

**Talk with your academic advisor
to see what course
requirements you need to fulfill.**

**Learn about scholarships
and other types of financial
aid to help cover costs.**

**Pay attention to costs
associated with the program
and create a budget for
personal expenses.**

**Research your host
country/community's culture/social
norms and learn some basic phrases
in the language.**

Determine your housing options (dorm, apartment, host family, etc.).

Prepare all necessary documents and paperwork (passport, visas, etc.).

Arrange flights and transportation from the airport to where you are staying.

Make a packing list and only pack what you need.



Before

Read up on current events in your own country and be prepared to talk about them with locals.



Before and during

Determine communication channels with family and friends and set expectations for communication.



Before

Know your priorities and what you want to get out of the experience.



Before

Find out the location of the United States embassy, the closest police station, and the closest hospital.





Before

Get all necessary medical check-ups (physical, dental, vaccinations, etc.) before leaving.



Before and during

Know how you will access funds and be aware of foreign transaction fees on debit/credit cards.



Before and during

Understand safety concerns in your host country.



Before

Have a back-up plan in case your technology fails.





Before and during

Meet with a study abroad advisor to discuss any personal matters (religion, identity, disability accommodations, etc.).



During

Adjust to your host country's laws, customs, and culture instead of expecting them to adjust to you.



During

Watch for culture shock (feeling "blue" or avoiding doing things for more than a few days).



During

Break out of your comfort zone and seek out experiences and opportunities that will make you stand out.



**Keep a journal, notebook,
or blog to document your
experiences.**

**Seek out experiences off the
beaten path and beyond the
typical tourist areas.**

**Befriend the locals and ask
questions.**

**Be conscious of your
environmental and
economic impact.**

**Continue to ask questions
and discover cultural
knowledge about your host
country.**

**Continue practicing any
language that you learned
while abroad.**

**Maintain relationships you
developed while abroad.**

**Connect your study abroad
experience with your program
of study, research, and
coursework.**

**Find a student organization
that allows you to build on
your study abroad experience.**

**Make connections with
other students who have
studied abroad.**

**If possible, go on some
weekend excursions
outside of your host town.**

**Talk to your friends and
encourage others to
study abroad.**

Reflect on how you are growing and changing while abroad.

Consciously analyze both similarities and differences between your home and host cultures.

When appropriate, try behaving like a local.

Know how to talk to family friends about your experience without overwhelming them.

Create a scrapbook or some other art project to relive your memories.

Explore your home country and note the similarities and differences between your experiences.

Plan your next trip abroad.

Maintain a balance between your studies, extracurricular activities, and leisure time.



During

Remember that you must still abide by your home institution's rules while abroad.



During

Prepare for reverse culture-shock when you return to your home country.



Before, during, & after

Know how to utilize your study abroad experience for professionalization (resumés, cover letters, interviews, etc.).



During and after

Talk to a study abroad advisor to figure out next steps after returning home.

