

5 Things To Do Before Going Abroad

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Are you going abroad next semester? Check out my five helpful tips before you take off!

Check Your Passport

Look at your passport to make sure you know where it is. A good rule of thumb is that if the passport expires within six months of your departure date, get it renewed before you plan to go abroad. Also, make sure that it has the required number of pages in order to travel from country to country while abroad (including day trips). Always make a copy of your passport before you go abroad in case you lose it on the trip. Find more information on U.S. Passports [here](#).

Get a New Debit Card (with Chip)

Before going abroad call your bank(s). Countries throughout the world are changing the way that credit cards are being processed. Now cards are embedded

with [microprocessor chips](#) to meet the EMV (EuroPay, MasterCard and Visa) standard. This protects cards from fraud by using chip and pin technology. If you don't resolve this before you leave, the card could be rejected or your accounts could be frozen — stranding you with no money in a foreign nation.

Apply for Your Visas

If you plan to travel outside the U.S., make sure you apply for the student visa of the country you plan to visit. Do you plan to visit other local countries as well? Make sure you won't need a tourist visa to visit or you'll be sent back. As visas can be issued up to 120 days in advance of the trip, the sooner you apply, the better. Keep extra photocopies of these documents (with you and your parents) for your own safety and security while you study abroad. For U.S. visas, you may be required to have an interview, in addition to submitting all of the paperwork, a photo (with specific dimensions) and the associated fees to get the visa.

Check Your Phone, Laptop and Other Devices

While abroad, don't forget your family and friends. Going abroad can be a stressful and nerve-wracking time not just for you, but for your family and friends, too. Before you leave, make sure you have all the appropriate cables for your devices. While abroad there are two standard options for phones. Either you can contact your local service provider to talk about international calling, SIM cards and cellular data, or you can try to get a temporary student phone from a provider in the country where you're studying. Some other options you have for communication tools are Skype, FaceTime, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and e-mail. Some students even decide to vlog their experience.

Make a Budget

One of the hardest things to do in college is stick to a budget, but nowhere is it more important than when you're studying abroad. If you plan to travel during your time abroad, make sure you pay attention to travel fees (that can include entrance and exit fees and other miscellaneous charges). If you want to save money, travel to fewer countries or travel within them for longer periods of time. Similarly be conscientious about how much you're spending daily and pay attention to your bank accounts. While in another country, it can be cool to buy items for friends and family, but think first. Don't just buy things to give to people, buy things they will like. Another way to save is to check online for events in the area. Check the websites of any events or places you want to go. If the location/event has online tickets, you may even be able to save money by purchasing ahead of time.

Looking for more information and resources regarding study abroad options? Make sure to visit the [UNH Center for International Education and Global Engagement \(CIEGE\)](#).

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