

IES Abroad Suggested Packing List

We questioned IES Abroad alumni from programs throughout the world to develop the following suggested packing list. Since personal styles and interests differ, no single list fits all students, so consider this list a general guideline to help with the packing process.

1. What to Pack in Your Carry-on

Here is a list of a few carry-on essentials. Also, contact your airline provider and ask about in-flight items already provided, such as an eye mask, ear plugs, etc. Make sure that what you pack in your carry-on luggage conforms to Transportation Security Administration rules, by visiting www.tsa.gov.

- Passport (with visa, if applicable)
- Airline ticket(s)
- Laptop computer & adaptor
- Cell phone & charger
- Prescription medications in original containers
- Change of clothing and toiletries in case luggage is lost
- Arrival instructions from IES Abroad
- Pen/Small notepad

2. Clothing

General

Keep in mind that your accommodations may be cooler than you are accustomed to in the winter and warmer than you may expect in other months.

- 1.5 weeks' worth of socks
- 1.5 weeks' worth of underwear
- 2 pairs of jeans – one nicer, one more casual
- 1-2 pairs of casual pants (khakis, corduroys, etc.)
- 2-3 T-shirts/polo shirts/casual button-downs
- 1 lightweight sweater for layering – dark colors work best
- 2 every-day casual skirts or dresses for women, 1 pair of nicer dark slacks for men

If it will be warmer, also consider:

- 2-3 pairs of shorts/skirts - depending on the nature of your program, and your style

If it will be colder, also consider:

- 2 sweaters
- 1 lightweight fleece, hoodie, or sweatshirt
- 1-2 long-sleeved T-shirts or long-underwear to layer

Outerwear

- 1 light, all-season, water-proof jacket (or raincoat). Gore-Tex™ is a popular choice.
- Hat, gloves, scarf

If it will get colder: Winter coat (Some students opt for bringing water-proof jackets that convert to colder weather coats through additional zip-in linings or layering with a heavy fleece, etc.)

For More Formal Occasions or Internships

If participating in an internship, include additional professional clothes. Also, some places (i.e. theaters or opera houses) do not allow jeans or require a little dressier look.

- 1-2 dresses for women (Suggested: a simple, solid color dress that you can dress up/down with accessories – like a scarf, wrap, cardigan, belt, etc.)
- A suit and tie or a blazer, slacks and button-down shirt for men
- Dress socks/hosiery
- Jewelry - do not bring very expensive or flashy items that attract attention.
- 1 small purse, wristlet, or clutch for evenings

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Other Clothing Items to Consider Based on Interests/Activities

- 2 T-Shirts, 1 pair of shorts, athletic socks (athletic wear)
- 1 pair of athletic/running shoes
- 1 bathing suit (and beach towel depending on location)

3. Footwear Essentials

- 1 pair of very comfortable and broken-in walking shoes
- 1 pair of comfortable, sturdy shoes or sneakers that aren't the white athletic kind
- 1 pair of dress shoes
- 1 pair of flip flops for the shower, beach, etc.
- 1 pair of slippers (especially if living in a homestay or with a host)

For cooler weather/outdoor footwear, consider packing comfortable casual boots for daily wear. If you like to explore the outdoors, pack very sturdy, comfortable, waterproof hiking boots or other appropriate shoes for day-long outings, hikes, etc.

4. Bath & Toiletries

Items past students say you should definitely pack:

- Deodorant/Antiperspirant
- Contacts & contact solution (and your glasses)
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- Hair brush/comb
- Travel size manicure set
- Shaver and replacement blades
- Cosmetics/Mirror
- Sunscreen
- Insect repellent
- Travel-size hand sanitizer
- A mini "first-aid kit" with a small supply of band aids, antiseptic, etc.
- Travel size health aids such as Tylenol/Advil, Pepto-Bismol, Imodium, cold medicine, etc.
- 1 month of feminine hygiene products (some recommend more due to product differences)

Favorite personal products – depending on what you usually use and if there are any brands you "must have." Items to consider: shampoo/conditioner, hair products, body lotion, perfume/cologne, etc. If it's not a "must have" brand, you can save space and buy it abroad.

TRAVEL TIP! Place liquid/gel products in sealable/leak-proof plastic baggies.

Items to consider packing:

- Towels, depending on housing. These can also be purchased abroad. You may want to take one small towel.
- Linens, depending on housing. These can also be purchased abroad. You may want to bring a single twin-size flat sheet.
- Small, travel-size toiletries for your first week or for short trips.

5. Electrical Items (hair dryers, curling irons, electric shavers, etc.)

Most electricity abroad operates at voltages that require transformers and adaptors to operate U.S. electrical items. If you are bringing electrical items with you, you will need a **plug converter kit** and a **transformer**. However, it is often more convenient to purchase small, inexpensive electrical items abroad, rather than worry about yours working in your host city. Plus, it's less to carry.

6. Prescriptions

Read the packing information in your **MyIESabroad account** for recommendations and warnings about taking prescribed drugs into your host country. Don't forget to pack copies of your prescriptions for medication or glasses/contacts and leave medication in original packaging or containers.

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7. Important Documentation/Finances

Keep these items secure and separate from originals.

- A photocopy of your credit/debit cards (front and back) in case they are lost
- A traveler's check (for emergency, i.e. lost wallet)
- A photocopy of your passport and leave a second copy with a family member or friend
- A list of family/friends addresses for postcards, letters and gifts or emergencies

You may also wish to obtain these items in the U.S. before you study abroad:

- International Student Identity Card
- International Youth Hostel Association Card
- Train passes: such as a Eurorail pass

8. Other Useful Items to Consider

- MP3 player
- Camera and large memory card(s) or film (also bring required cords for uploading)
- Flash drive
- Headset for Skype™
- Language dictionary and phrase book
- Currency converter (some recommend it and others said it was not necessary)
- Umbrella
- Belt
- Sunglasses
- Journal (even if you don't currently keep one, we highly recommend taking one)
- Battery-operated travel alarm clock (some just use their cell phone)
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Swiss Army knife (**REMEMBER**: this is NOT a carry-on item!)
- Neck pouch or money belt
- A small mesh laundry bag
- Travel guide(s)
- A small sewing kit
- A few packets of Tide™ and a flat rubber drain-stop for washing out clothes in a sink/tub
- A few photos of family and friends
- Small bungee cord (useful to hang laundry, attach items to bags or bikes, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Vitamins/supplements (in original packing or container)
- Book(s) to read when traveling or relaxing

If you have a host/host family:

It is important to bring a small gift for your host family that is representative of the U.S. or your hometown. A box of local chocolates is a popular option. Other students suggest a variety of smaller, usable items like souvenir key chains, pens, or mugs that feature U.S. destinations or landmarks.

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO LIST PERSONAL "MUST HAVE" OR LOCATION-SPECIFIC ITEMS
