

Pre-Departure Checklist

Note that the timelines and requirements will vary by program and by individual, so please ALWAYS refer to the instructions provided by your host institution as a priority. THIS LIST IS AN EXAMPLE, is not all-inclusive, and is only meant to help you start thinking about the different aspects of your pre-departure process.

Immediate

- Change your status to “committed” in My Study Abroad
- Complete required questionnaires/materials in My Study Abroad, including Confirmation of Participation * DO NOT BOOK FLIGHTS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE HOST INSTITUTION ACCEPTANCE
- Complete your host institution’s application and confirm your enrollment by their stated deadline
- Review the official program budget, which is located in the Documents section of My Study Abroad
- Consult the Office of Student Financial Aid (finaidstudyabroad@illinois.edu) about applying your financial aid package to your program
- Attend mandatory pre-departure session(s) for your program, including those run by your host institution
- International students: visit ISSS about immigration status and documents needed to re-enter the U.S.
- Learn about your host country’s required visas and gather materials, if necessary
- Meet with your academic advisor about course selection and study abroad goals if you have not done so already
- Review COVID-19 related requirements for your host country

2-3 Months Prior to Departure

- Secure housing through your program if not done by the host institution (host family, campus housing, apartment, etc.)
- Register for courses according to your host institution’s instructions
- Apply for a visa, if required, and review your passport and visa for accuracy
- Students with visible or non-visible disabilities: meet with your DRES advisor and arrange accommodations
- Consult your physician or schedule an appointment with the McKinley Travel Clinic about medications and vaccinations for your time abroad
- Book a flight to your host country and a return flight AFTER you have received acceptance and arrival/departure instructions from your host institution
- Review COVID-19 related requirements for your host country and airline

1 Month Prior to Departure

- Create a communication plan with family and friends, both for your arrival date and while abroad
- Check with your phone provider about options in-country and make sure your phone is unlocked in case you decide to get a local sim card.
- Make temporary housing arrangements if your housing won’t be available right when you arrive
- Sign up for the [U.S. State Department STEP Program](#)

- Review COVID-19 related requirements for your host country, layover country (if applicable), and airline.

1-2 Weeks Prior to Departure

- Create an airport arrival plan, if necessary (some programs will have airport pick-up, others will not)
- Alert your bank of your travel and have multiple forms of payment on hand (upon arrival and while abroad)
- Review International Safety and Security's safety and wellness tips
- Print and keep a copy of your International Insurance card in your wallet
- Stock up on medications, eye contact supplies, etc. that you need while abroad. Keep these in their original containers and pack them in your carry-on luggage. Bring enough for the entire duration of your program.
- Know the electrical outlets/voltage in your host country and acquire relevant adapters
- Pack (many programs provide suggested packing lists)
- Familiarize yourself with TSA rules and customs procedures for your host country
- Verify your airline's baggage restrictions/limits and be prepared for overage charges
- Make photocopies of your passport/visa, prescriptions, and flight itineraries
- Review COVID-19 related requirements for your host country, layover country (if applicable), and airline. Ensure you have everything ready and plans to obtain testing prior to departure (if required)

Day of Departure

- Label your luggage with your contact info and weigh it to make sure it is within the airline's parameters
- Write down and keep any host country contact numbers with you, in case of travel issues
- Disable any data roaming on your cell phone, if needed, to avoid unexpected usage and charges
- Check your flight status and arrive at the airport at least 3- 4 hours prior to flight departure
- Ensure you have all COVID-19 related entry requirements needed for your travel

Questions?

Email aces-studyabroad@illinois.edu or your host institution directly.