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Things to do before traveling abroad

[University]

International Travel Orientation



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ONLINE ORIENTATION FOR INDEPENDENT UNDERGRADUATE TRAVELERS
(Adapted to remove University's identifying information)

WELCOME!

This orientation contains **helpful international travel information** and tips on how to stay **safe and healthy**

Its **purpose** is to give you tools to experience safe, successful travel, but safe travel is in your hands!

View the orientation in the full screen **Slide Show mode** to freely move about the sections by following links

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Things to do before traveling abroad

View the [Travel Checklist](#) for [University] travelers

- ① [Check your passport and get a visa](#)
- ② [Register your travel](#) with [University] and the U.S. State Department Smart Traveler Enrollment Program
- ③ Print and take your [FrontierMEDEX card](#)
- ④ [Understand your health insurance coverage](#)
- ⑤ Learn about your [destination](#)

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Pre-departure tips

5. Learn about your destination

⇒ Read the [reflections](#) of a few students who wished they had known more about their destination

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
- ⇒ FrontierMEDEX [World Watch country reports](#) (especially the **Cultural Information** under the Travel Information tab – [See a screen shot](#))
- ⇒ [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](#) or [your home country's embassy](#)

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- 4 [Nightlife, alcohol, and illegal drug use](#)
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- 6 What to do if you're [arrested](#)
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Safety tips

1. Preparing for emergencies

**Know how
to react**

[FrontierMEDEX](#) can help you deal with an emergency, but you need to remove yourself from any danger first (e.g., by getting yourself out of the building if there's a fire)

- ➔ It can be hard to know how to react if you've never thought about it before

Don't think, "That won't happen to me."

Take this approach instead: "If it happens to me, I can **keep myself safe.**"

- ➔ Consider **in advance** the possibility of various emergencies occurring during your travel

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1. Preparing for emergencies

Consider plausible emergencies

- An earthquake, a fire, being mugged, getting sick?
What else?

Then ask yourself questions...

- If there were a **fire** in my residence, can I escape through my window?
- How many doors in the hallway to the nearest exit?
- What would I do I'm trapped in my room?

- What would I do if I were **mugged** as I walk home from class?
- What would be my nearest escape route?
- Where could I go to be safe and contact the police?

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Safety tips

1. Preparing for emergencies

⇒ Read *one student's account of experiencing the 2011 protests in Egypt*

Keep asking yourself questions...

- ⇒ If there were a **natural disaster** and my city were in chaos, who would I call?
- ⇒ How would I know if I should stay or leave the country? How would I find transportation to the nearest embassy if I needed it?
- ⇒ If needed, could my hotel or residence supply me with food and water for a couple days?

Building confidence

It may seem silly to think about these possibilities, but occasionally they do happen

- You're preparing yourself to **stay calm** and **act quickly** in an emergency!
- Eventually, you'll feel **safer** and more **confident**

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Safety tips

5. Safe observation of protests

⇒ *Understand the perspectives of three [University] students who were evacuated from Egypt*

Observe and learn, but make smart decisions

- Protests provide a **unique opportunity** to learn about the culture, politics, and current affairs of your country
- **BUT** it's usually **unwise to participate** in protests – they're volatile and can turn violent quickly
- **Observe protests** from a safe distance so you're not mistaken for being involved (by police or other protesters)

Documenting a protest

- Be aware of local laws, customs, and regulations regarding documenting the protest
 - ⇒ You could be arrested for taking pictures or videos or recording your observations
 - ⇒ You may even put the protesters in danger

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Health tips

5. Understand travel's effects on mental health

Impact of study abroad on mental health

Study abroad can have a **significant impact** on your mental health

- ➔ Increased vulnerability to loneliness, depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts
- ➔ Existing problems can become worse
- ➔ Treatment for mental health problems can be hard to find outside the U.S.

- Know that it is **very common** for students to receive treatment for mental health issues during college and study abroad

Consider disclosing voluntarily

- Create a support network: disclose mental health conditions to your group leader or advisor before you leave

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Planning tips

2. Take photocopies of important documents

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...

1. Leave a copy of each at home with family or a friend
2. Keep a copy in your luggage (separate from any originals)
3. Scan and email copies to yourself

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Planning tips

5. Keep your data safe

Safeguard your electronic data

- [Know what data you have and the degree of security required](#) to protect it against unauthorized access or accidental loss

[Data privacy and security](#)

- [University] policies and standards for data protection will apply to your work overseas
- Expectations outside the U.S. about **what information is private** can be substantially different from those in the U.S

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CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking time to complete the orientation and make your travel a little safer.

Remember that you are responsible for your actions when traveling. Be a positive representation of [University] in the world!

Enjoy your trip, and have a successful learning experience!
