



Planning a Budget for Study in Argentina

To begin the process of determining your personal study abroad budget, you should cross-reference this guide with [Preparing to Study Abroad](#), [Money Matters](#) and the program costs listed on our website at www.ifsa-butler.org.

The information in this guide was compiled by staff in the IFSA-Butler Argentina offices and is based upon personal experience and student feedback. Despite years of experience, however, we have yet to create the “perfect” budget. If you’re honest with yourself about your expectations and lifestyle, this guide will give you a good idea of how much money you will need abroad.

Costs are in U.S. dollars unless otherwise stated.

Tips for Determining Your Budget

- When figuring your budget, enter the minimum amounts on which you think you could manage.
- Estimate a second set of figures that are more generous. Include items such as meals, personal expenses, entertainment and vacation travel. You might be able to afford the more generous projection.
- If your resources are more limited, go back and make selective adjustments based on close questioning of what you really need, what would be nice to have and what you could do without. Your final budget should fall somewhere in the middle.

The budget worksheet (see last page) itemizes costs you will incur in Argentina. It is in three parts: **fixed expenses**, which are expenses prepaid in the United States in U.S. dollars; **variable expenses**, which are mainly in Argentina and include start-up and term-time costs; and **vacation expenses**, which are expenses for your university vacation in Argentina and at the end of the program. We’ve also added a line where you should enter your personal resources, from which you will subtract your estimated expenses to determine a working budget.

Exchange Rates

The currency in the Argentina is the peso (A\$). The latest exchange rate is available at any bank, in most major newspapers and on the web at www.oanda.com.

Fixed Expenses

All students have the fixed expenses of the program fee and their transportation to and from Argentina. Other fixed expenses could include the [Tuition Payment Plan](#) enrollment fee, and travel and personal property insurance.

- **Program fee:** Use the “Services Included in the Program Fee” information in [Money Matters](#) to determine what is included in your program fee. Remember that your \$500 program deposit is credited to the fee.
- **Transportation costs:** Enter the cost of travel from your home city to Buenos Aires. Students studying in Mendoza should also factor in the cost of their return trip from Mendoza to Buenos Aires. Be sure to include the cost of your return flight back to your destination in the United States.
- **Tuition Payment Plan** (not applicable to all students): If you use the monthly payment plan through Tuition Payment Plan, enter the enrollment fee, which is \$55 for the year or \$35 for the semester.
- **Overload fee:** Some universities charge a fee for taking more than the required credit, called an overload fee. These universities do not always tell IFSA-Butler about the overload fee in advance. If you plan to take an overload while in Argentina, investigate the possibility of additional fees. You are responsible for overload fees if they occur. The *Student Handbook* you will receive during orientation outlines a full course load so you can avoid overloads and their related fees.

- **Cost of medical, travel and personal property insurance:** While in Argentina, you will have medical coverage through an IFSA-Butler group medical plan, the cost of which is included in your IFSA-Butler program fee. However, you should review the plan to determine whether you need additional insurance. It is your responsibility to make sure you are properly insured to travel and study abroad. You might also want to secure personal property and/or travel insurance. IFSA-Butler is not responsible for your personal property.
- **Passports:** The fee for obtaining a U.S. passport book is \$135 or \$110 to renew an expired one. If you already have a passport, check the expiration date to ensure that it is valid for six months past the time you will be in Argentina.
- **Visas:** All students studying in Argentina must acquire an Argentine visa, which costs A\$600. While most students will complete this process after their arrival in Argentina, year students **must** obtain an FBI background check that has been authenticated with an Apostille before departure. An Apostille is an internationally recognized means of ensuring the legality of a document. In the United States, Apostilles are available from the secretaries of state (visit www.state.gov for more information). Additionally, academic/calendar year students must also apply for a legalized police report while in Argentina, which will need to be translated by a public translator for about A\$1,000.
- **Reciprocity fee:** U.S. citizens entering Argentina **must** pay a US\$160 reciprocity fee prior to their arrival. To pay the reciprocity fee online, students should:
 1. Visit www.migraciones.gov or www.provinciapagos.com.ar to register and begin the process.
 2. Complete the form with your personal and credit card information.
 3. Print the payment receipt.
 4. At Immigration Control in Argentina, present your printed receipt. The receipt will be scanned by the immigration officers, the information will be verified, and your entry into the country will be registered.

Variable Expenses

All costs and estimates in this section are in Argentine pesos (A\$) unless otherwise noted.

- **Personal items:** Estimate what you will spend on clothing, a new backpack or travel items. You will want comfortable, color-coordinated clothes and shoes suitable for walking, but you should also plan on buying some items abroad. See the "Packing" section in [Preparing to Study Abroad](#) for more information.

You should plan on only packing what you can carry. Mailing clothes to Argentina isn't feasible; used clothes won't make it past customs due to sanitary concerns and new clothes carry a high customs charge. If you can't carry everything you need in your luggage, you should budget for acquiring clothes and other items in Argentina.
- **Orientation:** During your program orientation in Buenos Aires, lunch is not included, so you'll need about A\$70-80 per day.
- **Textbooks:** Our IFSA-Butler Argentina offices estimate that students will spend A\$600–800 on books and photocopied readings for a semester in Argentina.
- **Emergency reserve:** Whether it's a credit card or a cash reserve, set aside money for emergencies. You might want to consider US\$300–\$500.
- **Meals:** In Mendoza, three meals a day Monday through Saturday and two meals on Sunday are included in your program fee. In Buenos Aires, the program fee includes two meals a day Sunday through Friday and one meal on Saturday. Students should budget A\$450-600 per week for lunches and snacks.
- **Local transportation:** Most students in Argentine cities walk or take the bus. On average, students can expect to spend about A\$100 each week on local transportation in Buenos Aires and A\$70 per week in Mendoza.
- **Personal expenses:** Students report personal spending at about A\$150 weekly. They recommend stocking up on certain toiletries (which average A\$30 weekly) and prescriptions before leaving the United States, if there is room in your luggage. Toiletries in Argentina are expensive, especially contact lens solution. Certain items students often purchase after arriving in Argentina are clothing, hair dryers and curling irons since voltage converters are unreliable.

In your planning, be sure to include laundry, haircuts, postage, school supplies, photocopying, etc. Stamps for an overseas letter cost about A\$10–20.

Also, consider the cost of purchasing a pre-paid phone card or using a mobile phone. Argentine telephone cards are available in increments of A\$40 up to A\$150 and can be used to call within the country or abroad. A phone call from Argentina to the United States will cost around A\$5 per minute. Generally speaking, it's cheaper to use Skype or a calling card that you can get in Argentina or to have someone from home call you. Mobile phones are also available to rent or purchase. See your [Preparing to Study Abroad](#) book for more information about cell phones.

Be sure to set aside money in case you need to visit a doctor or fill a prescription. All medical expenses must be paid up front, so you will need to save your receipts for filing an insurance claim later.

- **Entertainment:** Past students report spending about A\$300 a week on entertainment. For some students, the cost of alcohol should be considered; a night in the clubs could cost A\$200, depending on your lifestyle.

A night at the theatre may cost between A\$100–150 and movies about A\$80. The staff in both the Buenos Aires and Mendoza offices can give you suggestions for entertainment that won't wreck your budget.

Vacation Expenses

We highly recommend that you invest in a good guidebook. *Let's Go*, *Lonely Planet* and the *Rough Guide* are some of the best. A guidebook can help you find good deals on travel, lodging, dining and entertainment, and can help you create a realistic vacation budget.

- **Travel:** Most students travel by bus, as it's one of the most inexpensive ways to see Argentina. If you are pressed for time, flying allows you to see more in a shorter trip, but flying is generally more expensive. Check with the IFSA-Butler Argentina offices for their advice on the cheapest and safest ways to travel.

No matter where you're going, be sure to check out the State Department warnings; they're available online at www.travel.state.gov and at most travel agencies.

- **Accommodation:** Your program fee includes housing with a host family for the duration of the program. Housing is covered during short university breaks. However, students staying over the Argentine summer (December–February) must find alternate accommodation and/or luggage storage. Our offices abroad cannot store luggage.
- **Meals:** While traveling, most of your meals will be consumed in restaurants, so you might want to estimate A\$300–A\$450 a day, not including beverages. Food will cost more during popular vacation times.
- **Personal expenses:** The telephone call component of your budget will be higher during vacation periods than during term time, but other expenses should be about the same. Entertainment and recreational expenses will vary. You will obviously need less if you're backpacking and hostelling than when staying in city hotels. It's difficult to gauge how much you'll spend on clothing and gifts, but keep in mind you must carry (or ship) all those purchases home at the end of your program.

Approximate Costs of Commonly Purchased Items in Argentina

Now you're ready to begin your budget planning. The costs in this section are in Argentine pesos (A\$). Check for the exchange rate by consulting the business section of any major newspaper or online at www.oanda.com.

Grocery Items

Milk	A\$18/L
Yogurt (small)	A\$11/qt
Eggs	A\$10
Juice	A\$15/1.5 L
Bread (loaf)	A\$17
Beef/steak	A\$80/kg
Apples	A\$20/kg
Oranges	A\$8/kg
Bananas	A\$13/kg
Lettuce	A\$30/kg
Potato chips	A\$25
Coffee	A\$250/kg
Tea	A\$20
Potatoes	A\$15/kg
Sugar	A\$20/kg

Personal Items

Contact lens solution	A\$76
Deodorant	A\$30
Shampoo/conditioner	A\$30
Soap	A\$10
Toothpaste	A\$30
Tampons (box of 18)	A\$32
Hair dryer	A\$500
Clothing iron	A\$250
Box of detergent	A\$18
Haircuts	A\$100
Movies	A\$80
Theatre (ask for student discount)	A\$100-150
Museum or gallery	free or minimum fee
Quick meal	A\$60-80
Beer in a bar	A\$40
House wine	A\$60
Alcohol/mixed drinks	A\$50-80

Budget Worksheet - Argentina

Argentina program: _____ Current exchange rate: _____

Fixed Expenses

U.S. \$

Program fee (see your program fee sheet)	\$ _____
U.S. domestic and round-trip transportation	\$ _____
Tuition Payment Plan enrollment fee*	\$ _____
Apostille, translation and background checks*	\$ _____
Reciprocity fee (must be paid prior to departure)	\$160 _____
Passport fee (first time or renewal)	\$ _____
Visa fees	\$ _____

**may not apply to all students*

Total fixed expenses

A \$ _____

Variable Expenses

A\$

Personal items (clothing, luggage)	\$ _____
Personal expenses	\$ _____
Local transportation	\$ _____
Meals	\$ _____
Entertainment	\$ _____
Orientation spending money	\$ _____
Textbooks (see your program fee sheet)	\$ _____
Emergency reserve fund	\$ _____

Total variable expenses (convert to U.S.\$)

B \$ _____

Vacation Expenses (check with travel professionals and/or guidebooks)

Travel costs (train, airfare, etc.)	\$ _____
\$ _____	
Accommodation	\$ _____
	\$ _____
Meals	\$ _____
Personal, including entertainment	\$ _____

Total vacation expenses (convert to U.S.\$)

C \$ _____

Total estimated expenses (add lines A, B and C)

D \$ _____

List personal resources available, such as savings, family contribution, financial aid, summer earnings, etc.

Total estimated resources \$ _____

Less total estimated expenses (subtract line D) \$ _____

Your study abroad budget \$ _____