

Semester in India

Travel and Logistics

Welcome to NOLS! We look forward to meeting you at the start of your course and hope the following information will help you get here with a minimum of difficulty and expense. This document also shares some information on how to minimize the risk of illness while you travel.

Course Start

Arrive	By 7:00 am on your course start date
Meeting place	Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain-NYC at the New York JFK Airport Area (Unless starting the course from outside the U.S.)
Meeting time	7:00 am on the course start date

Flight Destination

Airport	Fly into New York JFK International Airport (JFK) to meet your group, then to New Delhi, India (DEL)
Date	By 7:00 am on the course start date (or the night before)

Flight Return

Airport	Fly from New Delhi (DEL)
Date	The day after your course end date

Ground Transportation

From the airport to NOLS at the start of the course	NOLS will provide
From NOLS to New Delhi after the course	NOLS will provide

Accommodation

Before Course	You arrange at/near the JFK airport
After Course	NOLS will provide for the last night of the course in Delhi

Suggested Group Flight

Air India - AI 102	https://www.airindia.in/
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Questions?

After reviewing this information, if you have questions regarding your trip preparations please contact us. Students often find their questions can be answered faster and more thoroughly by speaking with our staff with experience in India.

Ravi Kumar: NOLS India Program Director

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NOLS India Program Supervisor

india@nols.edu

Cell: +91-9741374687

Prepare to Travel to Your Course

(Further details following)

1. **Submit your health form on your [Dashboard](#) as soon as possible. Once NOLS clears it, you can start booking travel.**
2. Book your travel.
3. Arrange accommodation for before the course at [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area for convenience.
4. Complete and submit the Travel and Logistics form on your [Dashboard](#)

5. Consider Tuition Protection coverage (see [Dashboard](#), highly recommended)
6. Check that your medical insurance coverage will be adequate for your travels
7. For International Travel:
 - a. Check that your passport is valid for the appropriate dates
 - b. Arrange visa and/or parent letter if needed
 - c. Notify your bank/credit card company that you will be traveling internationally
 - d. Get cash in local currency
 - e. Prepare for important cultural considerations
 - f. Get inoculations as required
8. Minimizing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 while traveling (follow CDC recommendations [here](#))
 - a. Practice physical distancing (6 feet) when possible.
 - b. Wear a mask when indoors or in close contact while out of doors
 - c. Wipe down surfaces with disinfecting wipes before touching
 - d. Practice meticulous hygiene with frequent handwashing and hand sanitizer use
9. **Contact NOLS Admissions:** 800-710-6657 / admissions@nols.edu (Save our contact info so you have it while you travel!)

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The Quick Run-Down

- The course begins at the [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area, USA, and ends in New Delhi, India.
- You are responsible for booking **3 flights**:
 - your individual flight to New York Intl Airport (JFK),
 - a seat on the [flight](#) to New Delhi (DEL) on the AI 102 flight on the first day of your course,
 - your individual return flight.

- Please note that students traveling from outside of North America can fly directly into New Delhi, India (DEL).
- NOLS will have a staff member meet the course at 7:00 AM on your course start date at the [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area. The staff member will escort you on the flight to New Delhi and onwards to the NOLS India campus in Ranikhet by a chartered bus.
- The expedition concludes in New Delhi on the course end date.
- You must have a valid passport **and** an “**Indian TOURIST VISA.**”

Prior Preparation Checklist

Valid passport for course duration + six months

India tourist visa **valid for course duration + any extra days of your stay in India**

Travel arrangements/flight ticket to reach the [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area before 7:00 AM on your course start date

A booking on the flight from New York Intl Airport, USA (JFK) to New Delhi, India (DEL)

If traveling from outside of North America, consider booking a flight to New Delhi, India (DEL) from home airport

Your individual return flight ticket back home

Medical insurance that will cover you while you are in India

Recommended inoculations

ATM card (Visa & MasterCard). You can withdraw money for expenses; we suggest you have a balance of at least \$400. Don't forget to inform your bank of your international travels.

Before leaving your home country, please register your travel plan in India with your home country's consulate in New Delhi to enable services in case of emergency. If your home country does not have a consulate in New Delhi, please register your travel plan with your home country's consulate in India. US citizens can use this link to register: step.state.gov/step/

Please do not book your flights until the NOLS Admission Office clears your Health Form.

Travel Arrangements

Additional Information

- If you will be outside the U.S. before the course begins and prefer to meet your course at the Delhi International Airport, please email india@nols.edu to make detailed arrangements. **All students should plan to reach Delhi International Airport by 12:00 Noon on the second day of the course.**

Course Orientation

Your course begins with an orientation at **7:00 AM on your course start date** at the [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area. After this, you will travel as a group to check in for your flight to India. You can choose to buy your own meal before boarding the flight either at the hotel or at the airport. NOLS will cover all your meals once you arrive in India. If you would like to arrive the night before, you can book your hotel room for that night. If you would like to share rooms with a coursemate at the Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTran-NYC, you must make these arrangements prior to booking your hotel room.

We encourage you to stay abreast of current travel information via the U.S. State Department website: travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country/india.html

If Delayed

If your arrival to New York is delayed and you are not able to make the meet-up at the Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, Air-Tran-NYC near the New York JFK Airport Area, please do the following:

1. Rebook for the next available flight.
2. Then, contact NOLS India to let us know of your new plans: india@nols.edu or call +91 9410159900 (WhatsApp, Facetime)

Passport

You will need a valid passport for the duration of your stay in India PLUS six months. If you already have a passport, check the expiration date. Passports are generally valid for a period of ten years from the issue date.

If you do not have a passport, please apply for one now. For your first passport, you must complete a Passport Application, Form DSP-11, available at passport agencies, federal, state and county courts, and some U.S. Post Offices. You will need to

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personally present your application and provide two forms of positive identification of U.S. citizenship, including:

1. **Certified** copy of your birth certificate.
2. Current driver's license (with photo).
3. Two (2) passport-size photographs.

Regulation passport photographs are required at various stages of preparation for the course. These can be purchased inexpensively once at NOLS India. Please bring **three** photocopies of the information page of your passport and Indian Tourist Visa kept with your passport for later use.

If you haven't done so already, please submit your passport and visa information on your NOLS Dashboard. NOLS India will contact you prior to the start of the course to verify these details.

Your Trip Abroad, a publication compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Consular Affairs, may be especially helpful. This publication may be available at a local travel agency. It is also available through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. Request Department of State Publication 8872.

For current information, American citizens can contact the U.S. State Department's web site at travel.state.gov/

Tourist Visa

As of this writing, **international travelers entering India are required to have a visa.**

Option 1: Apply on your own

Please use the following link to apply for One year or 5 years e tourist visa

<https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/evisa/tvoa.html>

*Please choose one year or five year option only, the 30 day visa option will not work for NOLS course and once in India you cannot extend the visa.

Option 2: Indian consulate suggests VFS Global to apply for Indian Visa.

To obtain a tourist visa, log onto this website and follow the instructions:

<https://visa.vfsglobal.com/usa>. As of June 21, 2019, the Indian Embassy and Indian Consulate Generals within the U.S. have outsourced the visa collection and delivery process to VSF Global Services (VSF).

Option 3: You may also choose to use another third-party service, such as TraVisa.

This is a paid service that does not guarantee a faster-processed visa. Essentially, you pay an additional fee to have someone else communicate with VSF. This is convenient for individuals who may have limited time to handle this process. The visa requirements remain the same. Go to the TraVisa website for more information: india.travisa.com/.

Filling Out the Visa Application

The visa application will ask for the type of visa requested and the duration; **state that you would like a 1 or 5-year TOURIST visa**. These tourist visas are valid for 1 or 5 years from the date of issue. Each visit will be valid for 180 days.

Indian Tourist Visa Requirements for U.S. Citizens (Always check website for most up to date list):

1. A signed passport that is **valid for 6 months beyond the intended stay in India**, with at least two empty pages available for the visa stamp.
2. Two copies of the Indian Visa application, signed by the above passport holder.
Note: Signatures are needed under your required photo as well as on the bottom of page two.
3. Passport type photo is needed. Check the website for specifics.
4. Proof of Residential Address; this must match the address used on Indian Visa application.
5. "India Particulars Form"

Very important: Please note that irrespective of the duration of your visa, foreigners are only allowed to stay a maximum of 6 months per visit. Ensure that your visa is valid through the last day of your course plus any extra days that you would be staying in India. *It is an extended, expensive and difficult process to extend a visa while in India.*

The visa application asks for "object of journey"; state that you will be a tourist traveling in the state of Uttarakhand, *not that you are a student*. NOLS differs from a traditional school and is not recognized by Indian travel authorities as a school.

The visa application will require the name and address of one reference in India. Please use either the name of our transportation service company manager or our NOLS India Program Director:

Ravi Kumar
NOLS India

Vaniya Heritage Cottage, Mall Road
Ranikhet 263645 Uttarakhand, India
Telephone 91-5966-297657 (+91 is the country code, 5966 is the city code)

Indian Embassy and Indian Consulates Located in the U.S.

There is a [VFS](#) Application Center in every city that currently has an Indian Embassy or India Consulate General.

Embassy of India/Consular Wing

2536 Mass. Ave NW
Washington DC 20008
(202) 939-9806 / Fax (202) 387-6946
indianembassyusa.gov.in/
Jurisdiction: DE, KY, MD, NC, VA, WV, DC, Bermuda

Consulate General of India, New York

3 East 64th St
New York NY 10065
(212) 774-0600 / Fax (212) 861-3788
www.indiainnewyork.gov.in
Jurisdiction: CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, OH, PA, RI, VT

Consulate General of India, San Francisco

540 Arguello Blvd
San Francisco CA 94118(415) 668-0662, (415) 688-0683 / Fax (415) 668-9764, (415) 688-2073
www.cgisf.org
Jurisdiction: AK, AZ, CA, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY, Guam

Consulate General of India, Chicago

455 N. Cityfront Plaza Dr
NBC Tower Bldg, Suite #850
Chicago IL 60611
(312) 595-0405, (312) 595- 0409
www.cgichicago.gov.in
Jurisdiction: IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, ND, SD, WI

Consulate General of India, Houston

4300 Scotland Street

NOLS

Houston TX 77007

(713) 626-2148, (713) 626-2149

cgihouston.gov.in

Jurisdiction: AR, FL, GA, KS, LA, NM, CO, OK, TX, NE

Consulate General of India, Atlanta

5549 Glenridge Dr NE

Atlanta, GA 30342

(404) 963-5902

www.indianconsulateatlanta.org

Jurisdiction: AL, FL, GA, MS, SC, TN, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands

Meeting Time and Location

Your course begins with an orientation at **7:00 AM on your course start date** at the [Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTrain- NYC](#) at the New York JFK Airport Area.

Note: if you are traveling from outside of North America, a direct flight to New Delhi (DEL) is encouraged.

The First Few Days

Your course will begin with a general course orientation and some time to meet and get to know the other course members at the Holiday Inn Express, Jamaica, AirTran-NYC near JFK Airport Area the morning of your international flight. You will fly out of John F Kennedy Intl Airport (JFK) to New Delhi, India (DEL) on your first day. Once you arrive at the New Delhi Airport, you will transfer to a chartered bus and drive overnight for 10-12 hours to the NOLS India campus in Ranikhet. Two days will be spent here acclimatizing, organizing the gear you'll need, packing rations for the course, learning some basic Hindi, and making a visit to the local market.

At the NOLS India campus, you will have access to international long-distance telephone service. Unfortunately, due to the remote location, Internet access cannot be guaranteed. Please plan on being “unplugged” for the duration of your course.

End of Course

You will return to the NOLS India campus in the town of Ranikhet for the last two nights of your course. It will be a busy evening with cleaning and storing equipment. The next day will be spent de-issuing personal gear and packing personal bags. On the following day, you will travel to the railhead town of Kathgodam, 3 hours by Jeep and a train ride of 5 hours (in air conditioned sitting coaches) to New Delhi.

This is the last day of the course. NOLS will provide you with hotel accommodation for that night. If you plan to fly out early the next morning, NOLS will provide you with transportation to the airport.

Note for booking end of course travel: International flights typically leave New Delhi around midnight. You will get to New Delhi airport (DEL) no earlier than 10 PM on the last day of your course. Please make sure to book your flight at least a few hours past midnight. Planning an additional day after the course will help you in case the train coming into New Delhi gets delayed. Please note that you must be at the airport three hours before your international flight departure time.

Travel after the Course

Previous students have enjoyed staying a few extra days in India to travel to Agra and see the Taj Mahal. You may want to consider this when making travel arrangements. Many enjoy traveling with the friends they have made during their NOLS expedition, creating travel plans and using their new knowledge of India and Hindi to get around. It is very easy to put together travel plans once in India, so we do not recommend making these arrangements while in the U.S. Please note that students are on their own after the hotel check-in in New Delhi or, for those departing that night, after NOLS India drops students off at the airport for their flights. NOLS does not provide supervision of any activity after the course ends.

Frequently, students have arranged for post-course travel with Mr. Pawan Sharma, who provides all bus transportation services for NOLS India courses. Visit his website to see some of the packages offered by his company Vandana Air Travels and his contact information below:

Pawan Sharma

Vandana Air Travels Pvt Ltd

204, Thapar House, Commercial Complex,

Gulmohar Enclave, New Delhi 110049

Phone: 011-49054905, Mobile: +919818223290

Email – tour1@vandanaairtravels.com

These arrangements are best done after your course, by which time you will have figured out your travel plans. Students are under no obligation to take the trip with Mr. Singh. If one were to shop around in downtown New Delhi, it is certainly possible to find cheaper travel agents. Traveling by train is a cheaper option as well.

Luggage

While in India, for the duration of the course, you may store your personal belongings at the NOLS India campus in Ranikhet.

Airport Customs

We will travel through customs as a group. You may be required by customs officials to declare the contents and value of your personal luggage. You may subsequently be asked to show the resulting documentation at customs control points in India. No duties are charged on clothing, personal effects, cameras, binoculars and other items that a tourist normally carries.

Appearance

As an expedition to a foreign country, we should recognize the social customs present and act accordingly as respectful guests. A neat, clean-cut appearance is suggested throughout your stay in India. Be thoughtful about what you bring into the country.

- Avoid the “rugged youth” look, such as old, worn-out clothing
- Avoid form fitting clothing.
- Choose conservative upper body layers that avoid showing skin—it will help you with sun protection while also being culturally sensitive to the people around you. T-shirts are OK, but avoid tank tops.
- Culturally, shorts are not well regarded; please limit their use to the river section of your course. Similarly, bring along a sarong, capris, pants, or skirts that are either mid or full length for field and in-town use.
- Do not bring army surplus clothing that resembles military fashion.
- T-shirts with political or sexual commentary are not appropriate.

Consider carrying an extra set of clothes (pair of pants/long skirts, a shirt, and a pair of sandals) for airline travel, your time in New Delhi, and your time at the campus. It will be hot in New Delhi, so consider light-colored clothing.

Travel, Health, and Medical Information

International travel poses special health considerations. NOLS strongly advises that all students traveling to international courses carefully consider which vaccinations or inoculations are required, recommended, or suggested for their specific travel itinerary:

- Consider what countries you are traveling through both to and from your course.

- Read the NOLS course description for information on where your group will be traveling within the country. Most NOLS courses do not follow customary tourist itineraries.
- **Consult with a physician, travel medicine specialist, or other health care professional.**

To guard against infection while traveling in a foreign country, **routine immunizations should be current**. These include tetanus and diphtheria, measles, mumps, rubella, and polio. A series of inoculations can take months; we suggest you begin early.

Regulations and recommendations can change. NOLS suggests some specific inoculations based on information from the United States Centers for Disease Control (CDC), through consultation with health officials in the specific region of the countries where courses are conducted, and through our experience in the specific country. The final decision about which inoculations you receive is your responsibility. There are many sources of information and some of the information is contradictory. In addition to consulting with your healthcare provider, the following organizations provide useful information:

- U.S. Centers for Disease Control either via the CDC International Travelers Hotline (404) 332-4559 or their website: www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm.
- International Association for Medical Assistance to Travelers (IMAT), 417 Center St, Lewiston NY 14092, (716) 754-4883.
- Shorelands Travel Health Online: tripprep.com.

Inoculations you receive should be recorded in the official document, International Certificate of Vaccination, available from the U.S. Public Health Service or from your doctor. This is also a good place to record your prescriptions, eyeglass needs, medical problems such as allergies, and any other information of a medical nature. Please record your blood type on the front page of this booklet.

Inoculations for India

At this time, there are no inoculations required by India or the United States for entry or re-entry. The CDC recommends the following vaccines (as appropriate for age):

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG).
- Hepatitis B if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than 6 months, or be exposed through medical treatment.

- Japanese encephalitis, if you plan to visit rural areas during the rainy season or stay longer than 4 weeks.
- Rabies, if you might be exposed to wild or domestic animals through your work or recreation.
- Typhoid, particularly if you plan to visit rural areas or stay longer than 6 weeks.
- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria and measles, and a one-time dose of polio for adults.

Malaria

As in equatorial regions around the world, malaria exists in India. Malaria is caused by a parasite that is transmitted by infected mosquitoes, found in areas below 6,500 ft (2,000 meters). While the NOLS India course areas are not malaria prone, it would be safer to carry 3 weeks' duration of malaria medication for the transitions through and back to New Delhi and for travel on the course's river section. You and your physician should choose a drug regimen for malaria prophylaxis. The US Center for Disease Control (CDC) also has a Malaria Hotline (404) 332-4555.

Traveler's Diarrhea

Diarrhea is by far the most frequent health problem for travelers to India. Traveler's diarrhea is caused by a variety of infectious agents and the spectrum of clinical illness varies considerably. This illness in travelers, however, is usually not severe, and complete recovery often occurs in the absence of treatment.

On NOLS courses, we treat our drinking water, and we are careful of what we eat, and your instructors will provide guidance on staying healthy. If a significant problem with diarrhea does occur during the course, the instructors carry additional medication to treat the condition in the field or, if needed, the student may be evacuated so the school's Indian physician can provide treatment and monitor the individual carefully.

You should carry personal medicines *only* if prescribed for treatment of existing health conditions disclosed on your health form or if you intend to travel after the course ends. Your instructors will be carrying a comprehensive drug kit that includes prescription medicines for most illnesses that you may encounter in the field. **Unless your NOLS Health Form states why you are taking a prescription medication, you will not be permitted to carry it on the course.**

Communication

While you are at the NOLS India campus you can be reached at + 91 5966 297657 for emergency contact only. Since there is little free time on issue day, any personal business should be attended to before the course meeting time. You will have access to an international long-distance telephone service at the NOLS India campus.

If you wish to receive mail on the last day of the course, have family and friends send it via airmail at least 14 days in advance to:

Mail by USPS and FedEx

Your Name and Course Code

NOLS INDIA

Vaniya Cottage, Mall Road,

Ranikhet – 263645

INDIA

You will not be able to receive mail at any time during the expedition. Be forewarned that packages sent internationally will incur customs duty on arrival in India. We will make every effort to get mail to students, but there is no guarantee.

Once the expedition begins, do not plan to be able to make or receive any phone calls until you return to Ranikhet. If someone needs to contact you with a true emergency message, they should contact our world headquarters in Lander, Wyoming at (800) 710-6657. There is no guarantee that they will be able to contact you once the expedition begins.

Money and Personal Expenses

Students are responsible for personal clothing and equipment, medical services, meals and lodging while in town, and expenses en route to India. NOLS will cover the cost of food on the expedition, transportation within India, and group equipment.

We recommend that you bring an ATM Card that has a minimum balance of \$400.

Visa and MasterCard are accepted throughout India in many hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops. It is highly advised to inform your local bank of your intended international travel. The currency in India is the rupee. During the last few years, ATMs have been getting popular and can be found at the airport and in most big cities and many small towns. Please note that there is no facility to change money near the NOLS India campus. The only opportunity for this is within the New Delhi airport.

Although thievery is no more prevalent in India than North America, you should consider how you carry your valuables. A lost or stolen passport would create a major hassle. We recommend you purchase a small traveler's pouch with an adjustable cord that allows it to be worn around your neck and under your clothing for security. These pouches are available at outfitting stores and are a great way to store your passport, money and documents.

Illegal Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco are prohibited on NOLS courses. Failure to adhere to this could result in expulsion from your course. While in India or in transit to and from India, you are subject to laws of the land/Indian law. Indian drug regulations are very strict; penalties of 10 years imprisonment are not uncommon. Neither NOLS nor your country's embassy will be responsible for anyone caught with illegal substances.