

Making Travel Arrangements

More than likely you will arrive in the United States by airplane. Notify the International Student Services Office of your arrival date and time, since he or she may meet you at the airport.

Do not forget to bring at least \$100 to \$200 in small cash denominations with you, in case you need U.S. money before you reach a currency exchange center.

Travel During U.S. Holidays

Make travel reservations well in advance of your departure date. This is especially important if you travel in the United States during peak tourist seasons or holidays. These include the Easter observance (either in March or April); the summer months of June through August; and the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day holidays in November, December, and January. There are ten U.S. Federal holidays:

New Year's Day - January 1

Martin Luther King Day - observed the third Monday in January

Presidents' Day - observed the third Monday in February

Memorial Day - observed the fourth Monday in May

Independence Day - July 4

Labor Day - observed the first Monday in September

Columbus Day - observed the second Monday in October

Veteran's Day - November 11

Thanksgiving Day - observed the fourth Thursday in November

Christmas Day - December 25

Travel Agencies

Probably the most efficient and convenient way to make your travel arrangements is through a travel agency. Travel agents are usually knowledgeable about conditions in various countries and make specialized travel arrangements adapted to your needs. They can advise you on airlines, fares, and routes; compare prices; and confirm or change reservations. If you have dietary restrictions for religious or health reasons, the travel agent will also be able to order you a special, in-flight meal.

You may not have to pay a fee for these services. In many countries, you pay no more than you would if you dealt directly with the airlines, purchased your own ticket, and made your own hotel reservations. In fact, because they have access to current specials or sales, travel agents may save you money. They also are aware of which airlines offer reduced student rates or special student packages, including round-trip international fares and domestic U.S. fares.

Travel Clubs and Charter Organizations

Certain organizations in your country may specialize in charter flights and other low-cost travel to the United States. Sometimes these organizations advertise in local publications and student newspapers, but students usually learn about them from other people who have dealt with them. Some travel clubs require that you join their club and pay a membership fee before you are eligible to take advantage of their charter flights. It is a good idea to check on the organization's reputation before you pay a fee or make reservations. When you call for information, ask whether fares, departure dates, and connections are reliable. Sometimes, if the carrier does not sell enough seats, charter flights are cancelled or rescheduled.

