

WIS Survival Guide

This is the new version! I'm just checking all the links right now.

Welcome to the WIS Survival Guide! This document was created and is maintained by Weizmann (International) students with the purpose of collecting and sharing tips and tricks of how to navigate life at the Weizmann Institute and Israel in general, especially as an International. We are constantly updating this document and aim to keep it up-to-date. We hope you find useful information here or answers to your questions. There is a table of contents with clickable links to the relevant section to hopefully make your search easier. Also check out the [FAQ section](#) at the end of the document - your question might already have been answered!

If you have **suggestions** for things to add and would like to contribute, there are two options:

1. Write the section/comment/tip you would like to add and send it in by email to WIS.survivalGuide@gmail.com and we will incorporate it here.
2. If you are a veteran WIS student, request permission to suggest direct changes to this document by sending an email to the same [address](#).

We are happy to receive your input and feedback in order to improve this document! :)

Corona Notice

There have been many major changes to life at Weizmann as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, some of the information below is not up-to-date for the corona times, however, we all look forward to the return to the normal routine.

We created a "[Corona Section](#)" that collects useful information about current guidelines regarding travel, PCR and serological tests, the vaccine and the green pass and vaccination certificate. We are trying to keep it updated, but as requirements are changing frequently, don't rely on it 100%. Do let us know if you find anything that is not up-to-date.

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Contributors

Weizmann Institute Onboarding

Identification

Israelis use their Teudat Zehut as an ID. International students use the passport number that they registered with Weizmann (holders of multiple passports, it is recommended to be consistent and use the same passport all the time in Israel). Within Weizmann your passport number will be used as your ID number, and will appear on your student ID (Teudat Student), (International students only).

Payroll

Around the time of your arrival, if you are in a paid position at Weizmann, you will receive a document to fill out, detailing your bank information (see the [Banking section](#)). The Weizmann Institute pays its employees once a month, generally around the 1st to 2nd working day, depending on the placement of the weekend. You will also be sent a fellowship/payment invoice detailing your income and any deductions (meals, electricity, rent, etc.).

Paying (anything) online without an Israeli ID number

In general, foreign ID or passport numbers are not accepted as Israeli ID numbers. One reason is that they often contain letters or don't have the exact amount of digits. Moreover, Israeli ID numbers are created based on a specific system where the last digit is a "check digit" calculated from the first 8 digits based on the [Luhn algorithm](#), allowing to check if the entered number is a valid ID number. This can cause many problems when entering ID numbers in places that require it (paying things online by credit card, ordering food, paying gas at a gas station, booking cinema tickets, ...). The list is endless. However, there is a way around: **On your visa there is a 9-digit number** (consisting only of numbers, no letters) **that functions as an ID number** (it seems like all international students have the same number). It seems like this number is only there when you have the two-page visa (after extending it here in Israel), but it's NOT there when you got a one-page visa in your home country. This number works in many places and is accepted as an ID number. So write it down and keep it with you at all times. To pay online, sometimes they (the system) check if the ID number fits the credit card number (e.g. when paying arnona). It could be that when you opened your bank account, the bank made up some random number because they couldn't enter your ID number in the system (and this number is probably not a valid ID number). In these cases your visa number won't fit with the credit card number and you will get an error. One way around is to **use a foreign credit card and enter your visa number as the ID number** - they don't have the international credit card registered so they can't check. This also works for paying bills for your apartment online (verified for arnona, water, gas and electricity so far). In other, less official places (e.g. the cinema) they seem not to have the connection between ID number and credit card (or they don't care), so you can **use your Israeli card and visa number** to book tickets. This ID number also works in other cases, e.g. when picking up parcels at the post office and they ask you to enter your ID number.

[Here](#) you can try to create an Israeli ID number and get it validated, i.e. whether it follows the Luhn algorithm and will be recognised as a valid ID number. Note however, that there is no guarantee that this number doesn't already belong to someone else. Moreover, you won't be able to pay online with your Israeli credit card as long as your bank account is not linked to this number. In more "official" places where the vendor will double check with the bank if the credit card number and the ID fit you will get an error message (e.g. arnona, electricity, ...). Less official places (e.g. the cinema) don't check, so you can use your own Israeli credit card and a random fake ID that does not need to be linked to your ID card. Good luck!

Whatsapp, Telegram and Facebook Groups at Weizmann

WhatsApp/Telegram

WhatsApp and Telegram are mobile communication tools used extensively in Israel, as they allow for internet-based international communication. They also allow creating/joining large groups. There are numerous groups at Weizmann in these platforms:

- **Internationals @WIS**
 - [Telegram group](#)
 - [WhatsApp group](#)
- **Students @ Clore House**
 - Email Aviv Shalit (Clore's Resident Advisor) if you are a new student at Clore House.
- **IO Reuse (giveaway group)**
 - [Telegram group](#)
 - Email io@weizmann.ac.il
- **WIS Neuroscience**
 - Email Philip.freund@weizmann.ac.il your phone number
 - All neuroscience students are welcome

Weizmann related Facebook Groups

- **Weizmann Institute Internationals**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WISinternational/>
- **Student Housing**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/charlesclore/>
- **Weizmann Student Council**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/56277554341/>
- **Weizmann Institute Students**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1450649728566326/>
- **Indians in Weizmann**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/183902805133171>

Facebook Groups for Rehovot (e.g. second-hand items, housing market etc)

- **Young Rehovot**

- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/470072323110545/>
- **English Speakers in Rehovot**
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/294801364003187/>
- **Second hand among students in the Rehovot area**
 - Second hand stuff and apartments
 - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/404753536295775/>

Clubs at Weizmann

There are numerous clubs at Weizmann with varying levels/rates of activity. Below is a list of clubs at Weizmann. If a club you know is missing here, do email us the details at

WIS.survivalGuide@gmail.com

- Photography - primarily a [Facebook group](#), has occasional meetings
- Tabletop gamers at Weizmann - [Facebook group](#), meeting at Goldschleger Library whenever someone takes initiative in the [WhatsApp group](#).
- Weizmann Orchestra - for more info contact Shakked Schwartz at shakked.schwartz@weizmann.ac.il
- Weizmann Acapella (Davkapella) - email acapella.rehovot@gmail.com to audition!
- Acroyoga - please contact Michel at +972 52-329-0962
- Ornithology - [WhatsApp group](#)
- Knitting - [WhatsApp group](#)
- Kayaking - [Sign up here for the upcoming trials!](#)
- Running - an on-campus running club run by an organization called Run 4 Fun Israel
 - Please contact them at run4funisrael@gmail.com
- Weizmann Hiking - [WhatsApp Group](#) - quiet during corona times, but sometimes people team up for small hikes or to share cabs to meeting points of organised Hikes (e.g. Finjan)
- Drama (in Hebrew). There is a group called "[Rehovot English Players](#)" for English speakers.
- Other activities on campus:
 - Pool table and table tennis (Clare basement bomb shelter)
 - Music room equipped with a piano and an electric key (for groups or individuals) (Clare basement)
- There are several other WhatsApp groups for sports activities organized by people from Weizmann either on-campus or off-campus. Invite links are in the names of the groups:

Football@WIS	WIS football group @WhatsApp
Frisbee freaks	WIS frisbee group @WhatsApp
Volleyball beginners	WIS volleyball group @WhatsApp
Pool.pokiris	WIS pool playing group for playing in the Clare game room @WhatsApp
WIS Basketball	WIS basketball group @WhatsApp

Hebrew Classes (Ulpan) at Weizmann

Ulpan is the Hebrew term for a [Hebrew] language-learning class. Weizmann offers subsidized ulpanim every semester, and in the summer.

Levels

- 1: Absolute beginner, can't read or speak at all
- 2: Can read and write, knows a few hundred words and basic grammar
- 3+: More advanced

Despite having up to 5 levels of ulpan available at Weizmann, at the end of this process you will have completed only 200 hours of learning (about 50 per class). Along the official, government-used guidelines for Ulpan, this 200 hours corresponds to the completion of kitah aleph (class A), the beginner level of Ulpan. In other words, if you want to learn the language at a very slow pace in that does not interfere with your laboratory work, then the Weizmann Ulpan is for you, but if you want to learn Hebrew to speak it fluently, it is probably best to find one of the many Ulpans off campus - these will be more intensive and expensive, but you will learn more and faster. If you make Aliyah, you are entitled to a subsidized/free Ulpan for a time.

Doing Science at Weizmann

How to do science is a broad and well-covered topic that we won't address too much here, particularly given that we are students who are themselves still learning.

A biology professor here named Maya Schuldiner has over the years compiled various advice for students. Below are some useful links to her guides and powerpoints:

Writing and Presenting

[Writing Cover Letters](#)

[Writing a Good Academic CV](#)

[Poster Tips](#)

[Reviewing Manuscripts](#)

[Elevator Pitch](#)

[Giving a Good Talk](#)

[Presenting a Poster](#)

Time Management

[Work-Life Balance](#)

[Time Management](#)

General Skills

[Feedbacks](#)

[Positive Reinforcement](#)

[Imposter Syndrome](#)

[Positive Psychology](#)

[Difficult Conversations](#)

Career

[The road to publication](#)

[Mid PhD Crisis](#)

[Staying sane during a PhD](#)

[Choosing Postdoc Lab](#)

[The Mona Lisa effect](#)

[Luck in science](#)

[Applying for a Lab](#)

[Career Choices](#)

[Quantifying Scientific Excellence](#)

[What motivates us](#)

Mental Health

Transportation And Navigation

Weizmann Institute Map

The [WIS map](#) is an interactive web site that lets you find all the main buildings and locations in the Weizmann Institute and links you to their respective web pages and online resources.

Maps.me also has a high quality map of the institute, as does Waze. It is recommended to avoid Google Maps.

Public transportation

Trains

Trains in Israel travel to most major cities. Schedules and times can be found on the [Israel Railways website](#) in English. The trains stop running during holidays, as well as Friday night to Saturday evening.

There are now night trains starting around 1:00 that will travel either to Tel Aviv HaHagana or Ben Gurion Airport directly, check availability in their website and/or app.

Note: Currently due to internal maintenance and construction, the trains do not run on Fridays in Rehovot, so a Bus or Sherut is necessary.

To cross the Rehovot train station without boarding a train (or paying), use the RavPass app to generate entry and exit QR codes. This enables easy travel between the institute and Park haMada.

Buses

Buses are the most reliable, but also the slowest ways to travel around Israel. When you alight, you only need to mention the city of your destination, which informs them of which code and the amount you will be charged. It is generally advisable that you use a [Ravkav](#), not cash, to pay, as they have begun phasing out cash as an option, especially in Tel Aviv. If you download the RavKav app ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)), you can charge your card with credit using your phone through NFC. Otherwise you will have to use a machine at bus stations. Some of the common lines that run through Rehovot and towards Tel Aviv include routes 201, 301, and 274.

Sheruts (aka Moniot Sherut)

Sheruts are a “low-price” way of transportation available throughout the week and importantly available during Shabbat on an **almost** 24/7 basis depending on demand (see below). Sheruts drive along specific routes but stop for passengers wherever is needed, most commonly charge a fixed rate between town to town which slightly increases on Shabbat. To stop a sherut, wait somewhere along the route and wave your hand. Sheruts will only leave a place once they are full, i.e. if you are the first person you need to wait for the sherut to fill (10 people in total) before the driver leaves. It is common to pay by passing the money via the people in front of you all the way to the driver and shouting where you want to go. Keep an eye on your money and the change, because there might be 3 people trying to pay at the same time. To get off the sherut, simply tell the driver that you would like to get off. This works anywhere along the route, no need for a designated bus stop. Usually you can get back from Tel Aviv to Rehovot very late at night, e.g. midnight/1am or even later. The later you go, the more you have to wait for a sherut to fill up.

Corona note: During corona times it seems like it is not profitable for sheruts to wait at night, so you won't even find sheruts anymore after midnight! The sherut lane on the central bus station will simply be completely empty.

Crucial tip: In case you are trying to get on a very busy sherut route which often has no empty seats, e.g. Rehovot to Tel Aviv on a Friday night, the best strategy is often to walk along the sherut route to its source. In the case of the Rehovot sherut, that would mean walking from the institute south on Herzl (the route starts at south Rehovot at a neighbourhood called Oshiyot). The further along you go, the better the chances of the sherut having empty seats. Note that you can hail sheruts even if in-between stations - so walk along the road and keep your eyes open.

Routes:

- From Rehovot to [Tel Aviv \(Central Bus Station - takhana merkazit\)](#)
 - Price: 14 NIS during the day, 17 NIS during the night, 21 NIS during shabbat.
- [From Tel Aviv \(Central Bus Station\)](#) to Rehovot
 - Price: 14 NIS during the day, 17 NIS during the night, 21 NIS during shabbat.
- Tel Aviv to all major cities: Be'er Sheva, Jerusalem, Haifa, Nazareth, Netanya
- You can also take a sherut inside Rehovot, e.g. from one side to the other. It's 5NIS inside Rehovot. E.g. to reach the car rental in the south of Rehovot, taking a sherut is convenient, and you can ask to be dropped off directly outside the car rental place.
- There is a sherut from Rehovot to Ramla and back. It goes via Lod. The pickup point in Rehovot is at the intersection with the mall right opposite the store “Twenty Six” and also at the “shuk” bus stop. To go from Ramla to Rehovot, ask around in Ramla about where sheruts leave (and let us know so we can update it here). Sheruts on this route don't go as frequently as the ones to Tel Aviv.

Details on transportation

- **Rav Kav Card**: Is a way of payment that allows you to pay in the integrated transportation network across Israel: from buses, to trains. To issue your plastic you need to present to the Israel Railways office with your passport. Showing them a letter of your student status grants you a student discount status for a year (renewable). This can also be done via the RavKav website. If you download the RavKav app ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)), you can charge your card with credit using your phone through NFC. Otherwise you will have to use a machine at bus stations. You can also renew your student plan every year through the app by uploading a valid certificate of enrolment (usually FGS automatically sends a Hebrew version at the start of each semester for exactly this purpose).
- **Shabbat**: Most public transportation is not available from Friday late afternoon to Saturday late evening, with the exception of the new Tel Aviv free transport scheme and Sheruts (mentioned above).
- **Paying for transport**: Use RavKav card and app. The card can be obtained at central bus stations, the Rehovot train station (issued on-site) or ordered on the RavKav website (allow for 1-2 weeks of processing time and delivery). You don't need Israeli ID to purchase. Can get student discount, just select the relevant contracts on the RavKav website and it will tell you what documents to upload. [RavKav website](#). This works for most public transport in Israel, including Jerusalem light rail, buses (all bus companies), and trains. Student discount: The prices for tickets will be the same, when you recharge your RavKav card you effectively get more money: charge it with 100 NIS and you will get credited 150 NIS. Renew your student discount every new academic year (between October and November). You can go to the RavKav office in the Rehovot train station and show a certificate of enrolment (you can get this from FGS); sometimes it's even enough to show the sticker of the current semester on the back of your WIS card. Postdocs also count as students.
- There are few apps for both Android and Apple that allow for recharging your RavKav card from your phone without the need to go to designated stations. HopOn and RavKav online are two such apps.

Private transportation

Car rental

- Sixt is a good rental place south of Rehovot, or from the airport. Elbar/Europcar, also south of Rehovot, has good offers. Call and pre-book a car, especially during busy seasons, e.g. holidays. Elbar/Europcar offer to drop you off at the WIS campus or somewhere along Herzl after you return your car (but tell them in advance you would like to make use of this). Although these car rental places are quite far from the Weizmann Institute, they are easy to reach by taxi, bus, sherut (see section about transport - sherut) or even by walking if you have some time.

Notes:

- Note 1: There is a law in Israel that you are only allowed to use your foreign driving licence within 1 YEAR after arrival. After that you're officially not allowed to drive. Once you leave the country for more than 3 months, the count resets, but if you only leave for a week, your time in Israel continues to accumulate. In car rental places they don't ask, they simply want to see your last "blue entry slip" (what you get when you pass immigration at the airport), and it cannot be older than one year. But keep in mind that in case something happens, they may revoke your insurance afterwards (this happened before!). In order to convert your driving licence and be able to drive in Israel even after one year, contact the international office for instructions.
- Note 2: You are not supposed to take a rental car into PA areas - you won't have insurance. Keep that in mind when you plan your trips. But Israeli/area C highways within the west bank are OK - use Waze and it will tell you where it is safe to drive (turn on the avoid high risk area feature). You will typically be stopped before reaching area A.
- Note 3: Sometimes it is possible to rent a car without paying tax by showing your entry slip to Israel (the blue slip kept with your passport).

Transportation and Navigation apps

- **Waze:** An Israeli app that allows you to navigate in an efficient way. It has important features such as "avoid high-risk areas" so you don't end up in dangerous or restricted areas. Keep in mind that Israel has one toll road, route 6, which you can avoid using Waze's "avoid toll roads" feature. It's a beautiful road though and it's worth the risk of a toll. Plus it saves a lot of driving time. Note on Route 6: You only pay for going North, but it is free for going south (towards Mitzpe Ramon etc).
- **Coordinating transportation:** Both [Moovit](#) app and [Google Maps](#) are good at giving accurate current info about bus/train schedules. As the train schedules have changed a lot recently, it's good to confirm the times on the [Israel Railways site](#) for the most up to date schedule. The Israel Railways company has a smartphone app ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)) that also works in English and is very reliable. For changes in train schedules (happens sometimes due to constructions), check the Israel Railways company website - they will mention any changes in schedule in a big colourful box at the top of the page.

Taxis

A common way to order a local taxi is through the [Gett Taxi](#) App ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)) or [Yango Taxi](#) ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)). It's fairly straightforward to enter the destination and pay via card instead of cash. In some instances, a fixed price can be chosen rather than selecting the meter option.

If you choose to hail a taxi or request one from a local dispatcher, they will only take cash, paying by card is not an option. Tipping the taxi drivers is optional, and not at all mandatory.

To/From the Airport: When departing from the airport, only order a taxi from the designated taxi stand, otherwise you run the risk of being overcharged. A decent price is between 130 NIS (rare) to 160 NIS (higher end).

At Ben Gurion Airport, there is a taxi stand of “reduced fare taxis” leaving from the second floor. You will get a receipt with the taxi number (in case you forget luggage in the taxi). They will also tell you the price before. Make sure you ask the official guy in the yellow vest for the price before you leave. At least one taxi driver there has a fake list of prices that he printed and refers to in order to overcharge people. They charge 4NIS for every piece of luggage. Some taxis are equipped to tie check-in bags on the roof.

- **Hadar Taxi.** A taxi company stationed in Lod offers so far the cheapest taxis to and from the airport. You can order a taxi online by following [this](#) link (in English). You can also see the price without ordering a taxi (usually around 135 NIS). They do ask for the amount of luggage but don’t charge extra for it.
- You can order a Gett taxi to and from the airport. Depending on where exactly you live in Rehovot it will end up at around 140 NIS. Here you don’t pay extra for luggage (but you do at the airport-owned taxi service).

Traveling in Israel

Basic geography and traveling tips in Israel

- TLDR: Israel is a safe country, except for some (not all) PA (Palestinian Authority) areas. Don’t go to Gaza, and understand how your future travel will be limited by an Israeli visa in your passport. Do your own research for specific travel destinations in the West Bank as simply glancing at a map is all but useless. Israel is a diverse country, both culturally and geographically, and there is something for everyone here. If you have something specific you want to do or find in Israel, don’t be afraid to reach out (Philip Freund, philip.freund@weizmann.ac.il)
- International border restrictions
 - Land borders
 - Lebanon: closed border
 - Syria: closed border
 - Jordan: open border (barring corona restrictions). Internationals can use any crossing; Israelis cannot use the Allenby Bridge (near Jericho)
 - Egypt: open border. Border is with the Sinai peninsula. Note that ISIL is active in the northern Sinai, so travel is only possible (but reasonably safe) in the south.
 - Saudi Arabia (no land border, but close): closed border
 - General border restrictions: if you have lived in Israel it is recommended to avoid the following countries, or to at least make sure there is no evidence of having lived in Israel in your passport: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Brunei, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, and

Yemen (these countries ban Israelis, some ban anyone that has been to Israel). In general, for Arab or Muslim countries, do some research to make sure you can visit safely after having lived in Israel. Against popular conception, Uzbekistan is perfectly safe for Israelis to travel to, and in fact there is a direct flight from Tel Aviv to Tashkent.

Tourism Resources

- Finjan tour company (frequented by WIS students):
 - <https://finjanisrael.com>
- Weizmann Hiking - [WhatsApp Group](#) - quiet during Corona time but with lots of hiking enthusiasts - good for sharing rides to meeting spots of Finjan hikes or organising hikes
- [Atlas obscura](#): A guide for “Cool, hidden, and unusual places”.

Restrictions for travel in West Bank territories

- To enter Palestinian Authority (PA) areas by bus, you can catch a bus at the East Jerusalem bus station near Damascus Gate.
- With some exceptions, Israelis are barred from PA areas. If you are a non-Israeli living here, you can enter these areas legally.
- If you are curious if a location is safe to travel to, try navigating to it with Waze (make sure the avoid high risk areas feature is on), and Waze will alert you if the destination is not safe (for an Israeli to enter).
- Rental cars: unless rented in East Jerusalem, **most rental companies will revoke your insurance if you go to the wrong parts (Area A) of the West Bank**. As a general rule, transiting through the West Bank isn't a problem for rental cars (e.g. driving from the Kinneret to Jerusalem or the Dead Sea). Supposedly it is safe for a foreigner to take an Israeli rental car to area B (for example, Taibe) but this is neither endorsed nor discouraged here.
- Hebron: safest to get a tour if visiting the PA side (most of the city). Most prominent site is the Tomb of the Patriarchs (also a divided site, with some holiday exceptions). You can drive a rental car to the parking lot of the Tomb and throughout the Jewish section (west of the Tomb, basically one street).

Gaza

- Closed territory. Unless you are a foreign journalist with the proper credentials (or you know the right people), and have approval from both the Israeli government and Hamas, this is essentially a no-go zone. There are lookout places along the strip, the main one of which is next to Sderot.

Geography of Israel - regions

- **North:** many nice little Arab and Druze communities, beautiful green landscapes. Mt Hermon, Kinneret, and great hiking

- **Haifa:** encompasses Haifa city, Mt. Carmel, Akko, and surroundings
- **Center:** surroundings of Tel Aviv, including Rehovot. Highly populated area
- **Tel Aviv:** city of Tel Aviv
- **Jerusalem:** city of Jerusalem plus western foothills. Great hiking, history
- **South:** Negev desert, hot year-round (though it does rain and hail in the winter). Be'er Sheva, Mizpe Ramon, Eilat, Dead Sea, Masada, Timna Park, Red Sea. Lots of great hikes here, and archaeology if you know where to look

Camping/hiking information

- Online hiking map containing most of the marked trails in Israel:
 - <https://israelhiking.osm.org.il/>
- Online high quality topographic map (in Hebrew):
 - <https://amudanan.co.il/>
- Excellent website containing detailed description of many hikes in the desert
 - <https://www.negevtrails.com/>
- Israeli nature and park authority (a lot of info including updates and warnings)
 - <https://www.parks.org.il/en/>
- A list of campgrounds (with payment)
 - <https://www.parks.org.il/en/campgrounds/>
- Open Street Map:
 - <https://www.openstreetmap.org/#map=8/31.438/35.074>

Health And Insurance (Internationals students)

Insurance companies for international students

Harel-Yeddidim

Harel-Yeddidim is the agency through which most international WIS students purchase an insurance policy.

A full reimbursement* will be received from FGS for full time students and postdocs.

* Reimbursement is given on a monthly basis, regardless of your payment schedule to the insurance company. At the end of the year what you paid and what you got reimbursed for will differ slightly due to currency conversion changes.

Harel-Yeddidim representative is Ms Einat Cohen, available 24/7

Telephone number: +972 54-529-7775

Email: einat@yedidim.co.il

For more information: <http://www.weizmann.ac.il/vs/housing/health-insurance>

When you first sign or renew your health insurance, you will receive an email by Harel with a confirmation stating your policy and until when it is valid (this can be used as a proof of health insurance for visa applications and other matters). You will also receive a pdf with info about clinics in Rehovot and what to do in case you are sick.

If you have pre-existing conditions, the insurance company will send you a form to sign saying they will not cover it. However, section 4.1 of your insurance policy states that worsening of pre-existing conditions is covered unless it requires CT/MRI scans, etc. Make sure to confirm this with Einat and the IO before signing the form.!

Clinics and hospitals in Rehovot

Refer to the "Clalit Clinics in Rehovot" pamphlet you receive after your insurance policy has been renewed/paid-for. Since our health insurance is with Clalit (one of the main health insurance providers), you need to look out specifically for Clalit clinics.

For most problems, you can either visit the Clalit clinic near the mall or the one on Sderot Hen 49. The hospital in Rehovot (Kaplan hospital) also falls under Clalit, so you can go there and it will be covered.

Booking appointments (Clalit)

Appointments can be made online, over the phone, and in person.

For **online appointments**, visit [this link](#). Put in your Clalit Insurance number as your ID number (you find this number on your Clalit card).

To make life easier for you, find an English-speaking GP in a Clalit clinic in Rehovot and ask the secretary on the ground floor of the clinic to put them down as your "family doctor". The next time you want an appointment with them, you can book it online. Again, it is necessary to choose them as your designated family doctor or this option will not be available online. Blood tests with the nurse can also be set online as long as the doctor has already prescribed one for you.

To book appointments **over the phone**, call the clinic during their hours of service, pick the English option (usually you'd have to dial 4 for English), transfer to the office and ask for English speaking personnel.

To book appointments **in person**, go to the clinic, pick a number at the kiosk at the entrance, and wait in line for the secretary/office personnel. Getting an English-speaking secretary can take time, and effort though. It can help to write down your request in Hebrew (e.g. I would like to book an appointment for xyz" -- use google translate or ask Hebrew speaking friends, and then just hand them the paper).

What to do when you get sick

If it is an emergency, usually determined by how much pain you're in, or how much blood is out of your body, call Einat first. Tell her that it's urgent and you simply have to go to the emergency room at Kaplan (or Ichilov if you live in TLV). You need a referral from a doctor before you turn up at the

ER, or they can charge you for expenses incurred. Having someone who speaks Hebrew is extremely helpful (or Russian since a lot of the night shift doctors are Russian at Ichilov/Kaplan). In case you're in a road accident, note the vehicle number for insurance purposes. If you call the ambulance for yourself, and do not need to be hospitalized overnight, you may have to pay for the ambulance.

If you require surgery for a condition developed while under the Harel insurance cover, don't worry, you are financially covered. Coordinate this with Einat and your GP (certain forms that are required for Israelis are not required for you and you need help to sort through the list). Procedures that are not life threatening will require more consultations and running around; the easiest way to get immediate appointments with a specialist is to ask your GP to put an "emergency tag" on your file, and to insist on your pain levels.

If you feel unwell but it's not an emergency but you can't go to the clinic, you can also ask for house visits from the doctor as outlined in the Clalit pamphlet.

Injuries in the laboratory

Call 2999. If you spill chemicals on you, stab yourself with pathogens, etc etc, just call them. Do not try to circumvent this if the situation is serious; it may cause bigger problems (both bureaucratic and medical) in the future.

Vacation days and illness days

Depending on your status you are entitled to vacation days and illness days. You need to register them at the end of the month. Administration will send you an email with a link to access the FGS system and fill it, the process should be straightforward. The system also tells you how many days you are entitled to and expiration date.

Medical and psychological services offered on campus

If you feel like you need therapeutic intervention for your mental health, send an email to the Weizmann social worker (nirit.cohen-kraus@weizmann.ac.il). You will be asked to fill up a lengthy form regarding why you need it. Please note there is usually a long waiting period to get assigned to a therapist (who is seated at the Faculta). Weizmann subsidises the first 15 sessions at a cost of 120 shekels per session (let me assure you, this is as cheap as it gets). If the therapist feels it is necessary, and if you don't already have one, you may be referred to a psychiatrist (the first diagnostic appointment is usually heavily subsidized, else it may cost you 800 shekels per visit).

If it is deemed that you require long term therapy, depending on the therapist, you can opt for more sessions (240 shekels per session), or be assigned to one outside the Faculta.

Please note that this is not covered in your insurance unless emergency psychiatric intervention is required.

Corona vaccination/recovery certification/Green Pass

Vaccination against corona is free of charge, and an appointment can be made via the Clalit website. It is often possible to walk into a clinic (including the one on Sderot Chen) and receive the vaccine sans appointment. Check out our dedicated [section about Corona](#) for more details.

English speaking doctors in Rehovot (verified by us)

General practitioners in Clalit Sderot Hen

- Dr. Sela (speaks English)
- Dr. Oksman (speaks English and also Russian)
- Dr. Shai Gottlieb (speaks English)

List of doctors (including dentists) recommended by the IO

Can be found at <https://www.weizmann.ac.il/InternationalOffice/after/health>.

Dentists (out of Clalit network)

- Dr. Eliot Dobin (Gluskin 16b, behind Shufersal express): 089474840. They speak good English. It's 250NIS for just a dental cleaning (no checkup).
- Dental center (מרפאת שיניים Dental Center רופא שיניים, Yitzhak Modai St 2): 08-945-7177. Both secretaries and doctors speak very good English. Price was around 200 NIS for a checkup.

Banking

Hapoalim

It seems to be Weizmann's go-to. They are experienced in dealing with international Weizmann students, including from the USA. Eti Sharon is a recommended banker. [The bank](#) (branch number 615) is located on Herzl just south of Shufersal. [The website](#) is in Hebrew, but there is a minimalistic English version [here](#). You can use the main website in google chrome, where it will be automatically translated to English.

Contact the Manager: Yuval Surani

@: yuval.sorani@poalim.co.il Tel: 08-9445915

Notes on the app: only in Hebrew. Lets you view your balance and some recent charges, change various settings of the account. Most of the functionalities of the website are also present in the app.

Opening an account and basic information: bring your passport (with visa), Social Security card (US citizens), letter from Weizmann confirming studies. They are experienced at opening accounts for foreigners, including Americans, and know what to do. You will be issued a debit/credit card - unlike in the US, the card has both functions; you can pull money out of ATM but when you pay for

groceries your account isn't charged until the end of the month. There is no charge for deposits or withdrawals.

Online bank transfer: You can make a bank transfer online by going to the [Hebrew website](#) (not available in the English website) and logging in. In Chrome you have the option to [translate](#) the page to English which is handy. Then in the upper menu choose: "Goes back and forth" > "Money transfer in NIS" > "Make transfer", or in Hebrew go to "עובר ושב" then to "העברות כספים בש"ח" and then to "ביצוע העברה". Now fill in the details and do the transfer. Note, in order to do the transfer, you will have to have your phone number in Hapoalims database, because you authorize the transfer through a code you receive by SMS. You can enter your phone number into their system in person at the bank branch.

Checkbook: Checkbooks can be obtained at the branch or by [online](#) order. If you can go to the bank early in the morning to avoid lines, it is probably more efficient to go in person than to order it online. If you take it in person the checks are already activated and ready to use. If you order them online, they will most probably arrive at your department mailbox (if your other bank mail arrives there usually) and you will have to call 03-6501282 to activate the checks. A machine will answer, and the only available languages are Hebrew, Russian and English. To order the checkbook online go to their website <https://www.bankhapoalim.co.il/he> and login to your account. Then choose "Pass and Return"> "Checks"> "Ordering Checkbooks" or in Hebrew "עובר ושב" < "שיקים". Fill out the details and order your checkbook. You will receive an SMS when the checkbooks are sent, with a reminder to activate the checkbook.

Important Note (Student account and discount): Three years after opening a student account, Hapoalim will change it to a regular account. They are supposed to inform you of this in the form of a letter one month before, but you might never receive this. If this happens to you and you're still a student, you will need to go to the bank and prove that you're still a student (it is enough to bring them student status confirmation from FGS).

There is also a way how to do it in the internet banking:

1. After logging in to the site with personal identification details, select the web tab and go to the top menu bar: "Goes back and forth" > "Additional Information and services" > "Joining the student club".
2. In the screen that opens under the title "They Accompany you all the way to the degree" - fill in the following fields:
 - a. Where do you study - type in the name of an institution to choose from in the scroll.
 - b. Towards a degree, in which department, academic year - you must select the scrolling options in the field by pressing V.

You must read the terms of service and confirm them by marking V in the checkbox to the right of the sentence I agree to the terms of the service agreement, then press the Continue button on the lower left side of the screen.

3. The study details will be displayed on the screen for your approval. To continue, click on Confirm joining at the bottom of the screen on the left.
4. Receiving a confirmation screen indicates that the account has been added to the club. On the screen under the heading for your attention, you can click on the various discounts and benefits link to view the club's conditions.

Important Information:

- Associating an account with a student club will certainly be possible for ages 18-35. The maximum period for membership in the club is 5 years or until the age of 35 (whichever is lower).
- Membership to the club is limited to one account per customer
- Updating the account at the club is one business day after making the association. Calculation of the exemption from transfer fees - from the beginning of the month in which the connection was made.
- In the event that the educational institution does not appear in the list of institutions to choose from - joining the club will be possible upon arrival at the branch by arranging a meeting in advance. You can arrange a meeting on the website/ app/ by phone number -2472.
- Ordering a new card associated with the club can be done by calling the workers on the phone, at the number - 2407*

Leumi

Also experienced in dealing with international Weizmann students.

Herzl 200

Contact: Sarit Aloni

@: sarit.aloni@bankleumi.co.il Tel: (050) 833-6302

App ([Android](#)|[Apple](#)): From the app you can see your transactions of debit and credit card, transfer money to other accounts, cash cheques (using your phone's camera), order new cheque books, etc. Unfortunately, it's only in Hebrew but it's quite easy to use. There is a menu that leads you to the different options. A work-around is to take a screenshot of the menu and translate it using Google Translate, the first times you use it, then repeat.

eBanking: [Hebrew login page](#) | [English login page](#)

Transferring money abroad

Here we collected a list of services that offer international money transfer. These were all used by international students in the past. We are constantly looking to add to this list, so shoot us an email if you have a recommendation to make.

Service	info	Extra charges
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Wire Transfer	Good for large sums; took around 1 week; important: transfer NIS (not the currency you want to receive); exchange rate: ~4% loss	~80 NIS charge for transferring 1000NIS
isratransfer	Good reviews	
Covercy	Good reviews, Doesn't ask for as much documentation as Isratransfer	
Currencytransfer	Only works from NIS to EUR, GBP and USD	
Eurogiro	Cheap, fast, took 2 days	

These were all comments collected by international students who previously used the service. When we refer to “good reviews” we talk about reviews and comments made by those students about the service.

Lawyer (International students)

For legal services, the International office recommends a lawyer:

Name: Ari Edelman

email: arna@012.net.il

address: Bilu Street 17, Rehovot, 76420, Israel

Mail, Shipping, Ordering

Aliexpress

Aliexpress is a shipping service analogous to Amazon. You can order a variety of goods online and have them shipped to you. Shipping times vary enormously; expect to wait somewhere between 2-3 weeks and 2-3 months.

Delivery address

For many items it is typically advisable to have them shipped to Weizmann, which will internally distribute the package to you. If you live in student housing, just note your housing information on the order form. You can also have the package shipped to your department/laboratory (the mailbox of which should be checked as packages bearing your name but not your apartment number will be sent there).

Note that where you have the package shipped to in Weizmann is not always where it ends up. Sometimes, they ignore the apartment number and send it to your lab, and do not inform you of this. Make sure to check your lab mailbox if you are expecting to receive a package or letter.

Some shipping companies will text you the day of delivery. It is advisable to get in contact with them (especially when the package is delivered to Weizmann), and send an annotated map of how to get from the main entrance to the place where they should deliver the package, and a phone number they can call if they have trouble. Otherwise, the delivery man may give up quite fast, and make the excuse that you weren't there/he couldn't find the address.

For ordering to **Clore house**, it is sufficient to put as the address:

Weizmann institute of Science, Herzl 234,

Clore house, apartment #number#,

7610001, Rehovot, Israel

The package arrives to Lea Marom, and she places the package in your Clore mailbox, or if it doesn't fit she will keep it in her office. In any case she informs you via email that you have a package and where it is located.

Similarly, you can order packages to your room in **Samy Cohen** or **Michael Kern** dormitories.

Sending package home and picking them up at a post office/dropoff point

If you send parcels to your home address and are not there to receive them, they will be brought to a closeby pickup point. This can be a post office, a gas station or a random shop somewhere in Rehovot. Go there with the notice you receive about the parcel and take a form of identification (passport). They need to enter your ID number into the system when you pick up the parcels. Some shops have a system connected to a computer and have the full keyboard available, i.e. they can enter passport numbers that contain letters. However, sometimes they only have a small number pinpad and will ask you to input your ID number. In that case simply use the 9-digit number on your visa (above where it says "NOT PERMITTED TO WORK"). This will work fine.

Ordering books online

Check out www.bookdepository.com. They ship books to Israel for free and it works very nicely. As shipping address it's the easiest to use something in the Weizmann Institute, either your dorm (if you live on campus), or your lab address.

Israel Post

The main postal agency in Israel is [Israel Post](#).

Ordering from restaurants to the institute or to home

The two most used apps/websites for ordering food online are **10bis** and **Wolt**. They are both very similar and with both you can get food deliveries to the campus.

10bis

- Exists as a website and app
- Weizmann has a special offer where we can sign up for a "premium account".
 - To join, please write your details on:

- https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeP_bvhCxlVx7xqlSQtLwXtMAJ2TMgyQ4ik4fVzmQEDqZToxw
 - Orders placed until 11:30 am will be collected and if they pass the minimum amount they will deliver for lunch - around 12:30 pm - without a delivery charge.
- Orders can also be placed at any time of the day or night, but then you might have to pay delivery fees.

Wolt

- Exists as a website and app

Maharaja

- Vegetarian Indian food - daily thalis for 30 NIS (medium) or 45 NIS (large)
- Order by 11 AM and get it by (FREE!) delivery in front of the life sciences/chem lab at 12:45 PM
- [WhatsApp Group](#)
- [Telegram Group](#)

Grocery Shopping in Rehovot

Supermarkets

- **TivTaam:** Russian supermarket, which is open every day until 22:00, even on Saturdays! Non-kosher, i.e. they sell pork. More expensive compared to other options, but has a large selection and more special food (e.g. gluten free). Address: [Oppenheimer 2](#)
- **Shufersal:** Basic supermarket, in general, cheaper than Tiv Taam. Kosher and not open on Shabbat. Typically old/low quality fresh produce. Address: [Herzl Street 181](#) (שופרסל של)
- **Shufersal Green (שופרסל גרין):** From the Shufersal chain, but with organic food. Considerably more expensive than normal Shufersal. Address: [Ya'akov St 3](#).
- **Yohananof:** Sometimes also referred to as the “underground” Market. Relatively cheap and big supermarket. Kosher; not open on Shabbat. Address: [Ahad Ha'Am street 19](#) (יוחננוף, yellow/red sign)
- **Yanot Bitan:** Very big and cheap supermarket. Closed on Shabbat and early on Friday. Address: HaAluf Yaakov Peri St 10
- **Victory:** relatively cheap supermarket. Close to Tiv Tam. Address still missing, coming soon.
- **Karl Berg:** Russian supermarket. Can get many Russian products, sweets etc. They have pork and non-kosher items. During Christmas time they sell Christmas sweets and decoration, and also some non-Russian christmas food (e.g. Panettone, German Christmas cake (Stollen), Christmas cookies etc). Address: [Ahad Ha'am Street 1](#)
- **Mania:** Russian supermarket. Same as Karl Berg (above). Address: [Herzl Street 157](#)

Smaller Grocery Stores, all open on Shabbat

- **Amir b'iy'r (עמיר בעיר):** new store just south of Clore house. Good, fresh produce at reasonable prices.
- **Market Streets:** another small store across Herzl from Clore. A reasonable selection of Asian goods (noodles, curry pastes, etc.)
- **Midnight (מדניית):** A bit farther south from Clore than Emir b'iy'r. Prices on the higher end.
- **Roberto's:** right next to Market Streets and Belkind, mainly for alcohol at the most reasonable price in the city and reasonably decent lattés. You can order from Belkind and have them bring the food to you while you sit at Roberto's.
- You will find more smaller kiosks/stores along Herzl street, many of which will be open until late night and on shabbat.
- Broida: wine shop (Yaakov St. 7)
- Chef Basar: kosher butcher (across from Broida)
- Meat Art: high quality meat and other delicacies

Indian and Southeast Asian Food

Bombay Store (based in Beersheva) does occasional mass deliveries to Weizmann. They have a dedicated WhatsApp group for this: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/FWtB7jYhOSS2Wyr7zjAOsz>

Examples of products include various spices, snacks, and other items that are difficult to find in the Rehovot area. One can order online and pay in cash while collecting the items.

Maharaja restaurant (based in Ramle) does lunch deliveries to the Weizmann campus during weekdays. [Telegram group](#) [Whatsapp group](#)

The store "Spice and Chocolate Shop" (that's how you find it on [Google Maps](#) (Bilu street), official Hebrew name (גרעיני עפולה) has a wide variety of spices, rice, lentils etc. They also have a collection of "exotic" food, most of it Indian. Some of them included masalas, pickles, atta, Haldiram's, idli/dosa ready mixes (sometimes), and rice flour.

Note: While this store has a pretty impressive selection, it does not have every spice (e.g. curry leaves, black cardamom, ...). Tel Aviv has several Indian stores with more options: Om Taste of India (two branches with different things in store (Rosh Pina Street 1 & HaGdud Haivri Street 38) and Jai Ho (Levinski Street 121). There is also a good Indian store in the market (shuk) in Ramla called Paprika which has spices that the Rehovot store lacks.

Chinese Food truck: Every second Monday a chinese food truck comes to Rehovot, in front of one of the back gates of [faculta](#) around 6 pm and at [Kipnis neighbourhood](#) around 7 pm. They do not have any Whatsapp group, but a wechat group (the joining QR code comes with time limitation).

Assorted Nuts, Fruits, Deserts, and Spices

Hamama in the City offers a wide variety of dried fruits, spices, nuts, and other dessert and snack items. They're quite reasonably priced and their wide variety and high turnover rates ensures that the products you buy are fresh and good quality.

Address: [Beit ha-Po'alim St 6](#), near the Sharon Oats bakery.

The Shuk (The Market)

Here you can get fresh fruit and vegetables directly from the farm. It's the best quality and prices are cheap. Open every day from early morning until roughly 5-6pm, on Fridays until around 1pm, closed on Saturdays.

Address: access from Bilu street; search for "urban market Rehovot" in Google maps

Bakeries

There are two bakeries on Herzl street between the shuk and campus, Sharon Oats (Beit Hapoalim Street 167) and Farin. Both are open 24/7 (except for shabbat), they only close for around 1 hour to clean at around 3 in the morning.

For fancier parisian-style desserts:

The "Patisserie", located on [Ahad Ha'am St](#) offers a wide variety of traditional pastries and cakes, which are pricier than your average Israeli bakery but offer higher quality and variety.

Many supermarkets also have a small bakery section inside.

Chef Emmanuel on [Derekh Yavne](#), offers a similar variety of products at a comparable price compared to the Patisserie.

Ordering groceries online

Yeinot Beitan

1) Go to <https://www.ybitan.co.il/>.

2) Hover your mouse over the globe icon in the top-left corner, and press "Eng" to change the language to English.



3) Use the search bar or menus to look for any item in your shopping list. Once you add an item, a window will pop-up asking you to insert your area. Please write it down in Hebrew (e.g.

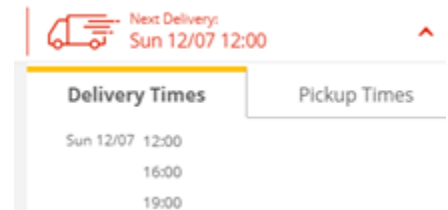
Please enter a city

רחובות

Check

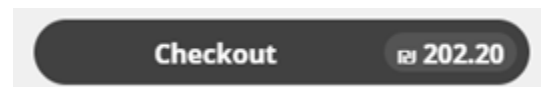
Rehovot -> רחובות), as it will not recognize it in English. Then press “check” and then any of the delivery options.

4) Before actually continuing to shop, make sure that the delivery times that are available are satisfactory. Press “checkout” in the grocery cart bar on the right then click “next delivery” on the top-right to see the options. This will return the next couple dates and times that are available.

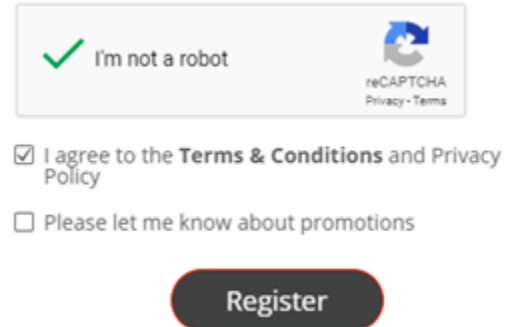


5) Continue adding items using the search bar and menus. Note that although most items and menus have been translated into English, a portion (including a few pop-up menus) have not. I suggest browsing with the Google translate extension turned on. Also, if you cannot find your item in the search in English, translate it into Hebrew and copy-paste it just in case it hasn't been translated.

6) Once you have over ₪200 in your shopping cart and are ready to check-out, press “check-out”.



7) In the next page, press “proceed to checkout”. A window will pop-up asking you to login (if you already have an account) or register. Type in your information and continue.



9) Insert your information. Note that before you can choose the delivery times, you first have to put the zip code (7610001 for the Weizmann Institute).

10) Below, you are given several options about how to deal with missing items:

Allow Substitutions?

- ☒ Call me - We will call you before we replace a missing product
- ☐ Allow
- ☐ Don't allow

“Call me” means they will contact you usually on the day of the shipping to suggest substitutes and get your approval for them. On the other hand, “allow” will result in them substituting by default and “don't allow” will result in no substitutions. From experience, while many suggested substitutions are just a different brand name for the same product, it can also mean a different

product entirely, so do let them contact you. But crucially, put “English-speaker” in the comment section so you’ll be contacted by someone who knows English.

11) Lastly, know that orders usually don’t come at the exact time you specify but can be hours early or late. In case you aren’t sure you will be home, check the option to leave it at the door. This will make them add several ice-packs to the groceries (free!) so you don’t need to worry about your food going bad.

☒ Please leave the order outside the door if nobody's home

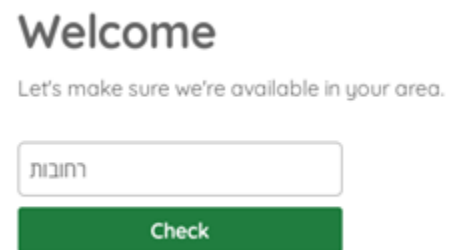
Tiv Taam and Supernoach (same system)

1) Go to <https://www.tivtaam.co.il/> or <https://supernoach.shopo.co.il/>

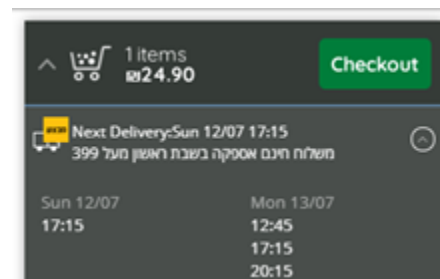
2) Hover your mouse over the globe icon in the top-left corner, and press “Eng” to change the language to English.



3) Use the search bar or menus to look for any item in your shopping list. Once you add an item, a window will pop-up asking you to insert your area. Please write it down in Hebrew (e.g. Rehovot -> רחובות), as it will not recognize it in English. Then press “check” and then choose the first delivery option (if they pop-up) or “continue shopping”.



4) Before actually continuing to shop, make sure that the delivery times that are available are satisfactory. To do so, in the grocery cart bar on the right press on the line starting with “Next Delivery”. This will return the next couple dates and times that are available.



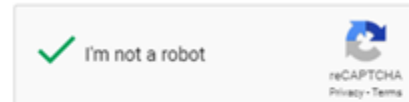
5) Continue adding items using the search bar and menus. Note that although most items and menus have been translated into English, a portion (including a few pop-up menus) have not. I suggest browsing with the Google translate extension turned on. Also, if you cannot find your item

in the search in English, translate it into Hebrew and copy-paste it just in case it hasn't been translated.

6) Once you have over ₪300 (Tiv Taam) or ₪150 (Supernoach) in your shopping cart and are ready to check-out, press “check-out” at the bottom of the shopping cart. Note: shipping is ₪30 for orders below ₪400 (750 as of 7.6.2023) but is free above that amount.



7) In the next page, press “proceed to checkout”. A window will pop-up asking you to login (if you already have an account) or register. Type in your information and continue.



☒ I agree to the [Terms & Conditions](#) and Privacy Policy
☐ Please let me know about promotions



8) If shopping in Tiv Taam, a window will pop-up in Hebrew (but this information is true anywhere you buy groceries online). What it says is that the price in your shopping cart may not be the actual price you'll be charged. There are three possible reasons for this: they may not have an item and will need to substitute or remove it, the items sold by weight will usually not end up being the exact weight you put in, and temporary deals can expire by the time of shipment.

9) Insert your information. Note that before you can choose the delivery times, you first have to put the zip code (7610001 for the Weizmann Institute).

10) Below, you are given several options about how to deal with missing items:

Allow Substitutions?

Send SMS

Call me

Allow

Don't allow

We will send you a text message
before we replace a missing
product

“Send SMS” and “Call me” means they will contact you usually on the day of the shipping to suggest substitutes and get your approval for them. On the other hand, “allow” will result in them substituting by default and “don't allow” will result in no substitutions. From experience, while many suggested substitutions are just a different brand name for the same product, it can also mean a different product entirely, so let them contact you. But crucially, put “English-speaker” in the comment section so you'll be contacted by someone who knows English.

11) Lastly, know that orders usually don't come at the exact time you specify but can be hours early or late. In case you aren't sure you will be home, check the option to leave it at the door. This

will make them add several ice-packs to the groceries (free!) so you don't need to worry about your food going bad.

Other Useful Stores/Services

Phone Plans

Phone plans in Israel are quite cheap, similar to most of Europe, and range between 20-50 NIS/month. Here are a list of companies, plans, and where you can easily sign up:

- [Golan](#): Offer plans in the 25-40 NIS range with around 100+ GB data available. A registration kiosk can be found in the [Rehovot Bilu Mall](#), the people there can usually speak passable English. Registration requires a passport or Israeli ID card, so have one ready. You are charged on a monthly basis, so there is no need to worry about an annual contract. When you want to cancel, you have to call by phone, and be sure to do so when you're still in Israel as they have English reps who can assist you. There is an international number that can be used outside of Israel, but it is a significantly bigger hassle to cancel and find English assistance. You will also get an online account where you can change your plan (usually anytime you want). **You might end up with a contract that's for 2 years after which the cost will increase.** Usually you can just log in to your account (or go to their shop) after 1 year and 11 months and change your plan to something else, and then you won't have that problem.
- HOTMobile website lets you order SIM cards to your home. They activate it for you and it will be ready upon arrival. It's about US\$15 a month for 100 GB which includes some international data + calling.

Pharmacy

Pharmacies in Israel are generally inside drug stores (e.g. SuperPharm, but TivTam also has one). You can get many non-prescription drugs just off the shelf. For prescription drugs and everything that is not on the shelves, go to the pharmacy section, get a number from the machine, wait in line and then hand over your prescription.

There is a pharmacy in the Clalit clinic in Sderot Hen. Pick a number and wait.

Specific medications:

Antibiotics: you cannot get antibiotics without a prescription

Imodium loperamide: ?

Drug Stores

For soap, shampoo, detergents, ...

Superpharm: Herzl Street 182 (closed on Shabbat)

Superpharm: Next to Tiv Tam (open on Shabbat)

Superpharm: in the mall (closed on Shabbat)

Good Pharm: Bilu street (often cheaper than Superpharm, many things for 10 NIS)

Stationary/Art Supply/Household Item Store

- [Ronbi](#) (Ahad Ha'Am Street 11) has a great selection of stationary, lots of art supplies, household items, electronics, a small selection of headphones, adapters and power converters, chargers, cables, light bulbs, batteries, tools, electric fans, heaters,
- [Atraktziya](#) (אטרקציה), Ahad Ha'Am St 13, Rehovot. It has all the items you need for the home (large store): kitchen equipment, plates, pots, pans, food boxes, appliances, tools, bathroom items, cleaning tools, lightbulbs, office supplies, at good prices.

Book Stores

For second hand English books: Rebook (Herzl Street 180: in Google Maps "Used book store" or "סיפור חוזר רחובות") has second hand books in English, Hebrew and some other languages (French, Spanish, Russian and more).. You can also bring your old books here (if they are in good condition) and receive a voucher to buy new books.

"Heftziba" - located on Derech Yavne 26 - has a great selection of new and 2nd hand books in English, Russian, French, Hebrew and other languages.

Camping Equipment

There is a new store in the Rehovot mall selling camping equipment - Ricochet! It is located in the side wing of the mall on the bottom floor.

There is a Decathlon in Tel Aviv and Rishon LeZion (service is great there).

There is a LaMetayel south of Rehovot in the Bilu shopping mall (its prices are quite high though).

Bike Store

[Maori](#) (Herzl Street 185, opposite the police station; walk into that corridor and it's in the back on the right side). They repair bikes and sell bike paraphernalia, e.g. helmets, locks, ... They also sell some bikes. Tell them you are from Weizmann and you might get a discount (they have discounts on locks, maybe also other things).

[Rehovot bike](#) (Herzl St 104, Rehovot) They have new bikes for little above 1000 NIS. They also have used bikes and other bike gear.

Other places to buy bikes: Yad2 (=yad shtaim, literally 'hand 2', i.e. second hand), Decathlon in TLV or Rishon for cheap-ish new bikes, ,...

Coffee

[Hanut Cafe](#), on Ahad Ha'Am Street 4 (next to the [Patisserie](#)): varieties of high quality ground coffee. I heard they also let you try.

Photography

At Herzl Street 192, you can enter into a small hall with several shops. The entrance to this is between the bakery and “Falafel 4 Flavours”. When entering, directly on your right is a photo store with large prints of photos. You can print photos here, and also **get passport pictures taken and printed directly**. It’s quite cheap. There’s another photo shop on the far left side in the back (as seen from Herzl). You can print photos here, and also get passport pictures taken as well. Price is the same as the other one.

Hardware Stores

If you need tools, nails, pipes, wall paint, copies of keys, ... (anything to fix stuff), check out the hardware stores in Rehovot. There are a few on Herzl. Sometimes it will help to have pictures of what you need ready on your phone. Also, if you don’t find it on the shelves, ask the owner because often these things are hidden or in rooms not accessible for shoppers. Here is a list of a few of those places:

- טל כלי עבודה (Herzl Street 151)
- Shoshi Homeware (Haim Weizmann Street 8)
- Tambor (on Herzl street, not sure about number, but next to Herzl Street 194)
- One store next to Case del Pepe (Shin Ben Zion Street 50)

Hairdressers in Rehovot who speak English

1. Hollywood Hair Salon
Address: Beit ha-Po'alim St 7, Rehovot, Israel
Phone: +972 8-947-3091
Call to make an appointment, the hairdresser is fluent in both Hebrew and English.
2. Joseph’s Barber Shop (for men). Ehad ha’am 6, Rehovot. On a street parallel to and east of Herzl, just north of the junction with Yaakov street across from the art supplies store, and Karl Berg. ~70 NIS for a standard haircut but sometimes they give you a shot of espresso at the end. You must make an appointment well ahead of time: <https://josephbarber.co.il> the website is in Hebrew but Google Chrome translates it well.
3. Avi Hair Design
Address: Derech Yavne 69, Rehovot, Israel.
Avi is a great hairdresser, who speaks both Hebrew and English. He is closed on Saturdays and Mondays. A standard haircut with shaving (for men) costs 60 NIS. Phone Number: +972 77-400-8113

Entertainment

One may think of Israel, and especially Rehovot, as a place that lacks options for entertainment, but knowing what is out there is half of the job to better enjoy your free time, and take advantage of all available options.

Cinema

Movies in Israel are typically shown in their original language and have Hebrew subtitles (i.e. most movies are in English). This is not the case for child-appropriate movies, which are typically dubbed.

- [Rehovot - Cinema HOT](#): There is a cinema in the mall, basement floor. To pre-book tickets, go to their website (unfortunately only in Hebrew, but doable). You will need an Israeli ID number here (use [your visa number](#)). The booking will work in combination with your own Israeli credit card. The cinema is also open on shabbat - most of the mall will be closed and you might need to take the side entrance to the mall from the side of the bus station, and there will be security guards in the mall, but the cinema will be open.

Sports

- [David Morosss Fitness Center](#): Located on campus is a sports facility with common gym facilities and availability for guided sessions on different disciplines. Subscription is paid monthly, commonly registering for 6-month periods with possibility to cancel at any time. Visit their site for detailed information.
- [Weisgal Recreational Center](#): A recreational center located on campus with diverse facilities such as: gym, pools, tennis and basketball courts, sauna, showers and lockers. Guided sessions are also available. Subscription is annual with chance to pay in a set of monthly installments.
- [Urban climbing](#): Offers a boulder to do indoor climbing and a small gym area. Different time length subscriptions are available as well as paying for the day. Climbing shoes are required but sold on-site as well.
- Sport streaming online: <https://totalsportek.pro/>

Recreational activities

- [Bowling](#)
- Salsa: Check out [Baila Salsa](#) in Rehovot (Moshe Yatom St 32, Rehovot). They have open clases of different levels on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Entry is 30 NIS. Afterwards they have an open-end dance party with mostly salsa and some bachata music.

Housing off campus

In the first year, international students and postdoc will receive accommodation in or close to the campus in one of the dorms. After one year you are required to find an apartment on the housing

market. There are a lot of options available, both for shared apartments (e.g. with other WIS students) or single studio apartments. People here generally don't plan too far ahead, so once you search for apartments in Facebook groups etc. you will often see apartments that are available 2 or 3 weeks later. Therefore, there is no need to start searching 3 months ahead. Start looking 1-2 months before your desired moving date. (You will see the same when people sell furniture online - often it's something like "Everything must go NOW. Come and pick it up. We are leaving the country.") The peak months for apartment search are August and September and partially October, basically before the semester starts.

Where to look for apartments

The first step in looking for an apartment is to order a checkbook from the bank, because that is the main way of paying rent to the landlord. You can see how to order a checkbook [here](#).

There are many Facebook groups that are dedicated specifically for renting apartments and finding flatmates. Here is a list of them:

Apartment Facebook groups:	Description
דירות מפה לאוזן ברחובות	Apartment search in Rehovot
שותפים/ות מפה לאוזן ברחובות	Flatmate search in Rehovot
דירות להשכרה ללא תיווך ברחובות	Apartments for rent without mediation in Rehovot
דירות להשכרה ברחובות	Apartments for rent in Rehovot
דירות להשכרה (בלבד) בין חברות ובין חברים מפה לאוזן ברחובות	Apartments for rent in Rehovot
דירות להשכרה ברחובות	Apartments in Rehovot
דירות בין סטודנטים - רחובות	Main group for finding flatmates in Rehovot
דירות להשכרה לסטודנטים ברחובות בכל מוסדות הלימוד של רחובות	Apartments for rent for students (all education institutions) in Rehovot
דירות למכירה והשכרה / רמלה / לוד / ראש"צ / רחובות / יבנה / נס ציונה	Apartments for sale / rent / Ramla / Lod / Rishon LeZion / Rehovot / Yavne / Ness Ziona
דירות להשכרה ברחובות	Apartments for rent in Rehovot

There is also a WIS off-campus housing and second hand Facebook group where people usually post ads for apartments, although it is common to see them in other Weizmann groups as well:

Weizmann Facebook	Description
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groups:	
Apartments and Second-Hand, Weizmann students לוח דירות ויד שנייה ויצמן	Weizmann housing and 2nd hand group
WIS student housing	Mostly about on campus housing activities, but there is the occasional off-campus apartment ad
Weizmann Institute Internationals	Exchange information, share rides, create events, get together, and share advice about Rehovot & living in Israel. Also apartment ads.
Weizmann Institute Students	The public and unofficial group for us - the Weizmann Institute students - to discuss, help each other, organize activities and anything else!

Apartment search websites

The most popular one is yad2.co.il. It has a section for vacant [apartments](#) for rent and also for ads where someone is looking for [flatmates](#). The website is in Hebrew, but translating the page in Chrome works like a charm. You can also find apartment ads on the [Weizmann Net private sales](#) section. The International Office also has a [spreadsheet](#) with apartment ads. If some of the ads are out of date (not available anymore), please [contact them](#) so they can update it.

Getting furniture and other things for the apartment

Here is a list of 2nd hand, giveaway, selling and purpose groups in Rehovot, as well as websites that cover all of Israel:

Second-hand, selling, giveaway, occasional apartment ad:	Description
רחובות (והסביבה) למסירה- עיר של נתינה	Rehovot (and surrounding places) giveaway group, can find furniture and appliances for the apartment
יד שניה בין סטודנטים איזור רחובות	Second hand among students in the Rehovot area
קח תן רחובות-מסירה, מכירה, החלף! קניה והשכרה. לא לסוחרים	Giveaway group for Rehovot - Delivery, Sale, Exchange, Buy and Rent.
יד 2 רחובות יבנה ראשון אשדוד והסביבה	Second hand - Rehovot, Yavne, Rishon, Ashdod and the surrounding area
למסירה - רחובות	Giveaway and selling group
Young Rehovot	Selling and information group in Rehovot
https://www.yad2.co.il/products/furniture?category=2	Yad2 furniture for sale

https://www.yad2.co.il/products/giveaway?category=59&item=658	Yad2 FREE furniture
https://chat.whatsapp.com/DxE6ClcnJlm5kmRrF7Xt82	WhatsApp giveaway group in Rehovot (Hebrew)
https://www.agora.co.il/	Website for giving and receiving free things in Israel

Of course, there is always the [IO reuse Telegram group](#) where students who are moving out will give away furniture and other things for the apartment.

How to look for an apartment

Once you have followed all the groups above you will have many apartments to choose from.

PROTIP: set the group notifications to [All posts](#) so that you don't miss any apartment ads.

Posts will usually be in Hebrew but Facebook can auto translate to English very well. The ads are sometimes put up by landlords that are offering the whole apartment for rent, and sometimes some students are posting an ad for a new flatmate to join them in the apartment. They will usually put a contact for the person that you can call/write to about the apartment, be it the landlord or some current tenant.

PROTIP: When you save a contact, next to their name write also the apartment address, so you know what apartment it is related to. There could be many apartments that you are looking into at the same time.

The ads might be written in detail with all the costs and many pictures, or they could be scarce with information. If you have any questions, feel free to ask them beforehand, like what is the [arnona](#), vaad bayt, how many bedrooms does the apartment have, does the room have air conditioning, how large is the bedroom, what furniture does it have. These questions might save you time for a visit if you determine that the apartment/room is not suitable for you. If the price sounds nice and you like the photos of it, arrange a visit to the apartment with the contact.

Once you go to the apartment, you should go around, try to see all the common areas and also the room that you plan on taking (or all the rooms if it will be a vacant apartment and you don't know yet which one you want). You should also take photos if you think the photos they provided are not good enough or they skipped some part of the apartment, it will be useful later when you compare it to other apartments, so you remember details that you didn't think of on the spot. This will not always be possible. Sometimes the person that already lives there doesn't want you to take photos of his room, or the person that lives in the room is not there or is sleeping so you cannot enter the room. Try to arrange a visit when all parts of the apartment are accessible (when all flatmates are there), you should see what you are getting if you move in.

Ask the tenants what is staying in the apartment. Will they be clearing out the whole apartment and only the bricks will remain, or will the apartment be fully furnished, or something in between.

Older buildings might have a shelter on the ground floor, or they might not have one at all, and the closest shelter is a few buildings away. If you live on the top floor, you might not even have time to get to the shelter, so check if the staircase is at least enclosed from all sides. This is something to consider given the security situation.

Some important notes:

- It is very important that your room has air conditioning because, as you might have noticed, it gets very hot here. It happens that some apartments have 2.5 bedrooms, so the 0.5 bedroom doesn't have air conditioning. Most apartments do have air conditioning in all rooms, so maybe better opt for those ones.
- Ask the previous tenants if possible, why are they moving out. It could be that there is some construction work going on or it is planned to be done right outside the building, or maybe they want to build bigger balconies on the whole building or to add two more floors on the building (not making it up, real stories from 2021 apartment search). These things are important because it might not let you sleep, depending on what your schedule is.
- It is also important to hear from old tenants what is their experience with the landlord. Is the landlord responsive when something goes bad in the apartment, or is there trouble.
- When you talk with the tenants that are your potential flatmates, try to understand what is the vibe of the apartment. Are they going to sleep early, or love to stay up until late. Do they expect the house to be spotless or are they very relaxed and don't remember the last time they cleaned. Is one of the shared expenses food or just cleaning supplies and spices. Are they not OK with smoking, or are they smokers that smoke around the house. Are they OK with bringing people over to the apartment or is it a study only, no fun zone. Do they have pets or do they approve of you bringing your pet. You need to find a common language and understand if this is the type of environment that you want to live in for the next year. It does seem intuitive, but it is worth saying.

What to look for in the contract:

An [example of an apartment renting contract](#) in English is provided by the International Office. Remember to always ask the landlord if they will use the English contract. Whatever you agree, make sure that it is written in the contract! When you are in negotiations with the landlord and you get the draft of the contract, send it to the [International Office](#) for review to tell you if they think that the contract is fair towards you. They can give you suggestions about what you can ask to be changed in the contract so that it is more favourable for you. They are not lawyers, so if you need actual legal help regarding your contract, they recommend you contact a [lawyer](#). In addition, here is a [website](#) (mostly Hebrew) that gives free legal information regarding many things. On this

[page](#) you can find the laws and regulations regarding the bank guarantee that the landlords ask from the tenants.

More will be added soon...

Bank guarantee:

Movers in Rehovot

This is a list of movers that have been hired by us in the past:

Slava	<p>Phone: 054-5658227</p> <p>Mover in Rehovot, speaks Russian and Hebrew (and a little bit of English, but only spoken, not written). You can text him on Whatsapp (use Google translate for Hebrew). Very very nice and professional, good prices. He has a moving truck but can also come for small individual items (e.g. if you buy a fridge or washing machine online and want to get it delivered).</p>
Uri	<p>Phone: 972 50-303-8689</p> <p>Text him on Whatsapp. His English is okay but not very good. Therefore, keep it clear and simple. Tell him</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ From where to where do you want to move (street, floor, elevator yes or no for both apartments) ○ When do you want to move ○ WHAT do you want to move (e.g. 1 bed, 5 boxes 1 wardrobe) ○ Ask if he's available ○ Ask for the price before (but they are fair and reasonable, and when I moved I could add some things extra which they took free of charge) ○ Ask if he needs pictures of the furniture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● They are three very nice and fun guys. They speak Russian and Georgian. ● They did a good job and some with all the foil to wrap the furniture to protect it from damage.
Hovalot Harusim company	<p>www.hovalot-harusim.com (Russian Truckers)</p> <p>Moving company situated in Bat Yam, but they do moves across all of Israel. Nice guys, very professional. They speak Russian (fluent), Hebrew and English (both semi-good).</p>

Pro tip:

Are moving apartments and have a lot to move (furniture, boxes), maybe even from the fifth floor without elevator? Check out www.getmoving.co.il.

This website offers to enter your old and new address (including which floor you live and if there is an elevator). In a next step you can select all the furniture you have (with very specific detail about

the size of the sofa or fridge), and you can choose if you also want it to be disassembled and reassembled. Within 24 hours they will send you price quotes from several moving companies and you can decide to book one of them based on the best offer (but you are not obliged to and the service is entirely free). The payment after booking will be done with the moving company directly - the company you choose will contact you (usually on Whatsapp) and tell you when, where and how to pay.

How to pay bills

If you live off campus you will need to pay a variety of bills. Depending on your agreement with the landlord, you either pay the landlord and he/she distributes it to the electricity, water, ... companies, or you need to pay everything yourself.

To pay online, you will need to go to the websites and enter several numbers from your bills to get to your current bill to pay. Some places (arnona, water) have colour codes around the fields on the bill, and online they tell you to enter the “green number”, “blue number” or “yellow number”. This makes things quite easy.

- Rent - usually paid directly to the landlord in form of cheques
- Arnona (property tax) - determined by the municipality; paid for 2 months; pay online [here](#)
- Water - paid to the municipality - paid for 2 months; pay online [here](#)
- Gas (if you have a gas stove): depends on your provider and the system you use: either unlimited gas with regular meter readings, or you pay for a ‘ballon’ and get a new one once it’s used up; for supergas, pay online [here](#)
- Electricity: There is a central provider. They can be reached by dialing *103 from your phone (if that doesn’t work, try without *); pay online [here](#).
- Internet: depends on your company; check out a few before you book it (e.g. Partner, Bezeq, Hot)
- Va’ad beit: Housing fee: For cleaning the hallway, changing light bulbs, maintaining the garden, ...

You can either give all of these permissions to directly access your bank account, or pay every time you receive the bills. If you have an Israeli ID card you can pay online, it’s very simple and easy. If you don’t have an Israeli ID number, have a look at the section about [paying without](#) an Israeli ID number in the beginning of the document and check if any of these options work for you. You can also go to the post office to pay there: Bring the money you need to pay in cash and the bills. There they will process the payment and you will get a confirmation stamp on your bill. When you go to the post office, you will need to take a number and wait in line. Prepare to wait for a long time and have people push in line in front of you. There are options to book appointments online to reduce waiting times.

If you pay your bills late they will increase. If you don’t pay for too long, you might get your gas turned off or other horrible things happening to you.

Holidays in Israel

Jewish religious holidays follow the Hebrew lunisolar calendar. The lunar day officially starts in the evening (technically when 3 stars are visible), and as a result holidays and shabbos start the evening before the full day.

In general, holidays in Israel start on the evening before, the same way as shabbat. For example, if a holiday falls on a Tuesday, it will actually start on Monday evening. If the holiday is a yom tov, Monday will be like a Friday before shabbat: Shops will close at around 3pm, public transport might stop, people might leave work earlier to get to family celebrations.

The Israeli New Year starts in September/October (it's different every year), so the holidays here are listed in that order. Here we only list the major holidays. For a complete list and to find the exact days, search online for the current year.

Shabbat

- **What:** Jewish Sabbath
- **When:** Weekly, Friday evening to Saturday night
- **What to expect:** Observant Jews do not perform any kind of work on Shabbat. There is no public transportation, most stores/restaurants are closed, and people spend the Friday evening having a big meal with the family. In Rehovot many of the restaurants and stores near WIS remain open. It is not allowed for Jewish businesses to be open. The airport remains open and essential services (police, ambulance, missile defence) are of course still available.
- **Work or vacation:** Weekend

Rosh haShana

- **What:** Jewish New Year
- **When:** September/October
- **What to expect:** Eat apples dipped in honey, ...
- **Work or vacation:** Vacation

Yom Kippur

- **What:** Day of atonement; holiest day in Judaism
- **When:** Usually early October
- **What to expect:** ALL shops and restaurants are closed; religious people fast for 25 hours. There is NO transport at all and no one drives cars (expect to see 2-3 cars during the entire day and some ambulances). The best day to plan bicycle tours: Ride your bike to the beach, on the motorway to Jerusalem. But still watch out for other cyclists and especially little kids who will go wild on their bikes and tricycles.
- **Work or vacation:** No work; starts the day before
- **Be respectful:** This is the most important holiday of the year, and it isn't meant to be a happy day (don't use greetings such as Chag Sameach or happy Yom Kippur). Instead, wish people an easy fast.

Sukkot

- **What:** Fall harvest festival/Commemorating the Exodus
- **When:** October
- **What to expect:** Kosher restaurants, IKEA, and many homes will have Sukkahs (special structures Jews are required to eat all their meals in for the length of the holiday, a bit like a tent). It's a great chance to enjoy the nice weather and eat outside before winter starts!
- **Work or vacation:** Vacation

Hanukkah

- **What:** Festival of lights
- **When:** Falls anywhere between late November and early January
- **What to expect:** 8 days of celebrations, lighting candles and having lots of oily food: sufganiyot (fried donuts filled with jam or chocolate) or latkes (fried potato pancakes).
- **Work or vacation:** Mostly normal work days.

Purim

- **What:** Celebrating the victory of the Jewish people in the story of Mordechai and Esther
- **When:** March
- **What to expect:** Everyone dresses up; costume competitions, department purim parties; lots of sweets; lots of parties (especially in TLV on both days (evening of the holiday and the holiday itself), as well as a street party in TLV usually on the Friday after Purim (but this party got cancelled in 2019)).
- **Work or vacation:** Vacation; also starts the evening before

Pesach/Passover

- **What:** Celebrating the Israelite Exodus from Egypt
- **When:** April
- **What to expect:** Jews are not allowed to possess anything that is 'chametz' (= leaven), e.g. bread, beer ,.... Supermarket owners will usually sell all these things to Arabs but leave them in the shops. The shelves will be covered in plastic foils. After Pesach they will buy them back. So stock up with anything you might need during that period (they usually start to cover things in the shops a few days before, so be prepared and don't start too late). Instead of bread you can buy Matza bread (dry, crunchy, tasteless stuff). Even treif (non-kosher stores open on shabbat) will not sell chametz if they are owned by a Jew. The main passover dinner (seder) involved long readings and songs from the haggadah (the story of how Moses left Egypt), and there are traditional food items that represent different aspects of the story. This dinner is an experience, and usually WIS offers internationals to join local families from WIS scientists to join them for their dinner and experience the tradition (it's worth it!).
On many days, families will go for camping (camping sites will be super full) and spend time outdoors. If you want quiet time for yourself in nature, don't even try during Passover.
- **Work or vacation:** First and last day are vacations, the rest are normal working days

Yom haShoa

- **What:** Holocaust/shoah remembrance day
- **When:** April or May

- **What to expect:** A sad day; memorial events and speeches; the siren will sound for three minutes (around 10am), and people will stop and stand in silence; ceremonies in WIS (in Hebrew); people often wear white or black shirts; usually WIS international office organizes a trip to Yad Vashem,, the holocaust memorial in Jerusalem (it's worth it).
- **Work or vacation:** Work day
- **Be respectful:** Many Israelis are either survivors or descendents of survivors, so it's a personally difficult day for many people. Expect many stores and places of entertainment to close their doors out of respect.

Yom haZikaron

- **What:** Remembrance day for fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism
- **When:** April or May
- **What to expect:** A sad day; memorial events and speeches; the siren will sound twice for three minutes each (morning and evening), and people will stop and stand in silence
- **Work or vacation:** Work day
- **Be respectful:** Many Israelis have lost loved ones, so it's a personally difficult day for many people. Expect many stores and places of entertainment to close their doors out of respect.

Yom haAtzmaut

- **What:** Independence Day
- **When:** April or May, always the day after Yom haZikaron
- **What to expect:** Celebrations and Israel themed decorations, parties and fireworks; in Rehovot: concert, celebrations and fireworks in the park close to the mall; all of Herzl street will be sealed off for cars and people can walk there; BBQs
- **Work or vacation:** Vacation (starts the day before)

Lag BaOmer

- **What:** Celebrating Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai, Talmudic Sage and Mystic
- **When:** May
- **What to expect:** Lots of campfires and kids burning stuff; close your windows for this evening or your room will smell of smoke; don't leave your laundry out for drying
- **Work or vacation:** Usually work

Shavuot

- **What:** Harvest Festival/Celebrating the Receiving of the Ten Commandments
- **When:** May
- **What to expect:** Lots of dairy products being consumed
- **Work or vacation:** Vacation

Tisha b'Av

- **What:** Fast day commemorating the destruction of the temples in Jerusalem, and many other calamities in Jewish history.
- **When:** July or August
- **What to expect:** Public transportation continues as normal. Restaurants close.
- **Work or vacation:** Work, optional vacation
- **Be respectful:** Especially for religious and Zionist Jews, this is one of the saddest days of the year, as it is the day on which many major tragedies have occurred. Expect places of

entertainment and all stores to close the evening before (though some may reopen the next day) out of respect.

Simple guide to Jewish holidays:

	They Tried to Kill Us	We're alive!	Let's eat!	TREES!
Rosh Hashana	NO	YES	YES	NO
Tzom Gedaliah	YES	NO	NO	NO
Yom Kippur	NO	YES	NO	NO
Sukkot	NO	YES	YES	YES
Hoshana Raba	NO	YES	YES	YES
Shemini Atzeret	NO	YES	YES	YES
Simchat Torah	NO	YES	YES	YES
Yom HaAliyah	YES	YES	OK	NO
Chanukah	YES	YES	YES	NO
Asarah B'Tevet	YES	NO	NO	NO
Tu B'Shevat	NO	YES	YES	YES
Ta'anit Esther	YES	YES	NO	NO
Purim	YES	YES	YES	NO
New Year for Kings	NO	YES	YES	NO
Ta'anit Bechorot	YES	YES	NO	NO
Pesach	YES	YES	YES	YES
Yom HaShoah	YES	NO	OK	NO
Yom HaZikaron	YES	NO	OK	NO
Yom HaAtzma'ut	YES	YES	OK	NO
Lag B'Omer	YES?	NO	YES	YES?
Yom Yerushalayim	YES	YES	OK	NO
Shavuot	NO	YES	YES	YES
Tzom Tammuz	YES	NO	NO	NO
Tisha B'Av	YES	NO	NO	NO
Tu B'Av	NO	YES	OK	YES?
New Year for Animals	NO	YES	YES	YES?
Leil Selichot/Selichot	NO	YES	OK	NO
Rosh Chodesh	NO	YES	YES	NO
Shabbat	NO	YES	YES	YES
Average Yes	50%	77%	50%	37%
Major Holiday	Minor Holiday	Minor Fast		

Corona section

We are trying to keep this section updated, but with rules changing frequently we may miss some updates. Please double check the information and do let us know if you find anything that is outdated (email address on the first page).

International travelling during Corona

Guidance for international travelling changes frequently with global and domestic infection rates. The ministry of health website provides up to date information regarding entering and existing israel. So check out [this website](#) before travelling. Also the [kayak website](#) provides up to date information regarding travelling in general between any two countries and has external links to the official websites as well.

Pro tip: It is good to check the kayak website before making any travelling plan and then go to the respective official pages for the specific requirement.

You can always ask the IO for updated travel regulations and they will send you an automatic email. But be warned that they will automatically cc your PI and department secretary, so any potential travel plans (even if very vague) will already be broadcasted before you might talk to your PI in person (can be awkward... :D).

Leaving Israel

As an international, you will have no problems leaving Israel. While Israelis currently still need to fill an exit form, this is not required from internationals. Internationals can also go to red/restricted countries (which israelis are banned from).

If you are vaccinated in Israel and have a valid green pass you do not need a PCR test to enter the Ben Gurion airport. However, you should check the requirements for (a) your airline, (b) your layover (if applicable) and © your country of origin. If they require a PCR test 48/72 hours before departure/arrival, make sure to take into account different time zones when doing the calculation, and book a test appointment early to get your preferred slot.

We have a separate dedicated section for Corona tests, so check that out about more info.

Returning to Israel

When you return to Israel, you need to have/do the following things:

1. Fill the [entry statement form](#) 48 hours or less before your departure. You will get an email with a confirmation number and a bunch of text in Hebrew and then English, which they

will ask for before you check in. It's okay to show this on the phone. Recently, they also added a pdf, which you can download (and print) after filling the form. While filling the form, you will be asked to provide the following info:

- a. Your name, email address, phone number
 - b. Your airline, flight number and scheduled time of arrival
 - c. Enter all countries you have been to in the past 14 days
 - d. Whether you have been vaccinated/recovered in Israel
 - e. Your address of isolation, number of household members in that place, number of rooms
 - f. Confirm that you did not have COVID symptoms in the last 2 weeks and a negative test, and that you can provide this information
2. Have a negative PCR test that has the result in English language and contains your name and passport number taken no more than 72 hours before departure. It's okay to show this on the phone.
 3. Just in case, have your health insurance policy ready. Airport staff are required to ask for it. It should contain your name and date of validity, and a section that says that Corona is covered. This is sent to you every time you sign up for/renew your health insurance. It's okay to show this on the phone.
 4. Have your vaccination certificate at hand. Depending on your airline they might ask.
 5. Internationals on an A2 visa returning to Israel from yellow and orange countries currently do not need the entry permit. The info on the official website seems outdated (it says "All foreigners require an entry permit. Without it boarding will be denied"). From own experience, this is not true anymore (confirmed by the International Office).

As many things can be shown on the phone, make sure you have them ready and in case of bad internet connection, have them downloaded already to show them. You might want to have a screenshot ready of the email confirming you filled the entry statement.

Quarantine after arriving to Israel

The most up-to-date regulations can be found at [this link](#). You should always verify any information on this link (although we are trying to keep this section updated as well).

You will also receive information about how long you need to quarantine after you fill the entry statement, since the duration of quarantine depends on your country of origin and vaccination status - both of them information that you need to provide. While filling the entry statement, the info about your vaccination in Israel is immediately cross-checked with the ministry of health. They do not check your name, only the passport number - so make sure this is entered in the system correctly and they have a record of all the vaccines, otherwise you will get an automatic email and sms telling you to stay in quarantine for 14 days.

If you arrive from abroad as a non-Israeli and are a Weizmann student or postdoc, you are currently allowed to quarantine in your own home.

To find out if your country of origin is classified as yellow, orange or red, check out [this link](#).

This is a summary of the current regulations:

	Country of origin (last 14 days)		
Vaccination status	yellow	orange	red
Vaccinated 3x in Israel*	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)
Recovered in Israel*	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)
Vaccinated 2x in Israel - 2nd shot >6 months ago	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)
Vaccinated 2x in Israel - 2nd shot <6 months ago	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	Up to 24 hours or until negative test from the airport	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)
unvaccinated	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)	14 days (shorten to 7 days with negative PCR test at arrival, second negative PCR test after 7 days)

* Requires a valid Ministry of Health Certificate

I'm in quarantine by mistake - what do I do?

If you are in quarantine by mistake, you can fill out [this form](#) and apply for leave. This can be done for any kind of quarantine or isolation - due to travel, contact with infected individuals, ... (if you think there is a mistake). For example, if you are an international student and you get a new passport (with a new passport number), the ministry of health might not be aware of this yet and consider you as unvaccinated and send you to quarantine. The MOH says they will work on these applications in 2 days, so if you don't hear anything back from them after 48 hours, call them and put pressure on them. You will receive an official document confirming that you are free to leave quarantine.

Breaking quarantine

There are various ways that they use to check whether you are keeping your isolation. In some cases, the police send SMS messages asking for a reply within the next 30 minutes of the current GPS coordinates (the message will contain a link where you can agree to share your GPS coordinates on a one-time basis). We also have reports of the police calling from a private number to ask whether this person is at home - however, we do not know if they actually come to the home and ring the doorbell (although there are reports of that).

At the official website, this is how they answer one question regarding this issue:

What if I received a message informing me of my full isolation requirement, even though I am eligible for reduced isolation? - You need to make sure that you carry a Ministry of Health-issued COVID certificate.

To us, this sounds like you will be safe as long as you have a valid Covid certificate/Israeli green pass and can prove your point according to the current regulations (e.g. when concerning travel).

PCR and serological tests

PCR test before leaving Israel:

Depending on your airline or country of origin, you might need a PCR test. Here is a collection of places that offer PCR tests. This may also be useful if you suspect you may have been in contact with someone infected and want to get yourself tested.

PCR tests in Rehovot:

- MDA (Magen David Adom in Israel) conducts PCR tests which can be used for travelling in Rehovot. The test result is in English and comes with a passport number as well. There are several test options to choose from and the standard one (going to a test center to get tested) costs 135 NIS. The address is 71 David Remez St and if one goes there, one can see their logo (a red coloured star of David). The test booking is through the [website](#) and the result comes within 24 hours.
- [Be Pharmacy](#) in the Mall: You can do a PCR test here. Tell them that it's for travelling and make sure they add your passport number to the test result. Cost: around 130 NIS.
- [Lab2Door](#)

PCR test in Rishon LeZion: Aid covid also conducts PCR test for 99 NIS which can be used for travelling. One can go to the [website](#) and order a test. The nearest location is Lazarov St 3, Rishon LeZion. Usually they operate between 10:00-20:30 everyday (including Friday, Saturday and eve of holidays). But it is better to call them and confirm the working hours. Also make a note that result take 36 hours.

PCR test at Ben Gurion Airport: With [Check2Fly](#) at Ben Gurion Airport you can do PCR tests before travelling. These are cheaper than in the Be Pharmacy, but consider also the travel time and the money it takes to get there and back. There are currently no trains to the airport on weekends, so plan ahead before.

PCR test after returning to Israel

Currently, you need to perform a PCR test after you land in Israel. The cost is 80 NIS if you book online, or 100 NIS if you don't. You can book it online from your phone a day before or even 1 minute before to get the reduced price. You don't book for a specific time. These tests are provided by **femi** and they can be booked online here:

<https://testngo.femi.com/en/sign-in>

You will receive your test results within 24 hours (often less). If you are registered with an Israeli HMO, you will receive the result through them. If you are not registered, you will receive an email/sms with a link to the result. For some reason, international students seem to count as "not registered", so you will receive the result by sms or email. If you're an international student and you call Clalit to find out about the test, they might not even have it in their records - neither the fact that you took a test nor the result. Don't panic, that's okay - you will get the test result via email or sms. In rare cases it can take more than 24 hours to receive the result (one of our authors waited once for ~32 hours), but in that case you can call the MOH (*5400) and talk to them.

Serological test in Israel

If you were vaccinated or are recovered abroad, you will need to perform a serological test *in Israel* to prove this. These are the options for taking serological tests:

- 1) At the airport after arrival: [here](#) you can find more info.

Corona vaccine

Corona vaccines in Israel are free. Currently (October 2021) you can just walk in to a Clalit clinic in Rehovot and you will very likely get a shot as the demand went down. You can also book appointments online or on the phone. Call Clalit (*2700) and navigate through the menu to English language and Corona. In case you need to enter your ID number, try your Clalit number (on the front of the Clalit card). If that is not recognised, simply wait a bit and it will forward you to a real person to speak to.

Before getting the vaccine you should make sure that your details in Clalit are correct: verify your passport number, phone number and date of birth, as you will need those to download the documents from the ministry of health later. You can also ask the doctor to print out a confirmation that you got the vaccine, they should be able to do it. If they say they can't do it, ask if you can take a photo of their computer screen where it lists your vaccines in your account. You can also get a printout confirming your vaccines at the front desk in the Clalit clinics, but see below - this document doesn't look very official and will be of no use for travelling, but it can help in case something on the way goes wrong and you need to prove your vaccines to the ministry of health.

Green pass and vaccination certificate

Green Pass

Israel currently works with the green pass (tav yarok) policy, where you receive a green pass from the ministry of health. You receive this document only if

- you had 2 vaccines, and the last vaccine is more than 7 days but not more than 6 months ago
- if you had three vaccines and 7 days have passed since the third vaccine
- if you recovered from Corona

In all cases, the ministry of health needs to have a record of your situation.

The Green pass only works in Israel, not abroad. So don't worry about having it for your trip abroad - no one there will accept it, and the new version only contains Hebrew and Arabic. The new version (starting in October 2021) has an expiry date that is 6 months after your third vaccine.

You can request the green pass from [here](#). It works with an Israeli ID number or with a passport number. You will need to enter a phone number and get a code sent to your phone, which you will need to enter (if you do not receive the code it is very likely that Clalit does not have your phone number - go to a Clalit clinic in person and check). After that there will be the option to download the green pass, and you will also receive it sent to the email address you provided. However, you might receive the following error messages:

- You are not eligible for a green pass.
 - Did more than 6 months pass after your last vaccine?
 - Did less than 7 days pass after your third vaccine?
- There is no record of you having received the vaccine or that you recovered from Corona.
 - Did you change your passport number or make aliyah and receive a teudat zehut? Make sure the ID/passport number at the time of the vaccine is the same you entered now.

The easiest will be to call the ministry of health and inquire about the issue. You can request these documents directly and they will send them to your email. They say these requests take up to 10 working days, but from experience it's often ready within a few hours to two days.

Call the MOH at *5400 and wait for the English answering machine. Choose corona related issues (dial 1), then choose service in English language. They are available 24/7 and on weekends/shabbat. If you call late at night the waiting queue will be shorter.

Important (especially for international students): Check with Clalit that your information is up to date! Otherwise it won't work. Go to the nearest Clalit clinic and ask them for a printout of your data - they might say they can't do it but it's possible. Check that your phone number, passport number and date of birth are correct. For the passport number, pay attention to 0 vs O (zero vs. the letter O) - there have been mix-ups before.

Vaccination Certificate

You can get a printout of your vaccinations at the Clalit clinic. However, this document looks very unofficial and may not be accepted for international travel. It does work in Israel though - not guaranteed and not officially, depends on how strict the ones who check are.

To get the official vaccination certificate from the ministry of health, follow the same steps as above for the green pass. You can request this document online, and if there are errors try to get it via the phone. It seems to be a common bug that internationals (using a passport number) can get the green pass online, but using the same details they cannot receive their vaccination certificate. In that case, ignore the error message (it's meaningless) and call the MOH. Ask them to send it to your email address.

This document is in Hebrew, Arabic and English and can be used abroad to show your vaccinations. It will list which type of vaccine you got (usually Pfizer) including the batch number and the dates, which is in agreement with the requirements of many countries when travelling. The certificate contains a QR code and the new version should be accepted abroad (the EU and Israel agreed on a common system to verify Corona-related QR codes, so the airport authorities in Europe should be able to verify that it's real - this wasn't possible with the old version (before September/October 2021)).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

General

Q: I don't have an Israeli ID. How can I do xyz which requires an ID?

Check out [this](#) explanation.

Corona

Do I need a PCR test to enter Israel?

Yes, currently everyone who enters Israel needs to have a negative PCR test with results in English and the passport number written on it.

Where can I perform serological tests before flying?

Check out our section on [PCR test before leaving Israel](#):

Where can I perform a PCR test after landing in Israel?

Check out our section about [PCR tests performed at Ben Gurion airport](#) after landing.

How do I know if I need to go into quarantine?

Check out [this section](#) and the link that leads you to the official ministry of health website. You can also find out if your country of origin is classified as yellow, orange or red.

How can I reach the MOH?

You can call any time at *5400. Navigate to the English menu and you should get someone who speaks English.

Where can I download my green pass?

You can request your green pass [here](#). If there is an error, go to a Clalit clinic and check that all your information is correct, as explained in [this section](#). You can call the MOH and request them to check what's wrong and send you the green pass by email - this will take up to 10 working days, but usually happens much faster than that.

Where can I download my vaccination certificate?

You can request your vaccination certificate [here](#). For some reason, there are problems for international students, and often they can access their green pass but not the vaccination certificate. If this is the case, call the MOH and ask them to send it to your email address.

Can I use the Israeli Green pass when travelling abroad?

No, the Israeli Green Pass is only valid in Israel and will not be accepted abroad. Use the vaccination certificate instead.

Will my vaccination certificate be accepted abroad?

It depends on which country you are talking about. Many countries in the EU are now cooperating with the new Israeli vaccination certificate, and the QR code is valid and can be scanned by the apps in Europe and is accepted there, from airport immigration to restaurants! We'd be happy to add more information here if anyone can add experience from other countries -- shoot us an email! :)

Medical

Do I need to pay for dental treatment?

Yes, the health insurance Weizmann provides through Harel does not cover dental treatments and there is no way to expand the health insurance plan to include dental services for international students (this is a reply from a Harel representative through visitors@yedidim.co.il).

Do I need to pay for professional dental cleaning?

Yes. You can go to Clalit Smile, which is Clalit's dental clinic, and you can clean your teeth for about 200 NIS, as an international that doesn't have a dental insurance plan.

Transport

How can I get to Tel Aviv on the weekend?

There is no public transport on weekends. Check out [this explanation](#) of getting around on weekends using sherut taxis (shared minibus taxis).

Can I take sheruts to Haifa/Nazareth/other cities in Israel?

Sheruts leave from the Central bus station in TLV, and from there you can go to all major cities, even on weekends. However, depending on the time of travel, it might take a long time to fill a sherut. Sheruts go from TLV to Haifa, Nazareth, Jerusalem, Netanya, Beer Sheva, ... Therefore, in theory you can go from Rehovot to TLV, and from there to your destination of choice - even on weekends.

Where can I borrow a bike?

The International office has a bike sharing programme where you can rent a bike for free. Check out their website on how to do it.

Banking

How can I transfer money abroad?

Coming

Physically

At Israeli customs (both emigration and immigration) you can carry up to 80,000 NIS without declaring it. If you are carrying more (including the value of goods) you must declare so, but there is no limit on how much cash you can carry. The immigration limit for those making Aliyah is 1,000,000 NIS. Of course, check with the Israeli customs and immigration authorities, as well as those of all countries you transit through and enter, for up-to-date information.

Searching for a shop that sells xyz

Where can I take passport pictures?

We describe how to take passport pictures in [this](#) section.

Where can I buy electronic converters/adaptors?

Check out the store Ronbi on Ahad Ha'Am Street 11 in the basement.

What are English speaking hairdressers in Rehovot?

Check out [this section](#) about hairdressers.

Where can I buy furniture?

Yad2 (www.yad2.co.il) - you can buy anything second hand here. Using it in Google Chrome will allow you to use automatic translation to English.

How can I find apartments?

Check out the apartment section.

Where can I find second hand items?

You can join the IO Reuse Whatsapp group (giving away items for free, link in [this section](#)). There are also some Facebook groups in Rehovot to sell/exchange/give away things.

On the [Weizmann Net website](#) there is a panel titled Private Sales with links to ride sharings, cars, real estate, electrical, baby equipment, furniture, miscellaneous, ...

Check out www.yad2.co.il for second hand items, furniture, apartments etc (in Hebrew).

There are several second hand stores in Rehovot: coming

Where can I buy books in English?

Check out the section [Book Stores](#) for more info.

Where can I buy stationary (paper, pens, ...)?

There are several stores that offer this:

- [Ronbi](#)
- [Atrakzia](#)
- [Kravitz](#) (in the mall)

Where can I duplicate keys?

There are several stores/workshops in Rehovot that duplicate keys. It's very fast and cheap (5-6NIS per key). These are a few examples:

- טל כלי עבודה (Herzl Street 151)
- Shoshi Homeware (Haim Weizmann Street 8)
- Tambor (on Herzl street, not sure about number, but next to Herzl Street 194)
- One store next to Case del Pepe (Shin Ben Zion Street 50)
- One store next to Shufersal Express (Bustanai Street 13), it has a poster with a key on the window

Travelling, vacation, visitors from abroad

My family/friends are visiting and I need a place for them to stay. What are the options?

If you live in the dorms on campus, there are specific rules about visitors staying over and the duration that's accepted. Check with your housing coordinator.

If you are looking for a short term rental e.g. in Rehovot, there are many good options available on AirBnB. You might also find short term rentals of entire apartments on various Facebook groups.

There is also the Leonardo Hotel close to the train station.

Miscellaneous

I found something that someone lost on campus. What should I do?

The easiest would be to return it to the guards at the main gate (e.g. keys, cards, wallets, sunglasses, headphones, ...). That's usually where people look for it. You can also post messages in the WhatsApp and Facebook groups to let people know. If you find something in your department or close to a department building, maybe ask the secretary to write an email to department members to ask around.

I lost something on campus. What should I do?

Ask at the main gate if someone returned it. Also check if someone posted on the Weizmann Net website lost and found or in the various Weizmann WhatsApp groups.

How can I get an up-to-date letter from FGS explaining that I currently live in Israel and am enrolled in an academic program (question arose after a jury summons in the US was received)?

Email the international office explaining the situation and exactly what you want in the letter and they will make it for you (make sure you request it on institute letterhead).

Wishlist: Proposed questions or topics that still need to be addressed.

- Navigating the healthcare system - major and important topic
- Restaurants - including menu translations
- Local synagogues, churches and mosques
- Ordering online (and get stuff sent to the lab instead of home) - amazon, UPS, aliexpress, bookdepository.com, ...
- Beaches (palmachim, TLV, ...)
 - How to get there?
 - Website for jellyfish forecast?
- How to send money abroad. ATMs that give out USD or Euro?
- Events in Israel, e.g. annual Jazz festival in Eilat, Light Festival in Jerusalem, Beer festival in Jerusalem,
- Useful apps (google translate for instant translation via camera), moovit, waze, banking, israel railways, weizmann app, fgs app, gett, parking ticket app (pango), ...
- Restaurants in Rehovot: some on Herzl street, some Kosher and non-kosher ones, Italian, Ethiopian, ..
 - Restaurants on campus
- Bars in Rehovot: stuff on Herzl street, kiosk,

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