

A photograph of the Statue of Liberty in New York City, holding a tablet that reads "JULY 17 1776". The background shows the city skyline and a blue sky with clouds.

STUDY GUIDE

UNITED STATES

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The United States of America (also known as United States, U.S., USA, America, or the States). It is a federal constitutional republic that consists fifty states and a federal district.

United States of America has 3.79 million square miles (9.83 million km²) and with over 314 million people, it become the third- or fourth-largest country by total area, and the third-largest by both land area and population. It is one of the world's most ethnically diverse and multi-cultural nations, the product of large-scale immigration from many countries.

The States is a multicultural nation, just like home to a wide variety of ethnic groups, traditions, and values, and the American cultural is considered as the

most individualistic in the world.

The development of the culture at United States of America has been marked by a tension between two strong sources of inspiration: European ideals, especially British; and domestic originality. Besides, the American culture do encompasses traditions, ideals, customs, beliefs, values, arts, folklore and innovations developed both domestically and imported via colonization and immigration from the British Isles.

The government of the United States of America is the federal government of the constitutional republic of fifty states that constitute the United States of America, as well as one capitol district, and several other territories.

The federal government is composed of three distinct branches: legislative, executive and judicial, which powers are vested by the U.S.

The country is situated mostly in central North America, where its forty-eight contiguous states and Washington, D.C., the capital district, lie between the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans, bordered by Canada to the north and Mexico to the south. The state of Alaska is in the northwest of the continent, with Canada to the east and Russia to the west across the Bering Strait. The state of Hawaii is an archipelago in the mid-Pacific. Other than that, the country also possesses several territories in the Pacific and Caribbean.

#1 Country Info



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Country Info

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WEATHER



United States of America consists wide variety of climate types due to its large size, range of geographic features, and non-contiguous arrangement. Temperatures reach both extremes of the scale from freezing cold -80°F in Alaska to a piping hot 135°F in California's Death Valley (hence the name). In general the climate is temperate.

Winter (December – April): the northern states are the coldest, experiencing bitter, freezing temperatures. Low temperatures in January and February are made slightly warmer by the Chinook winds originating from the Rocky Mountains. The southern states, known as the 'sunbelt' are quite the opposite, with temperatures rarely falling below freezing.

Summers (June - September): hot in the US but for New England, Oregon and Washington which tend to be rainier and less predictable. The Pacific Northwest states are generally temperate while the south, east coast and Midwest are more humid. Heat waves are common in the Southwest.

Spring and autumn are generally mild, warm and sunny with the exception of some wet areas, the Pacific Northwest in particular.

Tornado season typically arrives in the Midwest between April and June, and hurricanes are common in early summer along the southern East Coast and Gulf of Mexico coast - TV and radio will broadcast warnings for both, but the chances of encountering one on a short visit are remote.

TIME AND WEATHER

United States of America Time Zone

The United States uses nine standard time zones. From east to west they are:-

- 🕒 Atlantic Standard Time (AST)
- 🕒 Eastern Standard Time (EST)
- 🕒 Central Standard Time (CST)
- 🕒 Mountain Standard Time (MST)
- 🕒 Pacific Standard Time (PST)
- 🕒 Alaskan Standard Time (AKST)
- 🕒 Hawaii-Aleutian Standard Time (HST)
- 🕒 Samoa Standard Time (UTC-11)
- 🕒 Chamorro Standard Time (UTC+10)

The United States of America operates Daylight Saving Time which begins at 2:00 a.m. local time on the second Sunday in March. On the first Sunday in November areas on Daylight Saving Time return to Standard Time at 2:00 a.m. The names in each time zone change along with Daylight Saving Time. Eastern Standard Time (EST) becomes Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), and so forth. Whilst, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Hawaii, U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa do not observe Daylight Saving Time.

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LANGUAGE

Languages in United States of America

The most common language used in the States is English and Spanish, is the second most commonly spoken language.

After English and Spanish, however, few realize that French is spoken regularly in more American homes more than any other language.

More than a million Americans also regularly speak German, Italian, and Chinese. And among the top languages spoken by Americans at home is one that has been spoken in this country long before English and Spanish.

SECURITY

Security in United States of America

The current president of the States is Barack H. Obama. He was elected the 44th President of the United States on November 4, 2008, and sworn in on January 20, 2009.



The president is indirectly elected by the people through the Electoral College to a four-year term, and is one of only two nationally elected federal officers, the other being the Vice President of the United States.

Head of State

The President of the United States of America is the head of state and head of government of the United States. The president leads the executive branch of the federal government and is the commander-in-chief of the United States Armed Forces.

The White House



The White House is one of the world's most famous buildings. It isn't simply a home to First Families or meeting space for world leaders, yet also known as 'The People's House', a place that should be open to everyone.

The White House is the only building in the world that is simultaneously the home of a head of state, the executive office of a



CURRENCY

Currency & Denomination

The currency used in the States is the U.S. dollar (sign: \$; code: USD; also abbreviated US\$). Notes are printed on bills in denominations of \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100 while the circulating coins exist in denominations: \$0.01, \$0.05, \$0.10, \$0.25, \$0.50, and \$1.00.

Exchange Rate Indicators

1.00 USD = 0.77 EUR

1.00 USD = 0.62 GBP

1.00 USD = 0.98 AUD

*Currency conversion rates as of 10 October 2012.

head of state, and is regularly open to the public for tours not only to increase the number of visitors, but also enhance each visitor's experience at the White House.

DINING

Dining in United States of America

The States often well known for the mass production and global uniformity of fast food outlets, but America is actually home to wide-ranging regional cuisine and the influence of immigrant groups past and present.

From New England clam chowder to Texas barbecue to cioppino in the City by the Bay, the cuisine of the United States has thrills around every corner.

Below are some of the famous dishes in the States:

- Apple Cake (United States apple cake)
- Buffalo Wings (American chicken wings in spicy sauce)
- Cajun and Creole Seasoning (American Louisiana herb and spice blend)
- Cioppino (American fish and seafood stew)
- Macaroni and Cheese (American pasta with cheese)
- New England Clam Chowder (American clam and potato stew)
- Pancakes (American skille cakes)



SHOPPING

Shopping in United States of America

Shopping is one of America's favorite pastimes. Even the smallest cities in the United States have



shopping centers or "shopping malls" that contain a wide variety of stores and services.

There are several types of stores in United States of America:-

The Campus Bookstore, which operates in almost every college and university. These bookstores carry required textbooks and supplies, a complete range of stationery items, and items of clothing with the university's emblem printed on them, as well as a variety of things needed or enjoyed by students.

Department Stores, serves have many different sections, or departments, where shopper can buy clothing, shoes, appliances, kitchen items, china, gifts, jewelry, and more. The price and quality are differing in each department store.

Discount Stores, which similar to department stores but generally offer lower prices

because they buy in large quantities (sometimes older and discontinued models), and because the stores are large, economically built, and plain. You may find "bargains" (good buys) at discount stores if you shop with care.

Supermarkets, also called as the "grocery store", a large store that sells all kinds of food, as well as a small selection of other things like pharmacy items, hardware, kitchen utensils, houseplants, food for pets, and sometimes even clothing. Prices in supermarkets are usually lower than in small, independent stores.

Pharmacies, also known as "drugstores" in the States and usually offer a large selection of cosmetics, toiletries, stationery, and other items, as well as medicines. You may also purchase "nonprescription" (that is, not prescribed by a doctor) medication, such as aspirin and common cold remedies.

BANKING SERVICE

Banking in United States of America

There are various banks in the States and the five largest banks are JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, Citigroup, Wells Fargo, and Goldman Sachs. The banks operating hours in the States are not the same for all as it depends on the location in different parts of the country.

Majority of the banks operating hours are:-

Monday to Thursday: 9a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.



POSTAL SERVICE

Postal Services in United States of America

The United States Postal Service (USPS), also known as the Post Office and U.S. Mail. It is an independent agency of the United States government responsible for providing postal service in the United States. It is one of the few government agencies explicitly authorized by the United States Constitution.

The U.S Postal Service delivers not less than 40 % of land mails, yet, they also concerned about the earth as they choose to save energy and very supportive in 'go green' actions.



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ACCOMMODATION

LIVING IN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Depending on your place of study, there are several types of accommodation arrangements you can pursue:

i) On-Campus living

Provided at optional fee by the education institution; fees and facilities may vary from one education institution to another.

ii) Off-Campus living

Majority schools have an off-campus housing office to help students find an apartment. The housing office will have listings of available apartments and information about the neighborhoods near campus. Accommodation will be settled by students themselves.

For on-campus or off-campus accommodation, there are a variety of types and budgets to suit your lifestyle, and many of them are located a stone's throw from your intended place of study. Such accommodations may come in the form of college hostels, apartments, and so on in quiet neighborhood or close to the institution.



PROPERTY & REAL ESTATE

Property & Real Estate Agents

Contact the National Association Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) for more information on housing options and current rates.

NAREB

Website: <http://www.nareb.com>

Office: 301- 552- 9340

Fax: 301- 552- 9216

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Lanham, MD. 20706.

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TRANSPORTATION

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



Transportation in the States is facilitated by road, air, rail, and water networks. Majority of American travels by automobile for shorter distances, and airplane or railroad for some people, for longer distances.

Public transportation is generally quite good in urban areas with the subway in New York or the El in Chicago. There are also numerous underground train systems in operation in major cities including Washington DC (metro), Boston ('T') and San Francisco (BART). There are also several tramway and trolleybus systems, including the much-loved antique trams found in San Francisco.

The trains in the States are operated by Amtrak which serves with over 22,000 miles (33,000 km) tracks. Most of the states and cities do operate short-distance and commuter rail lines around the various urban areas and are connected to stops on the Amtrak lines.

If you are traveling on road by car, taxi, or bus, the traffic drives on the right and every town can be reached by an adequate system of roads. If by bus, Greyhound is the main national coach carrier and covers the major cities in the States with express bus services.

COST OF LIVING

COST OF LIVING IN THE STATES

The cost of living in the United States depends on the state that you wish to live in. With 50 states that contribute uniquely to the economy of the nation, students would find the cost of living in one state different from another. Of course, the cost of living also depends on the lifestyle that the students pursue.

The cost of living in the United States can differ depending on location and lifestyle. It can be tough to choose the right location. After all, United States has got 50 states each with its own distinct character and culture. Big cities like Los Angeles, New York and Chicago tend to have high costs and quality of goods and other commodities but there are also a number of states offering lower standards of living.

U.S. states combine affordability with the arts, nature and other attractions that will allow you to have fun while working toward your goals. The annual cost of living depends on your lifestyle and the type of accommodation you choose, but \$400-\$500 per week \$20,800-\$26,000 per year is generally sufficient for most students to live comfortably. This does not include tuition fees, medical cover, textbooks

or airfares. Of course, just because a place is cheap doesn't mean you want to live there.

Price Index of General Items

General Items	Price in US Dollar (USD)
Combo meal at McDonald's or similar	6 USD
Meal at an inexpensive restaurant	10 USD
Rent for an Apartment in City Centre (per month)	1500 USD
Rent for an Apartment outside of City Centre (per month)	900 USD
One-way Ticket (Local Transport)	2 USD
Taxi Start (Normal Tariff)	3 USD
Gasoline (1 litre)	0.98 USD
Basic (Electricity, Heating, Water, Garbage) for 85m2 Apartment	160 USD
Internet (6 Mbps, Unlimited Data, Cable/ADSL)	41 USD

Depending on current exchange rate these prices might vary.

The table above shows the prices of the general items that can give students an idea of roughly how much they would need to pay for a certain things in the United States on average. These costs might have to be paid individually, but then at the same time chances are that they can be shared for instance the electricity bill or the internet bills can all be shared by a group of people 4 to 5 people.



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Shawn Kelly
Lead Animator of Star Wars I & II / Transformers I, II, III



Carlos Baena
Professional Animator of Pixar Animation Studios



Shelley Page
Head of International Outreach DreamWorks Animation



Eric Leong
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Breakdown of Living Cost in the States

The average international student should be prepared to spend about USD1360 to USD2190 per month for living expenses in the vicinity of a city. The cost is broken down as below :

\$ Accommodation You should estimate about USD580 to USD900 for your accommodation per month. The rental will vary depending on the geographical area, the type of accommodation (on-campus living in a hall of residence; or off-campus living in an apartment, condominium, singlestorey house, doublestorey house, etc.), the facilities provided in the house (e.g. with or without air-conditioning) and of course, the number of people sharing the room (or the apartment/house).

\$ Food / Housekeeping Your food and housekeeping expense is estimated to be around USD200 to USD400. Naturally, if you cook and share the cooking expenses with your friends, it would be cheaper.

\$ Public Transport Students who stay on campus or near campus may not incur any cost of travelling to and from classes. However, other travelling may cost approximately USD60 to USD90 per month.

\$ Telecommunication / Mobile Phone Bills and Utilities The average student may pay approximately USD70 to USD100 on telecommunication for Internet and mobile phone bills per month.

\$ Personal Expenses How much your personal expenses would be per month would depend on your personal lifestyle. However, the cost can be estimated to be between USD450 to USD700. This includes your socialising needs, toiletries, haircut, clothes, movie, etc. Using the estimate above, the total cost of living will average from between USD1360 to USD2190 per month or about USD16320 to USD26280 per year (12 months) for one student.



It is important to remember that the above estimate is only a guide in planning your budget to study in United States of America. Individual expenses will vary according to the location you are at, course taken and your personal lifestyle.



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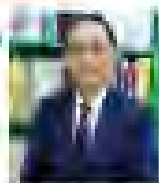


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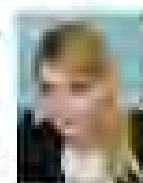


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ECONOMIC OUTLAY

UNITED STATES INDUSTRY

The United States is a superpower nation, being one of the top producers of natural gas, oil and supplies. Although it was affected by the economic recession, the United States quickly rose back with various industries within the nation offering work opportunities to citizens of the world.

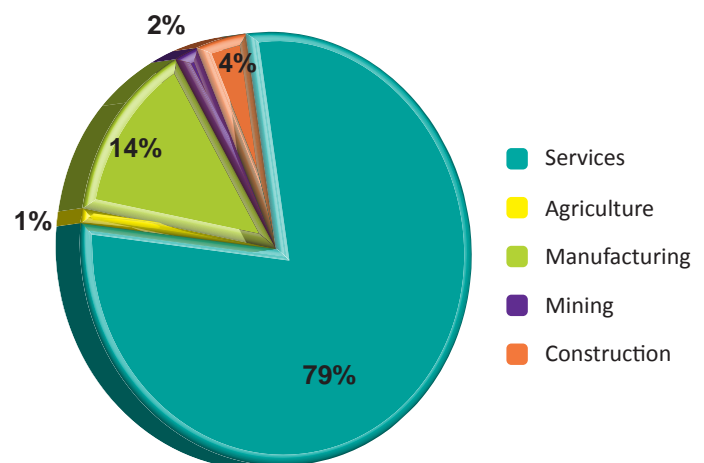
The economy of the United States is the world's largest single national economy. Its GDP at purchasing power parity is also the largest of any single country in the world, approximately a fifth of the global total. The United States has a mixed economy and has maintained a stable overall GDP growth rate, a moderate unemployment rate, and high levels of research and capital investment. Its five largest trading partners are Canada, China, Mexico, Japan, and Germany.

The U.S. is the world's third-largest producer of oil and second-largest producer of natural gas. It is the second-largest trading nation in the world behind China.

The U.S. economy has not recovered fully from the 2008 financial crisis and ensuing recession. High-tech companies are helping to drive the U.S. recovery, but even in Silicon Valley, California's high-tech center,

the picture is mixed. At the same time the leisure and hospitality sector is hiring, and banking and professional services are also doing well. California's \$44 billion farming industry helps feed the nation and is growing.

United States Industry Overview



Through the help of this chart above you can understand that the whole economy is more involved with the services sector and all the business that involve services, this has made United State flourish highly. This shows that any students considering or having graduated related to the services sector will have no difficulties in finding jobs or settling down in the United States.

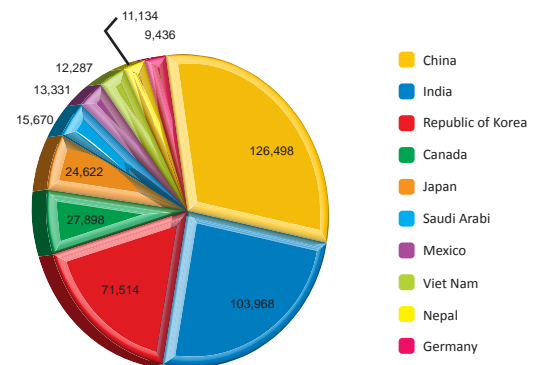
WHO STUDIES IN UNITED STATES

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE US



increased 44.4 percent. While slightly declining in numbers, students from India still represent 14 per cent of all international students in U.S. higher education, with tens of thousands more students from India in U.S. higher education than in any other host country. South Korea is the third leading place of origin, with more than 73,000 students, increasing by two per cent and making up 10 per cent of the total.

International students in the US



Students from different nationalities find the United States as an ideal destination to pursue their tertiary education. The amount of international student intake increases by the year, with a large number of students coming from China and India.

According to the latest data, at least 3.6 million students in 2010 were enrolled in tertiary education abroad, up from 2 million in 2000. East Asia and the Pacific are the largest source of international students, representing 28% of the global total. Students from China make up one-half of this figure, or 17% of the total. The United States, Australia, and Japan are their main

destinations for study. Several countries have more students studying abroad than at home for example countries like Andorra, Anguilla, Bermuda, Dominica and Liechtenstein so mostly students from these countries all prefer coming to the United States.

International Students USA

Chinese student enrolment in the United States rose to a total of nearly 158,000 students, or nearly 22 per cent of the total international student population, making China the leading sending country for the second year in a row. Yet, India, as a destination for U.S. students study abroad,

As the above chart helps you to see that many students come from different countries and it might help students get a rough estimate of the different nationalities that you can be expecting to see in your university.

WHO STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States has always opened its doors to aspiring individuals who seek a better quality of life. International students would find the quality of living here better, if not the same in their home. The USA does not only teach you curriculum in the class, but even beyond it; providing opportunity to those willing to improve their lifestyle.

The United States is the leader in many areas of technology and research. While studying here students will be exposed to advanced technology and research. They may be fortunate enough to meet, and even study, with the leading scholars in your chosen field. Living and learning in the USA will exhilarate you. It will change the landscape of your life permanently. We guarantee that you will return home changed—more confident, more open and knowledgeable, making you a citizen of the world with a much broader perspective.

Academic Flexibility

Students will soon discover that

the education system in the US is a lot different from their home country. They can now specialize in the area of their choice without having to take any unnecessary classes. Also have the flexibility to choose a class at any time during the academic year, since the some courses are offered multiple times during the academic year.

Lucrative Job Opportunities

On completion of your degree, you are legally authorized to work in the US in your related field for about a year. Most international students get inducted into the company that hires them during their OPT period, by sponsoring their H1-B or work visa. The H1-B work visa is usually granted by employers if they are hiring international students in specialty areas such as software, engineering, accountancy, teaching or marketing. Once your employer grants your H1-B, you are allowed to work in the US without returning to your home country.

Support Services for International Students

U.S. universities welcome international students for pursuing higher education in the USA and have support systems to help students adjust comfortably to life in the U.S. Services at the international student office help student's transition to the new environment. Support is offered through the year from organizing orientation programs for assistance with academic writing and building resumes as students get ready to graduate.

Value Addition and Cultural Enhancement

Around 30 per cent of all international students in the world study in the US, and this exposure will not only enhance your cultural and artistic faculties, but will also help you learn a lot more about the world. The exciting cultural exchange and international diversity will certainly enrich your life both personally and academically. Your new friends will be your new family.

Campus Life

U.S. universities offer a diverse choice of academic, cultural and athletic activities to choose from which not only enrich the educational experience but also help students make new friends and become global citizens. Your university may also have a cricket team in addition to fraternities, regional and ethnic clubs.



GENERAL STUDENT VISA REQUIREMENT FOR US

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR A STUDENT VISA

It has always been the aim of the United States to provide the best education to both local and international students. With state-of-the-art facilities and world-class quality educators, The USA has its educational institutions ranked in the Top 10 Best universities in the world. If you are interested in studying in the United States, here's an insight of the Visa requirements to get you prepared.

The United States welcomes foreign citizens who come to the U.S. to study. Before applying for a visa, all student visa applicants are required to be accepted and approved by their school or program. Once accepted, educational institutions will provide each applicant the necessary approval documentation to be submitted when applying for a student visa. Students can apply within 120 days from the start date of I-20 and can travel within 30 days from the start date of I-20.

The most common type of student visa is the F-1 Visa, if you wish to engage in academic studies in the United States at an approved school, such as an accredited U.S. college or university, private secondary school, or approved English



language program then you need an F-1 visa. You will also need an F-1 visa if your course of study is more than 18 hours a week.

Step 1

Pay the visa application fee.

Step 2

Complete the Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application form.

Step 3

Schedule your appointment. You will need three pieces of information in order to schedule your appointment.

- 1: Your passport number
- 2: The date you paid your fee
- 3: The ten (10) digit barcode number from your E application. (The form will be provided online by the university you wish to apply through)

Step 4

Visit the U.S. Embassy or Consulate on the date and time of your visa interview. You must bring a printed copy of your appointment letter, one photograph taken within the last six months, your current and all old passports, and the original visa fee payment receipt. Applications without all of these items will not be accepted.

Documents required for a Student Visa

Documents signifying strong financial, social, and family ties to your home country that will compel you to return to your country after your program of study in the United States ends.

Financial and any other documents you believe will support your application and which give credible evidence that

you have enough readily-available funds to meet all expenses for the first year of study and that you have access to funds sufficient to cover all expenses while you remain in the United States.

Duplicates of bank statements will not be accepted unless you can also show original copies of bank statements or original bank books.

If you are financially sponsored by another person, bring proof of your relationship to the sponsor (such as your birth certificate), the sponsor's most recent original tax forms and the sponsor's bankbooks and/or fixed deposit certificates.

School documents that show what you have studied before. Useful documents include school transcripts (original copies are preferred) with grades, public examination certificates (A-levels, etc.), Standardized test scores (SAT, TOEFL, etc.), and diplomas.



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