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STUDENTS

Travel Checklist

and Tips for Studying in the USA

Congratulations on being accepted to a U.S. university! We understand that traveling to a new country for your studies can be both exciting and overwhelming. To help you prepare for this journey, we've created a comprehensive checklist and provided some valuable suggestions for first-time F-1 students like you.

Before You Travel

1. Visa and Immigration Documents

- Passport with at least 6 months of validity
- Valid F-1 student visa
- I-20 form (Certificate of Eligibility)
- SEVIS fee receipt
- Admission letter from your U.S. school
- Financial documentation

2. Accommodation and Living Arrangements

- Secure off-campus housing.
- Research your housing options and understand rental agreements.
- Search for hotel, apartment, or short-term rentals(Airbnb, vrbo, etc.)
- Have the address with you when you travel in case CBP asks where you are staying.

3. Finances

- Open a US bank account.
- Prepare a budget for your living expenses.
- Notify your bank of your travel plans.

4. Health Insurance

- Purchase health insurance that meets your school's requirements.
- Understand your insurance coverage and how to use it.



5. Travel Documents and Important Papers

- Photocopy important documents (passport, visa, I-20, transcripts, degree certificates, English proficiency exam, etc.) and store them separately.
- Scan and upload digital copies to cloud storage for easy access.

6. Travel Itinerary

- Book your flight tickets.
- Check baggage allowance and airport regulations.
- Plan your arrival date. *You cannot enter the U.S. more than 30 days prior to your start date.*

7. Packing

- Create a packing list or use ours below.
- Pack essentials, including clothing, toiletries, and important documents. Consider the climate and season of your destination.
- Check baggage weight and size limits.

8. School Onboarding

- Pay semester tuition in full.
- Register for classes and complete any other onboarding steps.

Arriving in the USA

1. Arrival Airport

- Plan your arrival at a major airport in the USA.
- Be aware of the airport layout and facilities.

2. Airport Procedures

- Complete customs and immigration procedures.
- Present your passport, visa, and I-20 to immigration officers.
- Be prepared to answer the following questions.
 - The purpose of your visit to the United States
 - How long do you plan to visit
 - Where you will be staying
 - If you have the means to support yourself financially in the United States
 - If the documents you are presenting are compatible with the purpose and intent of your visit

A visa does not guarantee entry into the United States. A visa only allows a foreign citizen to travel to a U.S. port-of-entry (generally an airport) and request permission to enter the United States. A CBP official will make the decision to permit or deny entrance into the US.



3. Transportation

- Arrange transportation from the airport to your accommodation.
- Familiarize yourself with public transportation options.

4. US Dollars

- Bring enough cash to cover immediate expenses.
 - Transportation
 - Accommodations
 - Tuition
 - Meals
- You can also use credit cards if your home bank has issued you one that will work in the U.S.

Ongoing Tips and Support

1. Academic Success

- Attend your school's orientation program
- Understand your course schedule and requirements.
- Familiarize yourself with your school's campus and resources.
- Make friends and connect with fellow students.

2. Cultural Adjustment

- Learn about U.S. culture and customs.
- Explore nearby grocery stores and essential shops.
- Be aware of emergency services and healthcare options.
- Stay updated on local news, weather, and important events.

3. Maintaining Your Visa Status

- Be aware of your visa and work restrictions.
- Keep your I-20 updated and report any changes to your DSO.

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Essentials

- Current Passport
- Valid F-1 Visa
- Identification
- I-20
- Money : Cash / Credit
- Acceptance Letter
- Transcripts
- Emergency Contacts
- Hotel Reservation / Accommodations
- SEVIS I-901 fee receipt
- Financial Info - showing proof of funds to cover tuition and living expenses

Toiletries

- Soap
- Shampoo
- Toothpaste & Toothbrush
- Medications & Prescriptions
- Comb / Brush
- Deodorant
- Sanitary Items

Electronics

- Laptop
- Charger
- Powerbank
- Phone
- Headphones
- Travel Adapter

School Supplies

- Backpack
- Pens
- Pencils
- Calculator
- Notebook

Clothing

- Shirts
- Pants
- Shoes
- Sweaters
- Socks
- Consider the climate and season of your destination