Student Travel Checklist

HARVARD'S ONLINE PRE-DEPARTURE ORIENTATION

1. **IN AN EMERGENCY**
   1. Call the local equivalent of “911,” if appropriate.
   2. Call Harvard Travel Assist: +1 617-998-0000.

   Harvard Travel Assist offers 24/7 worldwide medical referrals, medical and security assistance, lost passport help, and evacuation services. Harvard Travel Assist will also alert Harvard Global Support Services, and we can provide additional help.

2. **BEFORE YOU GO**
   - **Research your destination**
     - Research country-specific environmental, financial, health, legal, medical, political, safety, and telecommunications information.
     - Prepare for cultural differences. For example, think about how you dress and behave.
     - Resources include Harvard Travel Assist, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the U.S. Department of State.
   - **Register your trip**
     - Enter your lodging, transportation, and emergency contact information in the Harvard Travel Registry.
     - Register with the embassy of your country of citizenship.
   - **Complete pre-departure requirements**
     - Review the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Travel Policies.
     - Check the Travel Risk Ratings.
     - Complete a Travel Waiver.
     - Review the expectations for conduct in your School's student handbook, which apply to you whether you’re on or off campus.
     - If conducting research on human subjects, contact your School's Institutional Review Board.
     - Obtain a passport and required visas well in advance; the process may take up to 10 weeks.

   *International students: consult with the Harvard International Office.*
   - **Complete health check-ups**
     - Talk with your health insurance provider about coverage abroad. Understand if you will need to pay out of pocket at the time of service and file reimbursements when you return.
     - Schedule a pre-travel health consultation at least 1 month before your trip to obtain necessary vaccinations and medications.
     - Obtain health clearance, if required by your program.
   - **Develop transportation, lodging, and communication plans**
     - Consider purchasing a flexible airline ticket.
     - Investigate your neighborhood.
     - Plan your daily route to and from your lodging and place of study, research, or work.
     - Write down emergency numbers and store them in your phone and email:
       - Local equivalent of “911,” if appropriate
       - Harvard Travel Assist: +1 617-998-0000
       - Your country’s embassy at your destination
       - Trip leader and/or in-country contact
       - Home country contact
     - Arrange a regular call schedule with someone at home; if you miss a call, that person can alert Harvard.
   - **Make a financial plan**
     - Budget your trip, and factor in exchange rates.
     - Notify your bank and credit card companies, and determine whether your debit and credit cards will work at your destination.
     - Identify “partner banks” that may have lower fees.

3. **WEB RESOURCES**
   - [traveltools.harvard.edu](http://traveltools.harvard.edu): Global Support Services’ Travel Tools, includes risk ratings, travel forms, policies, and visa services
   - [travelregistry.harvard.edu](http://travelregistry.harvard.edu): Harvard Travel Registry
   - [travelassistant.harvard.edu](http://travelassistant.harvard.edu): Harvard Travel Assist, includes eligibility criteria and access to country profiles and travel alerts
   - [hio.harvard.edu](http://hio.harvard.edu): Harvard International Office
   - [osapr.harvard.edu](http://osapr.harvard.edu): Harvard’s confidential Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response; 24-hour hotline: +1 617-495-9100
   - [diversity.harvard.edu/title-ix-coordinators-school](http://diversity.harvard.edu/title-ix-coordinators-school): Title IX Coordinators’ contact information
   - [travel.state.gov](http://travel.state.gov): U.S. Department of State, includes passport services, 911 lists, and travel alerts
   - [cdc.gov/travel](http://cdc.gov/travel): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, includes health risks and vaccine information
   - [step.state.gov](http://step.state.gov): Embassy registration for U.S. citizens
   - [http://embassy.goabroad.com](http://embassy.goabroad.com): Embassy and consulate locator
   - [google.com/earth](http://google.com/earth) and [maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com): Area, lodging, and transportation information
   - [oanda.com/currency/converter](http://oanda.com/currency/converter): Exchange rates
WHILE IN COUNTRY

☐ Airport arrival
  • Remain vigilant to avoid being a target, and stay in physical contact with your luggage.
  • Test your cell phone in a secure area.

☐ Transportation and motor vehicles
  • Plan your routes, safe transport, and back-up routes ahead of each excursion.
  • Rely on public transportation, if appropriate, and use only licensed taxis ordered from a trusted source.
  • *Undergraduate students*: Renting or driving any motor vehicles (cars, motorcycles, mopeds, and boats) is prohibited.

☐ Lodging
  • Review locks, windows, smoke detectors, and emergency exits.

☐ Updating the Harvard Travel Registry
  • Include any changes to your lodging and contact information, especially if you purchase a new phone or SIM card.
  • Add any day trips, overnight stays, or weekend trips.

☐ Communication
  • In addition to updating the Travel Registry, share your plans with a Harvard contact, in-country contact, friend, or family member.
  • Avoid posting your travel plans on social media.

☐ Disorientation and stress
  • Feeling some disorientation and stress is normal.
  • Establish routines, and make time for exercise and relaxation.
  • Look out for each other, and contact a trip leader or Harvard Travel Assist if you are worried.

☐ Behavior
  • Maintain “situational awareness” and practice visualization techniques, asking “What if?” to prepare for what might go wrong.
  • Use the buddy system, and do not travel alone, especially at night.
  • What is risky at home is riskier in an unfamiliar place.
  • Certain behaviors that are culturally acceptable in the US may be seen as sexual advances in other cultures.
  • Report sexual harassment to your program leader, your School’s Title IX Coordinator, and/or Harvard’s confidential Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR); you may also call Harvard Travel Assist.

☐ Injury or illness
  • Call your local emergency number, if appropriate.
  • Contact Harvard Travel Assist for medical referrals.
  • Report any illness or injury requiring a doctor to Harvard Travel Assist, even after the fact.

☐ Mugging
  • Be cautious about ATMs and cash.
  • Avoid eye contact with an attacker.
  • Comply with an attacker’s demands, unless they are trying to take you away.
  • Report any robbery or assault to Harvard Travel Assist.

☐ If you are sexually assaulted
  • Find a safe place, then call Harvard Travel Assist for discreet medical attention and other help.
  • You can also obtain advice and counseling from OSAPR (confidential) and your School’s Title IX Coordinator.

☐ Crowds and demonstrations
  • Avoid all protests; even observations may be perceived as subversive activity.
  • Do not take pictures; photographing protests may put you in jail.

☐ If you are arrested
  • First, call your country’s embassy. If you cannot call, ask someone to call for you.
  • Ask the embassy to call Harvard Travel Assist.

RETURNING HOME

☐ Prepare to leave
  • Take the time to say goodbye and collect contacts.
  • Review travel documentation and departure fees.
  • Put your finances in order, and collect documentation for any reimbursements you may be seeking.
  • Consider transmitting photos and research information electronically to avoid airport searches.
  • If you’re conducting research and plan to bring biological specimens to the US, you may need to obtain preauthorization.
  • Have a ground transportation plan for getting to and from the airport.

☐ Bring your experiences back to Harvard
  • Reverse culture shock is normal; find ways to share your experiences with other travelers.
  • Explore opportunities with Harvard’s international research centers, student groups, and the Office of International Education.

QUESTIONS
Contact your program director or Global Support Services, +1 617-495-1111 and globallsupport@harvard.edu.