about \$2.50 USD) an hour, an absolute bargain. The old, indigenous woman climbing up the stairs asked if there was a pilot in the drone. These are the most cherished of moments.

Perfect Your Props and Backdrops!

Lions, tigers, and bears, oh my! Kids and parents love props and educational backdrops! But they can be heavy and take up too much space and since I'm renting or staying in someone's home, I don't want to ruin their walls with backdrops.



Digital props and other money and space savers

Enter ManyCam! It's a third-party webcam that uses your internal or external webcam and has tons of borders, virtual backdrops, and effects. ManyCam allows me the flexibility to change up my backdrops and borders for each student based on their lesson, age, and level and many of the effects are animated. Most teaching company logos are already loaded into ManyCam. It's free to use for the

basic features but you can't turn the ManyCam logo off. Keep an eye out for special pricing and discounts!

I purchased a lifetime subscription that can be used on 4 devices.

Pro Tip! You can purchase a lifetime subscription for 2 or 4 devices and share the cost with friends. There are other providers such as YouCam that offers skin smoothing and makeup application for those early morning and late-night classes.

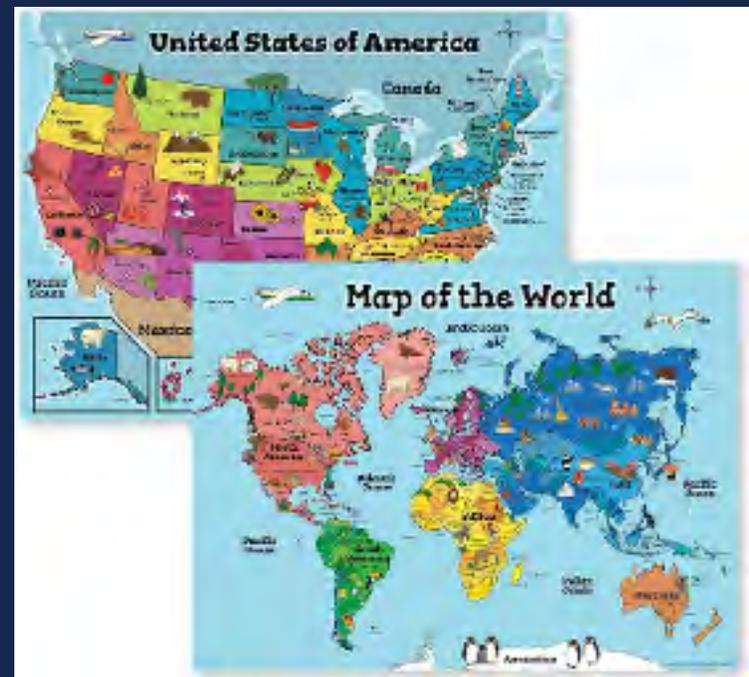
Flashcards are excellent props and I draw most of my own. I buy tongue depressors, index cards, glue, and dry erase markers to make them. I mirror image Manycam which means physical props show up backwards. Making my own means I can also make them backwards so neither I nor my students get confused.



More props to up-level your teaching game!

Finger puppets, a few stuffed animals and/or hand puppets, school supplies, and a magnetic white board round out my props. The magnetic white board makes secondary reward systems super easy and fun for the kids. If I need a background, I have a laminated world map that I can tape up behind me. It's light and rolls up for easy storage. Get them on Amazon!

puppets: <https://amzn.to/4exSMO4> map: <https://amzn.to/45znFO3>



Takeaways:

1

Lighting

I love my dual selfie ring to supplement the existing lighting and with the webcam arm, I can move my laptop without disturbing my webcam placement.

2

Maintaining Energy

Standing up while teaching is excellent for maintaining my energy, especially when teaching groups of kids.

3

Digital Props

My favorite is Manycam. You can save money by purchasing a lifetime subscription for 2 or 4 devices and share the cost with friends.



Technology tips & tricks

This drone shot was taken in Sima de las Cotorras in Chiapas. Green parrots live in this hole and fly out in spectacular fashion around sunrise. There is also an option to rappel into the hole. We chose this as our anniversary spot and rappelled into the hole and camped for the night. It was an exciting and we were able to photograph the area from above and below!

Computer: Specs are Critical!

A computer is pretty obvious right?! But what kind? As a traveling teacher, a laptop is a better choice than a desktop. It doesn't have to be new but it does need the right specifications. You should know the minimum requirements for your company. The most important specs when considering a computer are:



Valle de Bravo



Valle de Bravo

Operating System (Windows or Mac)

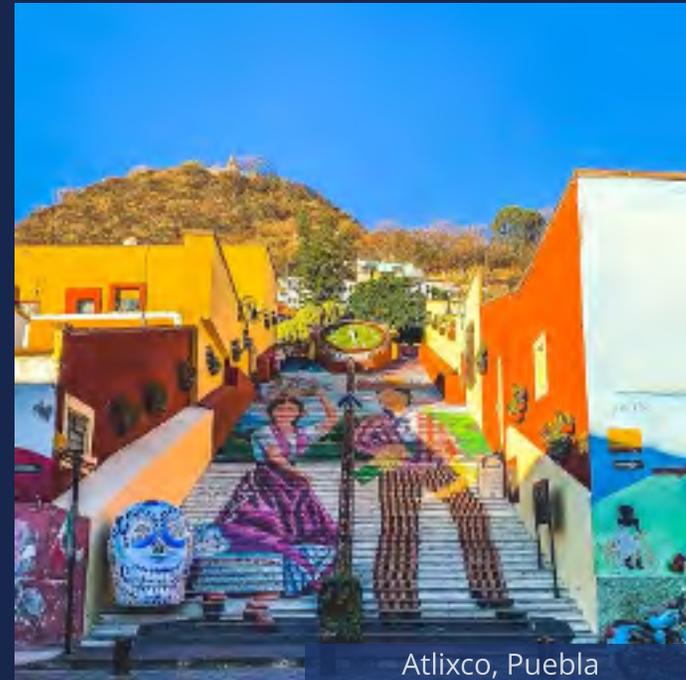
- I use a PC with Windows 11.



RAM (random access memory) - RAM is your computer's short-term memory and whatever you're working on will remain stored for quick access. If you don't have enough, your work will slow down significantly. It is not recommended to go below 8GB RAM. My computer has 16GB. Restart your computer at night to clear the RAM to avoid potential slowdowns for that early morning class.



San Cristobal de las Casas



Atlixco, Puebla

CPU (intel processor or core) - this is your computer's core (or brain) and the more intel processors you have, the more applications or tasks your computer can run at the same time. I work for several online companies and sometimes I have to switch between them several times per day so I like to keep all of their applications open plus Manycam. The more applications open on



Valle de Bravo

the computer, the higher the CPU usage and can slow down the performance of the computer. I have an older core I3 and it was incredibly slow. I prefer to use my laptop with a core I7 and it performs well above my I3 as well as a more satisfying experience for my students.

Important Accessories



Most laptops have internal **webcams** and they're great but check the placement on your model. If the placement of the webcam is on the bottom of the monitor you will appear as if you're looking up at the sky and not at your student. Awkward! An external webcam will work perfectly and is much less expensive than buying a new laptop. (<https://amzn.to/4c7wSzF>)

My laptop has 3 **USB ports** and I need 5. My USB hub has buttons to turn each USB port on and off. I use this feature to turn my headset off to listen to a video or music without unplugging the headset. It's also handy when on the go with my

laptop, like a cheap docking station. (<https://amzn.to/4b5tfZS>)

I haven't found an apartment yet that provides an **Ethernet cord** so I carry 2. One for a modem in the apartment and an extra-long, 100-foot cord. I've lived in an apartment that shared the modem with the homeowner and arranged beforehand to use my extra-long cord from his home to the rental next door before paying the deposit and signing a lease. **Pro Tip!** Some of the newer laptops don't have an ethernet port. Buy an ethernet adaptor, they are very inexpensive. (<https://amzn.to/3VSvXh6>)

Internet Outages?



Wi-Fi hotspot - what happens if the Internet goes out? A Wi-Fi hotspot on your phone or a separate one is a great backup option. I chose a separate one over using my phone because it's cheaper in Mexico. Unlimited plans are unusual here but if your country has them, it's easier to have it on your phone. My hotspot is 4G LTE and requires a SIM. I have a plan that allows me to pay a small amount when

I need it. (<https://amzn.to/4cqCg0t>)

Sometimes the Wi-Fi is perfect but there are dead spots. A **Wi-Fi extender** is a great solution for this problem and not a large piece of equipment to carry. The better ones can be pricey though so do your research. If you're using an Ethernet cord this isn't a necessary piece of equipment to carry.

(<https://amzn.to/4b9E0dF>)

Modem Location



Ethernet Powerline Adapter - I am just learning about these and haven't invested in one yet. Because of that I don't have a recommendation on a brand. They are small enough and I will definitely consider this in the future. Here's how it works: let's say everything is perfect but the modem is several rooms away from where you want to teach and stringing an ethernet cord is inconvenient. The adapter

comes with two pieces. Plug one into the wall near the modem and connect an ethernet cord from the modem to the adapter. Plug the other adapter into the wall near your computer and plug an ethernet cord from the adapter to the computer. It's important that the adapters be plugged into the wall and not a surge protector because it works using the home's existing electrical wiring. Cool huh?

Power Issues?



I love my **surge protectors** and have two kinds! In my experience, rentals have not had enough outlets for my equipment, no outlet near my desk, or both! My extension cord is perfect for this with 8 outlets and 4 USB plugins to charge my phone and hotspot. I have a 2nd surge protector that plugs directly into the wall with no extension cord. Both have high jules so if there is a lightning storm, my equipment is protected. I have these:

<https://amzn.to/4c7KsmO>

<https://amzn.to/45z8X9Y>

Uninterruptible Power Supply: while no one can predict or solve a power outage, these can be a lifesaver. It's great for finishing a current class in the event of an outage and giving you the opportunity to cancel any downline classes. It works exactly as it sounds and will keep your equipment running for the length of time of the unit purchased. Make sure to plug your modem into the UPS! It's pretty heavy and can be bulky so I haven't invested in one yet.



Flamingos taking off in Chelem, Yucatan. Flamingos can be seen year round in several areas of the Yucatan Peninsula. Some popular areas include Celestun and Rio Largentos.

Takeaways:

1

Computer specifications

Restart your computer at night to reset the RAM.

16gb RAM is recommended for use with ManyCam in combination with teaching applications.

Laptops with a core i7 is superior to an i3 or i5 especially when using

2

Important accessories

Check your laptop's webcam placement.

Check your laptop to ensure it has an Ethernet port. Some of the new, lighter travel models don't have one. USB hubs are helpful if your laptop doesn't have enough ports.

3

Internet & power

Your phone's hotspot is very convenient if you can get an unlimited data plan.

A good surge protector is a must.

Make sure to plug your modem and lighting into the UPS!

Are you ready to make the rest of your life the best of your life? Let's work together to answer your questions!

I offer:



- One-on-one Zoom consultations for questions
- Social media business page setup for YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram
- Logo creation, social media postings, video logo reveal
- Teacher introduction video

Questions Worksheet:

1

What are my biggest hurdles/fears? Is this right for me?

2

What do I keep and what do I do with the rest of my

3

Where do I want to go?

Write down everything and ask yourself questions. Google is your friend but can also provide false information. I'm happy to share my experience and my pitfalls. Happy travels and keep in touch!

Contact Me



esltravelingteacherrobin@gmail.com

www.eslteacherrobin.com

Connect with Me



[eslteacherrobin](https://www.facebook.com/eslteacherrobin)



[eslteacherrobin](https://www.instagram.com/eslteacherrobin)



[ESL Teacher Robin](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



[Robin Chacon](https://www.linkedin.com/in/RobinChacon)