

International Travel Checklist for Students: Things to Do Before You Confirm Plans and During Your Trip

Destination Safety

- ☐ **Research the safety and security situation of your planned destination.**
 - ✓ Before making travel arrangements, use these resources to determine if it's *safe* to travel to your destination. Be sure to research the specific locale(s) as well as the country and region at the [U.S. State Department website](#).

NOTE: Applications requesting funding to travel to countries under a travel warning will receive additional scrutiny
- ☐ **Be able to answer the following questions:**
 - ✓ How safe is my destination?
 - ✓ Is it OK to travel to a country with a high threat rating?
 - ✓ Is the safety/security environment of the country in flux?
 - ✓ Would it make sense to go to a different, safer country instead?
 - ✓ If I go, what resources will I use to monitor changes in the security situation or respond in an emergency?
- ☐ **Learn more about your destination, and how to get there safely**

Start with these resources:

 - ✓ [International travel](#) section of the U.S. State Department website
 - ✓ [CIA World Factbook](#)
 - ✓ The website of a popular media outlet in your destination
 - ✓ [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Learn about:

 - ✓ Political climate, weather, crime, what to bring, health issues, cultural differences, risks, differences in laws, what to expect, transportation, holidays or election days
 - ✓ The location of the [nearest U.S. embassy](#) and/or [your home country's embassy](#)

Travel Planning

- ☐ **Check your passport and get a visa (if required)**

Passport basics:

 - ✓ It can take several months to get a passport; apply now if you don't have one
 - ✓ Your passport should be valid for at least 6 months after you return from travel

Passport Security:

 - ✓ In some countries you must carry your passport at all times
 - ✓ Take your passport if you are taking a short trip from your base city
 - ✓ In many countries, hotels are required to photocopy or hold guests' passports overnight (it's common, but find out in advance if this is true for your destination)
 - ✓ Report a lost or stolen passport immediately to your nearest embassy. Put together a "lost passport kit," which should be kept separate and includes copies of all your important documents as well as photo IDs and the contact information for the nearest U.S. embassy.

- ☐ **Determine if you'll need a visa**
 - ✓ Check the [U.S. State Department](#), or your home country's embassy. Then answer these questions:
 - ✓ What type of visa do I need (tourist, student)?
 - ✓ How long will it take for my visa to arrive?
 - ✓ Will I need a transit visa (for a layover or travel through another country on the way to my destination)?
- ☐ **International students and visas**
 - ✓ Non-U.S. citizens returning to the U.S. after travel can run into complications, so begin the visa process early
 - ✓ Meet with the International Students and Scholars with questions about the visa process
- ☐ **Register your travel with the STEP program**
 - ✓ Register with the U.S. State Department through the [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program](#) (if you are a U.S. citizen) and help the State Department assist you in an emergency
- ☐ **Submit Clark's International Travel Form (REQUIRED for all Clark-related travel except study-abroad)**
 - Complete and [submit Clark's International Travel Form](#). The form serves several purposes:
 - It notifies Clark that you will be travelling and provides information that may be helpful in the even you are involved in an emergency situation.
 - It documents that you are travelling on Clark business for insurance purposes.
 - It prompts Clark to provide you with important information prior to your travel.
 - It allows Clark to meet insurance company requirements for tracking and reporting travel.

Health and Insurance

- ☐ **Visit Clark Health Services or your personal physician before you go**

Schedule a travel consultation with Clark's Health Services, a travel medicine clinic, or your personal physician at least 6-8 weeks before you depart

 - ✓ Schedule your appointment early; many immunizations are given in a series over time
 - ✓ A list of travel clinics can be found [online](#). Travel clinics are generally **fee-for-service**, meaning the cost of the visit may not be covered by your family health insurance. Find out before you go.

Make sure to discuss:

 - ✓ vaccinations
 - ✓ traveling with medication
 - ✓ other health concerns for the destination
- ☐ **Understand your health insurance coverage and contact information**
 - ✓ Don't make assumptions about what will be covered.
 - ✓ Determine if your **current health insurance plan** covers you while abroad, including for chronic medical conditions, non-emergency physician visits, pre-existing conditions.
 - ✓ If you're not covered abroad by your program, the following insurance is available for purchase through Clark [HTH Worldwide](#). The HTH insurance also provides assistance in the event of emergencies including evacuation services.

Adapted with permission from <http://world-toolkit.yale.edu/orientations/undergrad/travelplanning>

- ✓ Discuss your options with your parents or guardian, and decide if you need to **purchase an individual plan** for yourself.

☐ **Insurance Card**

- ✓ Take your health insurance card with you, and familiarize yourself with policies and procedures.
- ✓ If you are travelling on a Clark-related purpose, additional travel assistance is available to you. Please see the risk management website for more details.

Finances

☐ **See to your cash needs (ATM card, credit cards) and tell your bank and credit card companies that you'll be traveling**

- ✓ Ask if they charge foreign transaction fees
- ✓ Ask if you'll need a PIN to make purchases abroad
- ✓ Find out what the exchange rates are for the countries you will be traveling in.

☐ **Clean out your wallet or purse and take only the credit cards and ID you will need**

☐ **Find out if traveler's checks are a viable option or if you should rely on a debit/credit card and ATMs to obtain cash**

Important documents

☐ **Take photocopies of important documents and itinerary; give one set to your family and take one set with you**

☐ **Make copies of the following documents**

- ✓ Passport identification page and visa
- ✓ Driver's license
- ✓ Insurance cards
- ✓ Credit cards (front and back)
- ✓ Flight and other travel itineraries
- ✓ Immunizations and prescriptions
- ✓ Significant medical history (e.g., surgeries, major illnesses)
- ✓ The letter of admission to your university abroad or your study abroad program

☐ **Then...**

- ✓ Leave a copy of each at home with family and/or a friend
- ✓ Keep a copy in your luggage (separate from any originals)
- ✓ Scan and email copies to yourself or store photos of them on your smart phone and laptop

Communications

☐ **Look into cell phones and communicating (internet accessibility, telephone cards and costs)**

☐ **Cell phones**

Ways to get a cell phone for your travel:

- ✓ Ask your current cell phone service provider to unlock your U.S. cell phone
- ✓ Buy an international cell phone before you leave
- ✓ Buy an international plan for your cell phone if it can be used in the country you are visiting (check with your carrier)
- ✓ Buy a phone when you reach your destination then purchase a SIM card that can be recharged on a pay-as-you-go basis

☐ **Check in**

- ✓ Set a schedule for weekly check-ins with a family member at home so someone knows you're safe

☐ **Receiving calls from home**

- ✓ Making international calls from your cell phone can be expensive, but incoming calls may be free
- ✓ [Skype](#) and [Google Voice](#) may offer cheaper international calling rates from the U.S.

☐ **Collect calls**

- ✓ Learn how to make collect calls from your destination
- ✓ Find [country-specific telephone codes](#).

☐ **Emergency phone numbers**

- ✓ Make a list of emergency phone numbers and bring it with you. Include the phone number of the US Embassy for the location you are visiting as well as Clark University Police (1-508-793-7575).

☐ **Emergency cell phone use**

- ✓ If you are using your cell phone during an emergency that could last hours or even days, try texting instead of calling to save battery life on your phone

Personal awareness

☐ **Be aware that Clark University policies, rules and standard of conduct apply while you are abroad**

- ✓ Before you depart review the Clark Student Handbook policies and their application to Clark students when away from campus

☐ **Consider personal property insurance in case of loss or theft**

- ✓ Consider personal property insurance for electronics or other expensive personal items
- ✓ See if your belongings are covered abroad by your parent/guardian's homeowner's policy

Safety during your stay

☐ **Be aware of the cultural differences and abide by the local customs.**

- ✓ Be aware of the cultural differences and abide by the local customs.
- ✓ Request a hotel room between floors two and seven. Some fire department ladders will not reach above the seventh floor.
- ✓ Always check the nearest fire stairwell, hoses, and emergency telephone when checking in to a hotel.
- ✓ Be aware of your surroundings

- ✓ Invest in a good map of the city you are visiting
- ✓ Use the “buddy system” – try to travel in groups consisting of locals/classmates from the country

□ **Road crashes are the single greatest annual cause of death of healthy U.S. citizens traveling abroad. Suggestions for road safety:**

- ✓ Do not ride in unofficial taxis or buses.
- ✓ Avoid overcrowded vehicles or vehicles that are in poor condition. Do not travel at night, especially in rural or mountainous areas. Carry a cell phone.
- ✓ Ride vehicles with accessible and functional seat belts.
- ✓ Do not ride with drivers who seem to be fatigued, under influence of alcohol or medication or distracted.
- ✓ Be alert for irresponsible driving (e.g. speeding, inattention to driving, disregard for signage and signals).
- ✓ Speak out if driver is speeding or driving irresponsibly.
- ✓ If driver continues to drive irresponsibly, politely ask to be let out at first safe opportunity.
- ✓ If renting a car abroad, always purchase the additional liability insurance.
- ✓ If driving, be sure to research and understand the applicable laws, including road signs.

List of Websites:

- ✓ US State Department: travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/go.html
- ✓ International travel section of the U.S. State Department website: travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/country.html
- ✓ CIA World Factbook: www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/index.html
- ✓ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/list
- ✓ Embassy locations: www.usembassy.gov and/or embassy.goabroad.com
- ✓ Smart Traveler Enrollment Program: step.state.gov/step
- ✓ Travel clinics: tinyurl.com/njtvq2v
- ✓ HTH Worldwide: www.hthstudents.com
- ✓ Currency Converter: www.oanda.com/currency/converter
- ✓ Country-specific telephone codes: www.countrycallingcodes.com
- ✓ Clark travel assistance card: clarku.edu/offices/business/risk/travelcard.pdf
- ✓ Clark Risk Management website: clarku.edu/offices/business/risk/travelinsurance.cfm