

Career Advancement International City Guide:

How to Prepare for a Successful Summer Abroad

The resources in this guide are for informational purposes only. Career Advancement does not endorse or guarantee any of the services described in this document. Students should exercise their own discretion when planning for their summer internship. If you would like more information or have questions about this document, feel free to speak with a Career Advancement adviser. You can make an appointment on UChicago Handshake.

Summer Abroad Housing Overview

Congratulations on securing an internship or job abroad! We hope that you take advantage of this excellent opportunity to build your skills, explore your interests, broaden your professional network, and experience the world outside of the University of Chicago. There are many things to consider prior to your departure.

The type of housing you're looking for, your budget, and your connections are all factors that should help determine where you begin your housing search. The earlier you begin looking, the more options you will have and the easier it will be to choose exactly where you want to live for the summer. In the end, it is best to find housing that is near your job location with easy access to public transportation. This should be a priority when looking for housing; it will make your commute to and from work much easier and it will save you a lot of time and money.

Finding Summer Housing

Here is a list of steps you should take when looking for housing:

1. *Consider finding a roommate.* You may end up spending a good amount of your summer income paying for rent. If you can find a classmate, friend, or relative who is willing to room with you or put you up for the summer, economically, this could be your best option.
2. *Location is everything.* One strategy is to search for housing that is close to your workplace and/or near transportation that will get you to work quickly.
3. *Decide what is important to you.* Once you've decided on what neighborhoods would be convenient for you, it's always helpful to explore what attractions they have to offer. Whether you love trying new restaurants, shopping, or visiting museums and other cultural institutions, try to find a place that will give you the most time to explore your favorite things.
4. *Politely ask your employer about housing resources.* Your employer may have suggestions for where to live, or give

you the contact information of other interns who are searching for housing so that you can room together or get advice from each other.

Getting Your Passport (U.S. Citizens)

One of the first things you should do in preparing for your experience abroad is to obtain a passport. You should apply for a passport as soon as possible, as this can take six to eight weeks or longer. Renewing and replacing a U.S. passport costs \$110.

If you have never obtained a passport, you will need to apply for one in person. Visit <https://iafdb.travel.state.gov/> to find the nearest passport acceptance facility. If you simply need to renew your passport, you can usually do so by mail. To learn how, visit https://travel.state.gov/passport/renew/renew_833.html.

To apply for a passport, you will need:

- Completed passport application;
- Passport application fee;
- Valid proof of citizenship [e.g., an expired U.S. passport, a certified (original) birth certificate, Certificate of Naturalization, Certificate of Citizenship, or Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States];
- Proof of identity (a valid driver's license or government identification card are acceptable provided they identify you by physical description or photograph);
- Two identical 2 x 2-inch passport photographs taken within six months of applying for your passport. Walgreens and CVS have the equipment needed to take passport photographs, as do some U.S. Post Offices. If your photo does not meet the specifications required, the processing of your passport will be delayed and you'll be asked to re-send two photos.

Please Note: If you already have a passport, many countries require that your passport be valid for six months beyond the dates of your trip. Keep this in mind, in case you need to renew your passport.

Also, some countries will not allow entry if your passport indicates travel to specific countries; check with the embassy or consulate of the country in which you will be traveling for their requirements.

For more information on applying for a passport, see: <http://www.travel.state.gov/passport> or call 877-487-2778.

Work Permits and Visas

Different countries will require different forms of documentation before allowing you to work legally as an intern. Each country has its own rules, so it is crucial that you determine the requirements of the country in which you will be working prior to your departure! You can obtain this information by consulting the embassy or nearest consulate (many countries require that you apply through the consular office that is closest to your primary area of residence) regarding requirements. To get country-specific information about every nation in the world, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/International-Travel-Country-Information-Pages.html>. The “Entry/Exit Requirements” and “Registration/Embassy Location” sections should be of particular interest.

It is worth noting that most countries only require work permits from students who are being paid directly by the organization for which they are interning. Consequently, work permits will not be necessary for many students (for example, those who are volunteering or are being paid a Metcalf stipend directly by the University). However, certain countries—including the United Kingdom—now require a work permit regardless of the source of your funding. You can often find organizations to help you secure the required permits for such countries. Students traveling to the UK, for instance, should visit <http://www.bunac.org>.

If you plan to travel to other countries while abroad or after your internship finishes, check the entrance requirements of each country before you leave home. It is your responsibility to make sure you have proper documentation abroad.

DO NOT wait until the last minute to apply for your work permit or student visa! As with passports, this can take many weeks to process, and if you do not have your student visa (and passport), you could miss your flight.

Registering at the Embassy

You may choose to register at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in the country you are visiting prior to leaving or once you have arrived. Registration makes your presence and whereabouts known, in case it is necessary for a consular

officer to contact you in an emergency. American consular officers can assist in evacuation, were that to become necessary during a disaster overseas. But they cannot assist you if they do not know where you are.

Registration is particularly important for those who plan to stay in a country longer than one month, or who will travel to:

- A country that is experiencing civil unrest, has an unstable political climate, or is undergoing a natural disaster, such as an earthquake or a hurricane.
- A country where there are no U.S. officials. In such cases, you should register at the U.S. embassy or consulate in an adjacent country, leave an itinerary with the Consular Section, ask about conditions in the country that you will visit, and ask if there is a third-party country that represents U.S. interests there.

Please visit the Department of State’s website: <https://step.state.gov/step/>. Print out the confirmation page after you have registered; leave one copy at home and take one with you. Students of other nationalities should check with their own embassies to see if it is possible to register prior to departure.

Making Arrangements with Your Employer

Talk to your employer about their expectations and requirements prior to your departure. Ask your supervisor whether or not the organization or company will require you to sign a waiver—different from a passport, visa, or work permit—before leaving the United States. Employers occasionally have their own forms that must be completed, above and beyond what you must do for the government.

Confirm a start and finish date for your internship, and discuss whether or not vacation time will be available if you are planning to travel during your internship.

International Student Identity Card

The International Student Identity Card (ISIC) is issued and recognized in over 133 countries and gives you access to student benefits (mostly in European and Western countries). This card is quite a bargain, as it is only \$25 if you elect to upload your own digital photo to the ISIC website and \$30 if you need a photo taken in the office. You will be entitled to discounts on airfare, transportation, attractions, and accommodations, as well as basic travel insurance valid abroad and domestically.

Visit <https://www.isic.org/> for more information.

Skype, Phones, and Calling Cards

Services such as Skype, Google Hangout, Facebook Messenger, and FaceTime can be used to call home where a reliable internet connection is available. In some instances, ordering an international calling card will be useful. There are also a wide variety of other phone card services that may be able at cheaper rates, which you can research online.

If you have a smartphone, there are also apps available for you to text and message family and friends while you are abroad. These include WhatsApp, Groupme, and iMessage (if you have an iPhone).

You should also consider buying your calling cards after arriving in the country in which you will be working. Buying your calling cards abroad can help you avoid the steep charges and reliability problems that are associated with some domestic cards. These cards can be purchased in post offices and newsstands in many countries.

Purchasing a cell phone abroad is another way to keep in touch with friends and family. Most foreign providers offer phones at reasonable prices with varying plans and packages. Buying one that takes a rechargeable minutes card will help keep your expenses down. Incoming calls are usually free.

Flight Arrangements

You should start looking into arrangements for your flight as early as possible. Checking on different travel websites is helpful to exploring your options and the different price ranges. It might be helpful to work with a travel agency, but keep in mind that there may be fees associated. Obtaining an International Student Identity Card, as discussed previously, may entitle you to additional discounts. Check into price differences (and flexibility options) between buying a round-trip or two one-way tickets. If you are traveling after your program, you may want to consider an open-ended ticket that would allow you to set your return flight at a later date.

Purchasing your airline tickets using an American Express Card provides you with several layers of travel protection, such as a Global Assist Hotline and assistance changing your flight in the case of an emergency. Check with your credit card company to see if you are eligible for similar services prior to booking your flight.

The following are suggestions of travel agencies and travel companies:

- Advantage Travel: 800-788-1980 or <http://www.advantagetravelcny.com/>
- AESU Travel: 800-638-7640 or <https://www.aesu.com>



Student Universe <https://www.studentuniverse.com>

For the latest flight rules and regulations, see: <https://www.tsa.gov/>

For information on airports worldwide, see: <http://www.worldairportguides.com/>

Insurance Information

Medical Insurance

You must be sure that you have adequate health insurance coverage abroad. Check your policy to see what coverage it provides for medical services abroad. If you have health insurance through the University, you should be covered. You can learn more about coverage through the University Student Health Insurance Plan (U-SHIP) by visiting <http://wellness.uchicago.edu/page/student-health-insurance>. If you have an alternative form of health insurance, talk to your provider about coverage abroad. Be sure to take your insurance card with you abroad, as well as any claim forms you will need.

Regardless of the type of insurance you purchase, doctors and hospitals require payment at the time of the visit. You can seek reimbursement from your insurance company only after you have paid the bill and can produce the receipt. Some of these services will take credit cards as payment. You should also have access to emergency funds in case of hospitalization or other emergency medical care. In general, you will find medical care, particularly in the public sector, somewhat less expensive than in the U.S.

Foreign health insurance coverage should be considered complementary to, rather than a substitute for, a U.S. policy. Moreover, such insurance does not guarantee access to a public hospital, where there can be long waiting lists for all but major or emergency ailments, and private hospitals and clinics can be as expensive as their American counterparts. If you intend to travel outside of your host country, please remember that most local health insurance policies will be accepted only within the issuing country's borders.

Be sure you have coverage for medical evacuation, in the rare case that you would have to be flown back to the U.S. (or to a different country) for medical treatment. Also, check to be sure that your policy covers any continuing treatment you may need for newly acquired medical conditions after you return home. The International Student Identity Card mentioned earlier provides some medical evacuation and repatriation and basic accident and sickness insurance, but you should supplement this with additional coverage.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance can cover a variety of potential financial risks associated with travel, such as trip interruption and cancellation, medical problems, evacuation, loss of baggage, and missed flights. Insurance costs vary widely and depend on the type of coverage you need (a particular area versus comprehensive, etc.). You can compare insurance providers and costs at <http://www.insuremytrip.com>.

Personal Property Insurance

You should consider purchasing insurance to cover loss of personal possessions while abroad. It is possible that you may be covered under a policy held by your parents, so investigate this prior to departure. Inexpensive but limited travel insurance coverage can be found at <http://www.insuremytrip.com>.

Money

Debit and credit cards are a common way to make purchases while abroad. Using a card with a chip ensures safety, as well as being convenient to carry and generally offering a better exchange rate than you'll receive at banks or exchange counters.

Call your bank before leaving to ask about ATM fees in foreign countries and to let them know that you will be traveling. Be sure to call credit card companies as well to let them know that you will be using your card abroad. As always, use caution when removing large amounts of money from an ATM.

What to Bring

There are two words of advice that students who have interned abroad offer regarding packing: pack lightly! It is nearly impossible to take everything you want. Most day-to-day items you might need will be available in your host country.

Be sure to bring along the following:

- Passport
- Visa or work permit, if necessary
- Photocopy of passport (kept separately from passport; you can also scan a copy and send it to a trusted family member or friend)
- Debit or credit cards, currency from your host country
- Proof of insurance
- Personal medical records (if necessary for medical appointments while abroad)
- Prescription medications in original containers and copies of prescriptions in generic form

- International Student Identity Card
- Calling card (if you are bringing one from the States rather than purchasing abroad)
- Insurance card
- Insurance claim forms
- Letter from employer confirming your internship
- Language dictionary
- Extra passport-size photos for any ID cards you may need abroad

You can find more packing lists and suggestions in many guidebooks or on the internet. It's best to use a list from a guidebook for your host country.

Safety

After living in the city of Chicago, you should be well-versed in safety precautions for urban environments. However, here are some basic tips you should be reminded of before your internship abroad. Using common sense is good advice and you should also read the following tips for a quick refresher.

General Safety Tips:

- Always remember that there is safety in numbers. Walk with friends, or take populated routes when going places. Be especially careful when walking at night.
- Plan your route in advance, walk with a purpose, and be alert at all times, especially when talking on a cell phone or using headphones.
- Avoid deserted areas such as parks, alleys, and vacant lots.
- If you think you're being followed, cross the street, change direction, or go to a public place.
- Never display valuable or large amounts of cash. If you need to organize your wallet, duck into a store.
- Don't keep your wallet in the back pocket of your pants or backpack, and be aware of your wallet or purse in commotions. Pickpockets often use helpers to create disturbances nearby.
- Use caution when using ATMs and don't carry too much cash around with you. Most places accept credit cards and there are ATMs everywhere. Just make sure you choose one that is in a busy, well-lighted area.
- Avoid empty subway cars. Ride with many people or in the conductor's car.



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Connect with Alumni

While you're abroad this summer, take advantage of the opportunity to connect with another great resource: University of Chicago alumni! Whether you're interested in working abroad after graduation, or you wish to find out more about certain career paths, networking with alumni may be one of the most beneficial things you do during your summer. Research alumni who are currently working in your area this summer through the UChicagoWiser Network, an alumni mentoring platform: <https://uchicago.wiser.io/signup> and the online alumni directory: <http://www.uchicagoalumni.org>.



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