

# Checklist Before You Go



## After you decide to study abroad

- Complete all application materials required by SAGL and your study abroad provider (if applicable).
- If you do not have a passport book, begin the application process. For information about how to apply, visit [travel.state.gov/passport/](https://travel.state.gov/passport/) or [WKU Passport Services](#).
- Apply for study abroad scholarships by stated deadlines.
- Contact Tiffany Denton ([tiffany.denton@wku.edu](mailto:tiffany.denton@wku.edu)) in the Office of Student Financial Assistance to arrange for financial aid to be applied to your study abroad program.
- If you receive WKU scholarships, email [scholarships@wku.edu](mailto:scholarships@wku.edu) to notify the Office of Student Financial Assistance that you would like to apply those scholarships to your study abroad program by July 1 for fall or November 1 for spring. **(Semester Programs Only)**
- If you live on campus, visit the HRL Office in Southwest Hall to cancel your housing for your semester abroad. You can pick up a letter confirming your study abroad plans from the SAGL Office. **(Semester Programs Only)**
- Cancel your meal plan for the term you will be abroad. **(Semester Programs Only)**
- Drop any non-study abroad courses you are currently registered for during the semester you will be abroad. **(Semester Programs Only)**

## Initial pre-departure preparations

- If you are not traveling on group flights, book your flights after official arrival and departure dates are confirmed. Compare several airlines and travel websites before reserving flights. You can find the best deals usually 3-6 months before departure.
- Check the [Centers for Disease Control](https://www.cdc.gov) for information about health concerns and recommended vaccinations for the country to which you are traveling.
- Schedule a physical and obtain any necessary immunizations.
- If you regularly see a counselor/therapist, meet with him/her to discuss your study abroad plans and how to prepare for challenges such as anxiety, depression, and homesickness.
- If you are on prescription medication, confirm that it is legal in the countries to which you are traveling. Request a doctor's note and obtain enough medication to last you the entire length of your stay. Keep all medication in the original containers.

- Become familiar with your travel health insurance plan and how to file claims.
- Notify your bank and credit card companies of your travel dates and destinations, and to ask about foreign transaction fees to determine the best method to access funds.
- If internet won't be enough for your communication needs, check with your cell phone provider about getting an international plan. (Watch out for roaming and data charges.)
- Purchase a travel adapter. Check whether you need a converter for any appliances such as hair straighteners and dryers. (Voltage limits are usually indicated on the appliance.)
- Check your parents' homeowners insurance to see if it will cover your electronics and other valuable possessions that you will need to take with you abroad.
- Visit <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/> for useful information to prepare you for international travel and your study abroad destination(s).
- Research the country to which you are traveling and become familiar with some basic facts, cultural norms, current events, and climate so you know what to expect.

### **Final preparations**

- Attend all required pre-departure orientation meetings.
- Register your travel information with the U.S. Department of State's [Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#). Have your passport info, travel dates, and address handy.
- Make a few copies of your passport, visa (if applicable), and credit/debit cards. Leave one with your family and bring one or two with you separate from the original documents.
- Leave a copy of your itinerary and contact info with your family/emergency contacts.
- Check your airline's baggage restrictions and TSA security regulations ([www.tsa.gov](http://www.tsa.gov)).
- Get everything together by the day before you leave: be packed, prepared and have your passport out with the alarm set extra early!

### **Additional considerations**

- Arrange to vote by absentee ballot if you will be abroad on Election Day.
- Arrange to have your income taxes filed if you will be abroad during tax season.
- If you have no next-of-kin guardian (i.e. a parent), consider appointing a Health Care Power of Attorney to avoid international red tape for health care consent in the case of a medical emergency abroad. (<http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/f2848.pdf>)