



What happens next?

2025–2026

Important information for new international undergraduates

Read this first!

This brochure is for admitted international students who have **paid their Ohio State acceptance fee** and **received their I-20**. If you still need to complete these steps, visit:

First-year students: undergrad.osu.edu/intl-admitted

Transfer students: undergrad.osu.edu/intl-TR-admitted

Here's what happens next!

This brochure is for students who have their I-20 and are ready for the next steps in the process of attending Ohio State.

Contact Undergraduate Admissions (see Page 6 for contact information) to:

- Correct an error on an I-20
- Ask questions about transferring college credit
- Arrange to begin in a different term: If you do not plan to attend Ohio State during the term for which you have been admitted, you may update your application to be considered for another term. You will need a new I-20 but you may not need a new F-1 visa if you already applied for one with Ohio State's I-20. You must contact Undergraduate Admissions before the admission application deadline for the term for which you wish to be considered. A new application and/or fee may be required.

Office of International Affairs (OIA)

OIA serves international students in many ways, including helping them transition to the university. New and transfer international students are required to complete mandatory Immigration Check-in and Orientation with OIA after arriving in Columbus and before classes begin (more on Page 3).

Staff at OIA are available to assist you now and throughout the academic year — see Page 6 for contact information and hours.

Nationality clubs

Nationality clubs are a great source of information and support for new students. They can provide assistance once you arrive in Columbus, helping you settle in and get involved with campus life. For a list of clubs, visit go.osu.edu/student-orgs.

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Actions you must take before arriving

1 Check your BuckeyeMail account for email communication from OIA

Prior to your arrival, Ohio State's Office of International Affairs (OIA) will send weekly emails with important information to help prepare you for your arrival at Ohio State. These messages are also archived at go.osu.edu/pre-arrival-messages. (Haven't set up BuckeyeMail? Get help at undergrad.osu.edu/how2buckeyemail.)

2 Apply for your student visa

If you need a student visa (F-1) to study at Ohio State and ...

... you are currently attending school outside of the United States:

You must make an appointment with the nearest U.S. consulate or embassy to apply for a visa. (Read "Important visa issues" on this page.) As listed below, you'll need your visa eligibility document (I-20 for a F-1 visa), which you'll download when prompted by Ohio State.

... you are currently attending an institution in the United States:*

Instructions for accessing your International Student Transfer Form will be emailed to you. Ohio State will instruct you to download your visa eligibility document (I-20 for the F-1 visa) after your SEVIS record is released from your previous school. If you will be traveling outside the United States prior to the start of classes, you must contact Ohio State's Office of International Affairs (OIA) to receive your new document prior to re-entering the United States. If you are staying in the U.S. between programs, your documents will be mailed or emailed to you. Please follow the instructions on the International Student Transfer Form to ensure you receive your visa eligibility document at the appropriate time. Read "Important visa issues" on this page.

... you are currently attending Ohio State in another program:

Ohio State will instruct you to download your visa eligibility document (I-20 for the F-1 visa) prior to the start of your new program. If you will be traveling outside the United States prior to the start of your new educational level, you must contact Ohio State's Office of International Affairs (OIA) to receive your new document prior to re-entering the United States. You must also ensure that you receive the I-20 for your new program within your 60-day grace period following the completion of your current program. Read "Important visa issues" on this page.

To obtain a visa, take the following documents to your visa appointment:

- ☐ Passport (must be valid for at least six months into the future)
- ☐ I-20 (for F-1 visa)
- ☐ Proof of financial support (private sponsor's Visa Request Form and bank statement, or support letter from academic department or letter from sponsoring agency or government)
- ☐ Proof of additional funding for family members who will enter the U.S. on the F-2 visa, and marriage or birth certificates of family members applying for the F-2 visa (accompanying family members need their own I-20 in order to get a visa and enter the United States)
- ☐ Receipt for payment of the I-901 SEVIS fee; visit go.osu.edu/SEVISFee for details
- ☐ A copy of your Ohio State notice of admission email
- ☐ Be sure to check the embassy or consulate's website for other documents that may be required

Note for Canadian citizens: Canadian citizens do not need a U.S. visa. At the port of entry you will be asked to show your I-20, Canadian passport, receipt of SEVIS payment and proof of financial support. Make sure to obtain an admission stamp (F-1) on your passport at the port of entry.

Important visa issues

- In addition to the documentation listed in the previous column, you will need to demonstrate to the U.S. consular officer that you have a home address that you do not intend to abandon, that you have substantial ties to your home country and that you will return there when you've completed your studies.
- Be sure to enter the United States on the F-1 visa. Those entering on the visa waiver program or on a B-2 tourist visa cannot change status in the United States.
- Apply for your F-1 visa using the I-20 for the university in which you intend to enroll. If you have been admitted to and received an I-20 from a university other than Ohio State, please be aware that if you apply for the visa and enter the United States on that school's documents, you will be required to attend that school.

Information on U.S. consulate policies, procedures, requirements and visa wait times can be found at the U.S. Department of State website: travel.state.gov.

If you have questions about obtaining your student visa, please contact OIA (see contact information on Page 6).

*Are you coming from another U.S. school?

If you are an F-1 student enrolled at another U.S. high school, college or university, you are required to follow the SEVIS transfer process. Complete the International Student Transfer Form, which you will receive via email, and submit it to the international student advisor at your current institution prior to your last day of enrollment. Your advisor will release your SEVIS record to Ohio State. The International Student Transfer Form describes how to obtain the I-20 from Ohio State.

Actions you must take before arriving (continued)

3 Arrange for housing

All unmarried, full-time students within a year of high school are required to live in the residence halls for their first two years, unless they will be living locally with family.

Housing information is emailed to students' BuckeyeMail accounts (beginning in mid-March for freshmen admitted for autumn semester) in the order acceptance fees are received.

After receiving this information, apply for housing online as soon as possible. On-campus housing space fills quickly. In some cases, housing may not be available for students who do not return the contract in a timely manner.

Transfer students who graduated from secondary school in 2024–25 are required to live on campus; housing is dependent upon space availability and is not guaranteed for all other transfer students.

Contact Housing for details (see contact information on Page 6).

On-campus housing

Traditional residence halls

A few notes about residence halls:

- Each room is furnished and includes a small microwave oven and refrigerator (woks, electric burners and other small appliances may not be used in the rooms). Some residence halls have limited shared kitchen cooking space.
- A variety of meal plans and types of food are available in the university dining halls. Learn more: dining.osu.edu/dining-plans/columbus-campus-dining-plans.
- Most undergraduate students in residence halls have three roommates.
- Housing fees include all utilities, including internet connections.
- The entire campus — including residence halls — is tobacco-free.

Living-learning community residence hall

I-House is an undergraduate residential community where international and domestic students live together. Residents participate in educational and social programs. To learn about I-House, visit housing.osu.edu and click on Learning Communities. The application deadline for learning communities is April 15.

Off-campus housing

Off-Campus and Commuter Student Engagement provides resources and information for students who live off campus, including apartment/roommate searches, general lease information and legal referrals. Visit offcampus.osu.edu or contact this office directly (see contact information on Page 6).

4 Make plans to arrive early

OIA recommends that you arrive in Columbus no later than one week before classes begin. Plan to remain in Columbus during that time so you can take care of university business (see the checklist on Page 6).

Early arrival housing

Make arrangements with Housing to move into your autumn semester housing assignment in early August (for other terms, a limited number of spaces may be available).

- **If you have signed a housing contract**, use the link sent to you with your housing assignment to make arrangements for arrival. You also have the option of arranging host housing or booking a hotel.
- **If you have not signed a contract with Housing**, you will not have access to early-arrival housing in the residence halls. You must arrange for host housing or book a hotel.

Host housing

Your nationality club may be able to help with temporary housing. For a list of clubs, visit go.osu.edu/student-orgs.

Hotels

Area hotel rates range from \$70–\$140 per night for a single person room. Check rates online before making a reservation, and call the hotel to ask about special discounts for Ohio State students. For a list of hotels near the university, visit visitexperiencecolumbus.com/hotels/near-ohio-state-university.

5 Attend an online Pre-Arrival Session

To help students prepare for their journey to Ohio State, it is highly recommended that students attend a Pre-Arrival Session to learn more about the many opportunities and resources available. These sessions are held in June and only available to students starting autumn semester. Registration is available in mid-May at go.osu.edu/pre-arrival-sessions.

6 Learn about mandatory Immigration Check-in and Orientation

Mandatory Immigration Check-in and **International Student Orientation** are two separate but equally important processes to getting started as a new international student at Ohio State. Both are required and should be completed before the start of classes. Learn more, including how to register for both, at go.osu.edu/prearrival and go.osu.edu/ImmigrationProcess.

Actions you must take before arriving (continued)

7 Take required placement tests

To ensure appropriate placement in Ohio State courses, most new international students are required to take placement tests in ESL and/or math online prior to arriving on campus.

- **ESL placement tests:** Go to ielp.ehe.osu.edu/assessments to read more about the ESL Composition (ESLC) program, including placement requirements.
- **Math placement test:** If you are asked to take the math placement test, you will be given instructions to complete the test online. If possible, students should complete the test at orientation.osu.edu/placement prior to their arrival.

8 Complete vaccination requirement

Ohio State requires verification that you are up to date on certain vaccines (immunizations). Complete information on the requirement can be found at shc.osu.edu/services/vaccinations/vaccination-requirement.

- **Step 1:** Enter the dates of your vaccinations into [MyBuckMD](#), your secure health portal at Student Health Services. You'll need to log in with your Ohio State username and password.
- **Step 2:** Download and complete the vaccination document found at shs.osu.edu/vaccinations1/completing-university-vaccination-requirement and have it signed by your doctor. When the form is complete, you will need to scan it and upload it to [MyBuckMD](#).

If you're not able to receive, or verify that you have received, all of these vaccinations prior to arrival, you can receive them all at the Student Health Center once you're here, and the cost will be covered by your Ohio State health insurance. Questions should be addressed to vaccination@osu.edu.

Actions you must take after arriving

Immigration Check-in and International Student Orientation are required for all new international students. Most students can complete Immigration Check-in, orientation, testing and class registration within two weeks.

For those starting autumn 2025 term: You are required to be on campus no later than **August 19, 2025**, to complete government required Immigration Check-in and International Student Orientation before the start of classes.

1 Complete Immigration Check-in

All international students must check in with OIA when they arrive on campus and before classes begin. **You are required to complete your check-in not more than one week after your arrival in the United States to comply with U.S. immigration regulations.** It is very important that you read OIA's pre-arrival emails (go.osu.edu/pre-arrival-messages) for details on the immigration check-in process and how to register for a check-in date and time in advance.

2 Complete International Student Orientation

All new students are required to complete OIA's in-person and online orientation, which addresses topics such as:

- Cultural adjustment
- Campus safety
- University procedures

- Immigration regulations
- Academic standards and expectations
- Tuition and fee payment
- Campus involvement
- Health services and insurance

Ohio State staff members from a variety of offices participate in orientation to introduce themselves to you and share information about the services their departments provide. Orientation activities provide students with an opportunity to get acquainted with campus and get to know new and current international students.

International Student Orientation dates:

Semester	Orientation	Classes begin
Autumn 2025	Multiple dates	August 26, 2025
Spring 2026	January 2026	January 12, 2026

Visit go.osu.edu/prearrival for learn more about orientation.

3 Attend welcome events

During your first weeks at Ohio State, there will be events to help you acclimate to Ohio State and Columbus. Orientation leaders will help you learn more about shopping, arts and culture, food, sports, and Ohio State and campus resources. Visit go.osu.edu/oia-new-students.

Additional information to help you plan and prepare

Arriving in Columbus

When to arrive

Federal regulations require that F-1 students arrive no more than 30 days before the start date on the I-20. We recommend you arrive in Columbus no later than one week before classes begin, and remain in Columbus during that time so you can take care of university business.

Getting to campus from the airport

Ohio State provides a limited number of free transportation vouchers. Contact global-engagement@osu.edu for more information.

It's easy and safe to take a taxi from the airport to campus. Follow the ground transportation sign near the baggage claim area. Taxis and vans will be parked near the door. The fare to Ohio State is approximately \$25–\$30 (ask about the cost in advance). Taxi drivers expect a 10–15 percent tip.

Your nationality club may also be able to help with airport pick-up or other local transportation. For a list of clubs, search the directory at go.osu.edu/student-orgs.

Prior to your departure, learn more at go.osu.edu/prearrival.

Living expenses

The cost of tuition, fees and other living expenses is listed on the I-20 (cost for one year). Students should plan for a 5–10 percent annual increase for all costs.

Additional living expenses for family members for the 2024–2025 academic year are estimated at:

Spouse	\$11,086
Each child (under 13 years old)*	\$5,543

*For children over 13 years old, the living expenses match those of spouses.

Please be aware that...

- Student fees are typically due one week (seven calendar days) before the first day of classes each term unless otherwise noted on your Statement of Account. Fees are paid each term; you may not pay fees for the entire year at one time.
- There are limitations on the types of employment F-1 students may accept while studying in the United States. You will learn more about your eligibility to work on and off campus when you check in with OIA. Keep in mind that before beginning work off campus, you must always contact an OIA immigration coordinator. **Note:** F-2 dependents may not apply for authorization to work in the U.S.

- Plan to have sufficient funds in U.S. dollars, as there may be a delay in clearing funds from overseas banks. Do not carry large amounts of money in the form of cash, but do be prepared to have access to additional funds for unexpected expenses.
- Taxes are deducted from workers' salaries, so the amount of money available to spend is lower than the amount indicated in a job offer.

Packing for Columbus

Columbus weather

Columbus experiences four distinct seasons. Here are typical temperature ranges:

Season	Temperatures	What to expect
Summer June 21 to September 20	Day: 75–95 F / 24–34 C Night: 60–75 F / 16–21 C	Humid and hot; stormy
Autumn September 21 to December 20	Day: 35–65 F / 2–18 C Night: 20–50 F / -7–10 C	Cool – temperatures change quickly; rainy and windy
Winter December 21 to March 20	Day: 15–45 F / -9–9 C Night: 5–35 F / -15–2 C	A little snow; very cold; wear a heavy coat, hat and gloves
Spring March 21 to June 20	Day: 45–75 F / 7–23 C Night: 30–50 F / -1–10 C	Mild and rainy – carry an umbrella!

What to pack

Weather-appropriate clothes: As you can see from the chart above, you will need to be prepared for all kinds of weather. Humid summers require light clothing; the cold winds of winter call for a heavy coat. Of course, any type of clothing you need can be purchased in Columbus.

Medical information: Bring your medical information (with English translation) and information about any long-term health problems you may have (for example, prescription information, previous chest X-rays, etc.). **Ohio State requires a health screening.** During your health screening you will need your **completed vaccination requirement documentation.** See Page 4, step 8 for details on how to complete your vaccination requirement.

Immigration documents: Make two copies of all your immigration documents (passport, I-20, proof of funding): one to leave at home and one to bring with you on the plane, along with the originals. Also bring on the plane the address of your destination (you can use the contact information for OIA on Page 6).

Don't pack: fresh fruit, produce, meat, prepared food or spices. U.S. customs will not allow you to bring these items into the country.

Health insurance

All international students who will be arriving in the United States are required to purchase Ohio State's student health insurance, unless their government purchases them an insurance policy that meets Ohio State's minimum health insurance criteria (in which case a waiver must be filed with the Student Health Insurance office).

Students with F-2 dependents are strongly encouraged to add these family members to their plan as dependents.

As part of tuition and fees, students currently pay \$3,768 per academic year for Ohio State health insurance. This figure is included in the costs listed on the I-20. Learn more about the Ohio State student health insurance policy at shi.osu.edu.

There are additional yearly costs for Ohio State student health insurance coverage for family members. **The rates below are for the 2024–2025 academic year;** plan for a 5 to 10 percent annual increase for all costs.

Spouse or child	\$7,536
Spouse and 2+ children	\$11,304
Spouse and family	\$15,072

For coverage before classes start, we recommend that you purchase interim insurance. For more information, go to shi.osu.edu/shi-benefits-plan/early-arrival-coverage.

Helpful contact information

Office of International Affairs

Enarson Classroom Building
2009 Millikin Road
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-6101
oia.osu.edu

Email:

Immigration check in:
iss@osu.edu

Initial I-20s:
int.undergrad@osu.edu

Orientation:
global-engagement@osu.edu

Paying tuition:
buckeyelink@osu.edu

To schedule with an advisor:

To learn more about advising hours and how to schedule an appointment, visit oia.osu.edu/advising.

Undergraduate Admissions

Student Academic Services Building
281 W. Lane Ave.
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-3980
int.undergrad@osu.edu
undergrad.osu.edu

Housing

350 Morrill Tower
1910 Cannon Drive
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-8266
housing@osu.edu
housing.osu.edu

Off-Campus and Commuter Student Engagement

Ohio Union
1739 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-0100
offcampus@osu.edu
offcampus.osu.edu

Although updated at time of publication, all information is subject to change.

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Checklist

Before arriving

- ☐ Activate your Ohio State email account.
- ☐ Download your I-20 visa eligibility document when prompted by Ohio State.
- ☐ Read OIA's pre-arrival emails at go.osu.edu/pre-arrival-messages.
- ☐ Pay your I-901 SEVIS Fee at FMJfee.com.
- ☐ Apply for your F-1 student visa. Canadian citizens do not need a U.S. visa.
- ☐ Register for your online mandatory Immigration Check-in and in-person International Student Orientation.
- ☐ Complete the online International Student Orientation on CarmenCanvas.
- ☐ Plan to arrive early, and no later than one week prior to the start of classes.
- ☐ Make arrangements for early-arrival and permanent housing. Learn more at go.osu.edu/pre-arrival-messages.
- ☐ Complete the Student Health Services International Student Vaccination Requirement: shs.osu.edu/services/vaccinations/vaccination-requirement
- ☐ Take required placement tests online in ESL and/or math.
- ☐ Make flight arrangements to Columbus, Ohio (CMH).
- ☐ Purchase interim student health insurance available through Ohio State's Student Health Insurance Program for coverage from the time you arrive through the start of classes.
- ☐ Consider attending programs offered before the start of classes. Visit go.osu.edu/prearrival for more information.

Arriving in Columbus

- ☐ Arrive at your residence hall, off-campus apartment or temporary accommodation. Contact housing@osu.edu with questions.

Arriving at Ohio State

- ☐ Attend online Immigration Check-in and in-person and online International Student Orientation before classes begin.
- ☐ Receive welcome packet at your one-hour in-person International Student Orientation and learn more about:
 - Obtaining your BuckID (Ohio State student identification card).
 - Opening a bank account
 - Purchasing mobile telephone service
 - What to expect at orientation
 - Welcome events
- ☐ Review the assigned orientation program details and learn more about registering for classes, paying tuition and fees, transferring academic credit (if applicable), cultural adjustment and academic expectations.
- ☐ Attend meetings, orientations and scheduling appointments required by your college/department.
- ☐ Explore all the programs, activities and events offered to new international students! Visit go.osu.edu/oia-orientation-events.