



**EDUCATION
INNOVATION
SERVICE**



My First 24 Hours in Chicago

My flight has officially landed in Chicago...

Now What?

Checkpoint 1: Immigration Custom & Border Protection - CBP



Look for the Non-U.S. Citizen/Visitors line
Have your documents ready:

1. I-20
2. SEVIS fee receipt
3. Passport and Visa
4. Financial Statement
5. Other supporting documents for your stay in United States (if applicable)

Tips: cellphone and camera usage is not permitted before passing through immigration

Questions to expect from the Immigration Officer



What is your country of origin?
Where is your final destination?
Why are you here?
What are you studying?
Who's paying for you?
Where will you be living?



Once you are cleared, the officer will ask for your fingerprints and take your photo.

Tips: Immigration officers can be quite intimidating and demanding, stay calm and answer their questions to the best of your ability. Don't offer any extra answers if not asked.

If you are asked for a Secondary Inspection



Sometimes the CBP Officer cannot verify your information in his/her system or your documents are not completed, you might be asked for a Secondary Inspection. You will be taken to a separate area/room for more inspections. You probably will be given a Form I-515A asking you to submit to a local federal government agency the missing information or document within 30 days of your entry. In very rare case, you might be denied entry.

Tips: If you are asked for a Secondary Inspection, please contact your local pickup arrangement and let them know and you will not be told by the officer about how long it could take. It can be from a couple of hours to overnight. If you are given the Form I-515A, please notify your DSO immediately after your entry.

Checkpoint 2: Baggage Claim

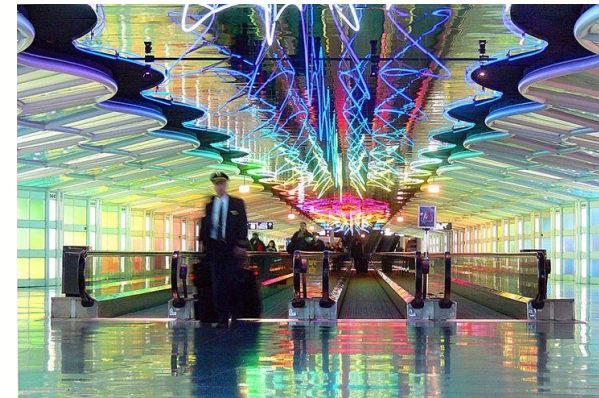


Look for your flight number from the monitor to find which carousel your baggage will be arriving on, or listen to announcements made through the PA system.

Retrieve your baggage

Tips: special sized baggage will be placed in the aisle nearest your carousel

Checkpoint 3: Customs

A scanned image of a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Customs Declaration form (CBP Form 6059B). The form is filled out with handwritten information. The family name is "BRISTOL", birth date is "05/08/30", and the country of residence is "USA". The form includes sections for "Countries visited", "Airlines/Flight No.", and "Primary purpose of trip". A red circle highlights the "I have (We have) commercial merchandise" section. The form is dated "11/2010".

When you have retrieved all your luggage, you will fall into another line in order to exit. This line leads to your final checkpoint, customs.

Have your blue Customs Declaration form in hand, ready to pass to the Customs Officer at the end of the line. You should have this form given to you during your flight.

Welcome to Chicago!

Is someone picking you up at the Arrival Gate?



There is no free Wi-Fi service at the arrival gate. Pay phones are located at either ends of the arrival hall. Only quarters (25c) are accepted.

Is someone picking you up outside?



If someone is picking you up outside, agree on a specific airline sign to stand under. Popular choices: Cathay Pacific, Korean Air, Air Canada, United Airlines

Tips for planning prior to arrival:

1. Have contact numbers copied down in case that person can't find you, is running late, or can't be there.
2. Make a backup plan before you arrive.

Transportation Options:

If someone wants to pick you up closer to their homes, or cannot pick you up, consider taking :

Taxi

- costs about \$50-\$80 to get to downtown, plus tips
- An option if you are travelling to the suburbs and have no idea about the city's transportation system.

CTA train (blue line)

- Faster, easier and cheaper way to get to the city.
- Follow the signs that say ground transport and trains.
- Purchase ticket from the kiosk with Visa, Mastercard, or American Express or cash.
- \$2.50 one way (subject to change)

Uber/ Lyft

- Usually cheaper than taxis
- If you already have an uber/lyft app downloaded on your phone, and have an international wifi plan, uber/lyft can be used to call a taxi.

Chicago Limosuine Service

- Visit <https://book.mylimobiz.com/afslinc> for quick reservations and call (312) 735 – 6111 to book
- Chicago school students are offered a discount and to contact your DSO for more information

Other On-Ground Transportation

- Hotel & Parking Lot Shuttles
- Long Distance Vans
- Public Transportation (public buses and light rail)
- Rental Cars
- Scheduled Buses
- Shared Ride Vans
- Taxis

Temporary Lodging: Hotels and Hostels

Not sure where to go? If you are landing in Chicago for the first time, don't have family or friends here to help, the first week may be daunting. The first thing you should consider: finding temporary lodging for a week while you set out looking for a place to rent.

It is important to find a safe environment for you to relax and be in the neighborhood you want to. Treat it as a vacation!



Refer to *Living Guide for International Students* for best areas to consider living in



Choose and book hotel/hostel in that area



Fighting Jet Lag

- Unless it is physically impossible for you to stay away it will be very beneficial to stay awake during daylight hours ⁽¹⁾
- First because you have a lot to do as a new international student, and most places (i.e. banks, the school, cell phone companies) will only be open between 9am and 6pm, so sleeping can delay getting things done ⁽¹⁾
- Also it will be healthier for you to get into a good sleep pattern now rather than when classes are starting, it takes about 1 week for circadian rhythms to adjust ⁽¹⁾

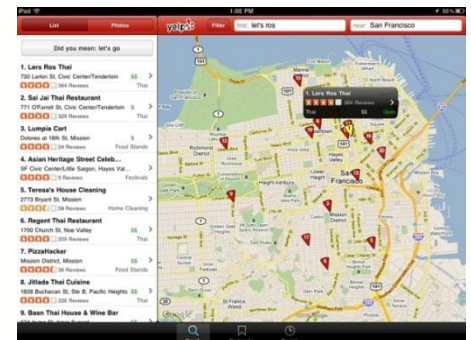
• <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/survival-guide-international-students-your-first-168-hours-united-states>

What about Food?

You're in a new area, settled down, checked in, but now you realize how hungry you are, but have no idea what to eat.

Solution: Yelp.com!

Everyone in Chicago uses Yelp as their guide to food and shops. Download the app on your smartphone before traveling, there is ample Wi-Fi in cafes and malls even if your hostel/hotel does not provide it.



Once you've settled down, gotten over jet lag, consider your next 48 hours...

- **Log on CBP's website, <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/I94/request.html> to get your I-94 Admission Number and print it out for future use, ex. Social Security Number, Driver's License, travel...**
- **Secure all your important documents.**
- **Find out how to get to school and the campus.**
- **Get familiar with your surroundings.**
- **Find out how to purchase the ticket for transportation.**
- **Participate in the orientation and meet with your International Student Advisor**

Include Cell Phone Information

- **CHOOSING A US-BASED CELL PHONE PLAN⁽¹⁾**
- There are basically 3 choices when it comes to cell phone plans:
 - Using an unlocked cell phone from home and buying a new SIM card that works in the US
 - The only possible difficulty is that if your cell phone was not unlocked or purchased as unlocked it will not (most likely) work in the US as international phones are locked
 - If your phone is unlocked-great- you can then purchase a US SIM card, for example: CampusSIMS (<https://campussims.com/>) is one option for purchases.
 - Buying a new phone and setting up a pre-paid plan
 - These plans are used by paying a fee each month upfront, a good part is that they do not require a contract, overall though they do generally cost more than contract plans but they do NOT require an SSN or Credit check both of which as an international student you will not have.
 - Buying a new phone and setting up a contract plan
 - These generally require an SSN or Credit Check, which can make it difficult when you are an international student and do not have either of these. Some companies will make exceptions for international students but it will require some time and discussion with the company. One company that tends to work well with international students is T-Mobile

1. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/survival-guide-international-students-your-first-168-hours-united-states>

Banking information

- Check out the banks that are close to your campus or where you are living, this will make a big difference in where you choose to bank as you want to use a bank that is close and that has easy access to ATM's for when you want to get cash. ⁽¹⁾
- Most students choose to set up a checking account, once you decide on your bank look into the types of account, they offer and what the requirements are. ⁽¹⁾
- In general, you want to look for something that has a low to no monthly service fee, one that does not require a large minimum balance, and some form of transaction limit to safeguard your account if your card gets lost or stolen. ⁽¹⁾

1. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/advice/survival-guide-international-students-your-first-168-hours-united-states>

Still have questions?

- If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact Courtney Bilbrey, Chicago DSO at cbilbrey@thechicagoschool.edu
- For other helpful information please visit the [International Programs and Services](#) website

Welcome to our Family of TESPP!