Important information for new international undergraduates 2021–2022

Here’s what happens next!

This brochure is for students who have paid the acceptance fee 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 or DS-2019
- 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/DS-2019 but you may not need a new F-1/J-1 visa if you already applied for one with Ohio State’s I-20/DS-2019. You must contact Undergraduate Admissions before the admission application deadline for the term for which you wish to be considered. A new application fee may be required.

Office of International Affairs (OIA)

OIA serves international students in many ways, including helping them transition to the university. You are required to check in with OIA after you arrive in Columbus (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.
Actions you must take before arriving

1. Check your BuckeyeMail account for email communication from OIA

Prior to your arrival, OIA will send weekly emails with important information to help prepare you for your arrival at Ohio State. These emails are also archived at go.osu.edu/Pre-arrival. Haven’t set up your BuckeyeMail email account? Visit undergrad.osu.edu/how2buckeyemail.

2. Apply for your student visa

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

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

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 and DS-2019 for the J-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 United States between programs, you may pick up your document when you attend immigration check-in with OIA. 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 and DS-2019 for the J-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 or DS-2019 for your new program within your 60-day grace period following the completion of your current program. Read “Important visa issues” on this page.

... 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 or DS-2019 for a J-1 visa), which you’ll download when prompted by Ohio State.

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) or DS-2019 (for J-1 visa)
- Proof of financial support (private sponsor’s affidavit of support 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 or J-2 visa, and marriage or birth certificates of family members applying for the F-2 or J-2 visa (accompanying family members need their own I-20 or DS-2019 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 or DS-2019, Canadian passport, receipt of SEVIS payment and proof of financial support. Make sure to obtain an admission stamp (F-1 or J-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.
- The J-1 visa often has a two-year home residency requirement. This requirement means that the visa holder must return to his or her home country for two years before becoming eligible to change status to H-1B or permanent resident.
- Be sure to enter the United States on the F-1 or J-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 or J-1 visa using the I-20 or DS-2019 for the university in which you intend to enroll. If you have been admitted to and received an I-20 or DS-2019 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 or J-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 or DS-2019 from Ohio State.
Actions you must take before arriving

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 2020–21 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, rice cookers 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.

Learning community residence hall

International House is a special residence hall where undergraduate 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.

Off-campus housing

Off-Campus and Commuter Student Services 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 at least two to three weeks 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

University Housing will make arrangements for you to move into your autumn semester housing assignment as early as August 7 (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 University 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. The University Hospitality District (uhdcolumbus.com) lists hotels in and around the university.

5 Learn about mandatory immigration check-in and orientation

Immigration check-in and orientation are required for all new international students. Learn more at go.osu.edu/Pre-arrival.

6 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 esl.ehe.osu.edu/home/testing 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.
7 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**

**COVID-19 note!**

Dates and other details are subject to change. Read OIA’s pre-arrival emails for up-to-date information.

**Immigration check-in and orientation are required for all new international students.** Most students can complete immigration check-in, orientation, testing and class registration within two weeks.

**1 Immigration check-in with OIA**

All international students must check in with OIA when they arrive on campus. **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 for detailed information 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 orientation program, which addresses topics such as:

• Cultural adjustment
• Campus safety
• University procedures
• Immigration regulations

**3 Attend welcome events**

Ohio State will have welcome booths at the John Glenn Columbus International Airport (CMH) and at the Ohio Union on campus before classes begin.

During your first weeks at Ohio State, there will be events to help you acclimate to Ohio State and Columbus. The Welcome Booth at the Ohio Union will serve as the meeting place to take advantage of shopping, arts and culture, food, sports, and Ohio State and campus resources. Orientation leaders will also be available at the booth to answer questions and provide information.
Arriving in Columbus

When to arrive
Federal regulations require that F-1 and J-1 students arrive no more than 30 days before the start date on the I-20 or DS-2019. We recommend you arrive in Columbus at least two to three weeks 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 at the Ohio State Welcome Booth in the John Glenn Columbus International Airport (CMH) upon arrival. 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.

Another transportation option to consider is to use ridesharing applications like Uber or Lyft. 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/Pre-arrival.

Living expenses
The cost of tuition, fees and other living expenses is listed on the I-20 (cost for one year) or the DS-2019 (cost for the entire program of study). Students should plan for a 5–10 percent annual increase for all costs.

Additional living expenses for family members for the 2020–2021 academic year are estimated at:

- Spouse   $10,139
- Each child (under 13 years old)*   $5,069
  *For children over 13 years old, the living expenses match those of spouses.

Please be aware that...

- You should plan to have sufficient funds in the form of traveler’s checks in U.S. dollars, as there may be a delay in clearing funds from overseas banks. Do not keep large amounts of money in the form of cash.
- 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:

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

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, which will happen at orientation. During your health screening you will need your completed vaccination requirement documentation. See Page 4, step 7 for details on how to complete your vaccination requirement.

Immigration documents: Make two copies of all your immigration documents (passport, I-20/DS-2019, 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. J-1 and J-2 visa holders are required by the U.S. government to have insurance coverage that meets specific requirements, which are covered by the Ohio State student health insurance plan. For details, visit shi.osu.edu.

As part of tuition and fees, students currently pay $3,366 per academic year for Ohio State health insurance. This figure is included in the costs listed on the I-20 or DS-2019. 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 2019–2020 academic year; plan for a 5 to 10 percent annual increase for all costs.

- Spouse or child: $3,316
- Spouse and child: $6,632
- Spouse and children: $9,948

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

Checklist

Before arriving

- Activate your Ohio State email account.
- Download your I-20 or DS-2019 visa eligibility document when prompted by Ohio State.
- Read pre-arrival emails from OIA.
- Pay your I-901 SEVIS Fee at FMJfee.com.
- Apply for your F-1 or J-1 student visa. Canadian citizens do not need a U.S. visa.
- Make plans to complete Immigration Check-In and International Student Orientation.
- Plan to arrive early. We recommend 2–3 weeks prior to classes.
- Make arrangements for early-arrival and permanent housing.
- 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/Pre-arrival for more information.

Arriving in Columbus

- Visit the Ohio State Welcome Booth at the Columbus airport. While there, pick up a free transportation voucher for transportation to campus (limited availability).
- Arrive at your residence hall, off-campus apartment or temporary accommodation. Contact housing@osu.edu with questions.

Arriving at Ohio State

- Receive welcome packet of resources and learn more about:
  - Obtaining your BuckID (Ohio State student identification card). To get your BuckID, you will need your “green sheet” from Immigration Check-In and your passport.
  - 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.
- Download OIA’s event app to explore fun events and important resources and information to plan and enhance your orientation experience. Visit go.osu.edu/globalevents.

Helpful contact information

Off-Campus and Commuter Student Services
Ohio Union
1739 N. High St.
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-0100
Email: offcampus@osu.edu
offcampus.osu.edu

Office of International Affairs (OIA)
Enarson Classroom Building
2009 Millikin Road
Columbus, OH 43210 USA
+1-614-292-6101
Email: iss@osu.edu
oia.osu.edu

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
Email: int.undergrad@osu.edu
undergrad.osu.edu

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

Checklist

Although updated at time of publication, all information is subject to change without notice.

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