

WanderWork:

A Guide to Working and
Traveling Abroad



USA Edition

The Benefits of an Exchange Visitor Visa in the USA as a Canadian



Are you ready for the adventure of a lifetime, but the thought of figuring out the visa process is making your head spin?

Do you have questions about where to go or how to get the Exchange Visitor visa?

Have you started to book your trip and need some travel suggestions and advice?

In this guide to working abroad in the USA you will find detailed information about your Exchange Visitor (J-1) visa!

At GO International we understand what you are going through and we are here to help.

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An Introduction to the Exchange Visitor (J-1) Visa

Are you ready to turn your travels into a life-changing experience? Did you know there are exchange visitor programs that make it possible for you to temporarily work in the United States?

As a Recognized Organization (RO) in Canada, GO International has been designated a partner in raising awareness and providing support services to foreign national and Canadian youth. The Government of Canada works with key stakeholders like GO International in Canada and abroad to raise awareness of the program, promote the benefits of international work experience, and to equip Canadian youth with information to successfully embark on international work experiences for an unforgettable journey.

What is an Exchange Visitor (J-1) Visa?

The J-1 visa program offers exciting opportunities for those seeking to participate in cultural exchange programs and gain valuable experiences in the United States. As part of the Exchange Visitor Program, the J-1 visa allows eligible people to engage in a wide range of educational, cultural, and professional activities, fostering cross-cultural understanding and international cooperation.

Whether you are a student, researcher, teacher, intern, or trainee, the J-1 visa opens doors to unique learning experiences, skill development, and exposure to American culture. This visa category encourages participants to share their expertise, perspectives, and heritage while immersing themselves in the rich diversity of the United States.

From academic exchanges at prestigious U.S. universities to internships at renowned

renowned companies and cultural immersion programs in local communities, the J-1 visa provides a pathway for personal growth, professional advancement, and lifelong connections with people from all walks of life.

In this introduction to the J-1 visa, we will explore the key eligibility criteria, the application process, and the exciting array of experiences available, thereby empowering you to embark on an enriching journey across the border and make lasting memories in the United States. Whether you aspire to pursue research in your field of study, teach at a U.S. educational institution, or immerse yourself in American culture and arts, the J-1 visa offers a gateway to turn your dreams into reality. Let's delve into the details and discover the possibilities that await you with the J-1 visa program.

"Traveling allows you to become so many different versions of yourself."

Requirements for a J-1 visa in the USA as a Canadian

As a Canadian citizen applying for a J-1 visa, you'll need to meet certain requirements to be eligible for the program. Here are the key requirements:

1. **Acceptance into an Exchange Visitor Program (EVP):** You must apply and be accepted into an approved Exchange Visitor Program in the United States. These programs cover a wide range of categories, including education, research, training, cultural exchange, and more.
2. **Program Sponsorship:** You need to be sponsored by an authorized and designated Exchange Visitor Program sponsor. The sponsor can be a U.S. government agency, academic institution, non-profit organization, or a private entity that has been approved by the U.S. Department of State to participate in the J-1 visa program.
3. **DS-2019 Form:** Once accepted into an EVP and sponsored, your program sponsor will issue a Form DS-2019, also known as the "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status." You will need this form to apply for the J-1 visa.
4. **Valid Passport:** You must have a valid passport issued by the Canadian government. It should be valid for at least six months beyond your intended period of stay in the United States.
5. **Non-immigrant Intent:** You must demonstrate strong ties to Canada and non-immigrant intent, indicating that you intend to return to Canada upon the completion of your J-1 program. This is to ensure that you do not have the intention of immigrating permanently to the United States.



Requirements for a J-1 visa in the USA as a Canadian

6. English Proficiency: Depending on the specific J-1 program, you may need to demonstrate proficiency in the English language. This requirement ensures that you can effectively participate in the program and communicate with others during your stay in the U.S.

7. Financial Ability: You should have the financial means to support yourself during your stay in the United States. This includes covering your living expenses, health insurance, and any program-related costs not covered by your sponsor.

8. Two-Year Home Country Requirement: Some J-1 visa categories may have a "two-year home country requirement," which means you may be required to return to your home country for at least two years upon completing your J-1 program before you can apply for certain U.S. visas or permanent residency.

It's important to note that the J-1 visa program includes various categories, each with its own specific requirements. Make sure to carefully review the specific requirements of the J-1 program you are interested in and follow the guidelines provided by your designated program sponsor during the application process.



Planning Your Trip: How to Budget and Plan Your Itinerary for the USA

Keep calm and travel to the USA for your work abroad adventure!

Embarking on an exchange visitor visa program in the USA offers the thrill of exploration combined with earning a living abroad. With diverse landscapes, rugged coastlines, and vibrant cities entice those seeking a new exciting experience.

As a primarily English-speaking country, the USA is easy for most Canadians to navigate.

The country offers a diverse range of job opportunities. The USA has a strong economy and is home to many large corporations, making it an attractive destination for Canadian professionals looking to advance their careers.

Requirements to work as a camp counselor in the USA

We at GO International work with our partner in the USA to place Canadians there as Camp Counselors. There are certain requirements to participate.

- You are sufficiently proficient in the English language to supervise and interact with American youth.
- You must be a post-secondary student, youth worker, teacher or individual with specialized skills.
- You must be at least 18 years old by June 1.
- You are available to work for at least 9 weeks from May/June to August.
- You enjoy working and being around children.
- You are outgoing, cheerful, flexible, and reliable.

Note: You will be required to pass an interview with one of our staff members before being accepted into the program.

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step."

Must-See Travel Sites to Visit on Your Trip

New York City



A vibrant metropolis known for its iconic landmarks, cultural diversity, and bustling atmosphere. Times Square, Central Park, the Statue of Liberty, Broadway shows, museums like the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Empire State Building are just a few of the many attractions that make New York City an unforgettable destination.

San Francisco



A picturesque city known for its stunning bay views, iconic Golden Gate Bridge, and unique neighborhoods. San Francisco offers a mix of culture, history, and culinary delights. Don't miss Alcatraz Island, Fisherman's Wharf, the famous cable cars, and the beautiful views from Twin Peaks.

Grand Canyon



A natural wonder that must be seen to be believed. The Grand Canyon is a breathtaking marvel of nature, offering awe-inspiring views, hiking trails, and opportunities for adventure. Whether you admire the canyon from the South Rim, take a helicopter tour, or hike down into the gorge, the experience is bound to be unforgettable.

TOP 5 EXCITING PLACES TO VISIT IN THE USA!



GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - SAN FRANCISCO

The Golden Gate Bridge has been seen and photographed in movies, commercials, advertisements, and vacation pictures making it the most visited bridge in the entire world. Walking and biking programs are available, just don't forget to bring a camera and jacket.



METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART - NY

Spend a day walking around the largest museum in the Western Hemisphere. Boasting over 2 million items from around the world, it's no wonder that there were over 6.5 million visitors in 2019 making it the most popular tourist site in New York.

UNIVERSAL STUDIOS - LOS ANGELES

Lights, camera, action! You never know what will happen next when you visit Hollywood. There is so much to see and do, you definitely won't be able to do it all in 1 day. Some of the most popular attractions are the studio tour and Harry Potter World. Be prepared for a long and adventurous day!



TOP 5 EXCITING PLACES TO VISIT IN THE USA!



FENWAY PARK - BOSTON

Take me out to the ball game! Fenway Park first broke ground in 1912 and since then undergone many updates.

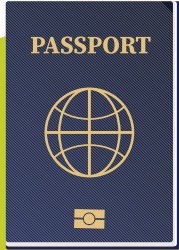
Located right in the heart of downtown Boston, this historical place is a great place to visit if you want to catch a game of the Boston Red Sox. Watch out for the one red seat in section 42, row 37, seat 21!



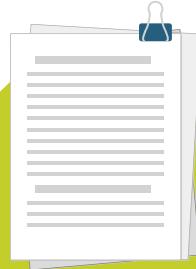
GRAND CANYON NATIONAL PARK - AZ

Beautiful layers of red rock and the sheer size of Grand Canyon make it one of the most stunning natural wonders. When visiting, don't miss out on popular viewpoints like Mather Point, Yavapai Point and the famous Grandview Point with wide views of the canyon and Colorado River, especially at sunrise and sunset.

What to pack for your Carry-on Luggage



Passport



POE Letter



Health Insurance



Credit or Debit Card



Cash



Emergency Contacts



Travel Pillow



Charger & Adapter



Important Documents



Electronics



Snacks & Water



Change of Clothes



Check the carry-on rules for your airline!

Travel Preparation Checklist



Travel Preparation

- Renew/Check passport
- Book medical insurance
- Change CAD to local currency
- Check flight status, online check-in, & seat reservation
- Download offline maps
- Print important documents
- Make copies to give to parents or someone you trust
- Get a credit card
- Write down important contact numbers
- Visit doctor (e.g. dentist)
- Apply for an international driving permit
- Check vaccination requirements
- Prepare a general resume
- Check that your cellphone is unlocked
- _____

Home Preparation

- Organize plant & pet care
- Empty the fridge of perishables
- Forward or hold mail
- Give keys to a relative/friend
- Cancel contracts/subscriptions



Packing Checklist

Clothing

- Shirts / T-shirts
- Pants / Jeans
- Shorts
- Socks
- Sweater
- Hat
- Underwear & Pajamas
- Bras
- Dress / Skirt
- Pantyhose
- Collar Shirt
- _____
- _____

Cold Weather Clothing

- Jacket (Wind breaker)
- Gloves
- Hat
- Scarf
- _____
- _____

Optional Clothing

- Belt
- Raincoat
- Umbrella
- Jewelry
- Glasses / Contact lens kit
- Smart interview outfit
- _____

Beach Gear

- Swimsuit
- Sunglasses
- Sunblock
- Beach towel
- _____
- _____

Shoes

- Runners / Walking shoes
- Sandals
- Dress shoes / Heels
- Shower shoes
- _____

Electronics

- Cellphone / Charger
- Extra batteries
- Power bank
- Laptop
- Watch
- Headphones
- Travel adapter
- _____

Luggage

- Backpack
- Carry-on bag
- Suitcase
- Safety pins
- _____

Personal Hygiene

- Toiletry bag
- Hair Brush / Comb
- Razor / Electric Shaver
- Toothbrush / Tooth Paste
- Dental floss
- Soap/ Cleansers
- Shampoo/ Conditioner
- Deodorant
- Moisturizer
- Lip Balm
- Quick-dry towel
- Make-up
- Feminine products
- _____
- _____

Health & Medications

- Prescription medicine
- Contraception/ Condoms
- Motion sickness pills
- Pain/ Aspirin medication
- Antibiotic ointment
- Laxative/ Diarrhea medicine
- First Aid Kit
- Insect repellent
- Band-aids
- _____

Quick Packing Tips



1 Don't overpack!

Pack only as if you'll be gone for 3 weeks and take just your favorites.

2 Pack smart

Use packing cubes or the rolling technique so you won't lose any suitcase space.

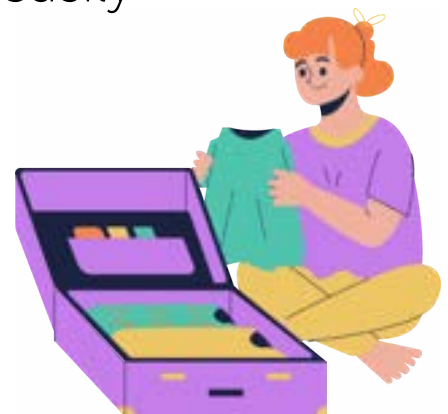
3 Be wise, carry travel size

Bring travel size items like shampoo, sunscreen, etc., and buy bigger packages at your destination.

4 Easily access certain items

Pack these items so they are easily accessible in your carry-on:

- Medication
- Change of clothing
- Important documents
- Liquids bag



General Tips

Get your paperwork in order

Once you have decided on your visa, you will need to gather the necessary paperwork. This typically includes a valid passport, proof of sufficient funds, and a completed visa application. Make sure to have all your documents ready and in order before your departure to avoid any delays.

Pack wisely

Pack only what you need and make sure you have enough space for souvenirs. Make sure to check the weather forecast for your destination and pack accordingly.

Sort out your finances

Make sure you have sufficient funds to cover your expenses while in the USA. This includes your airfare, accommodation, transportation, and daily expenses. It's also a good idea to research different banking options and compare fees and services, so you can choose the one that best suits your needs.

Make a list

Make a list of the things you need to do before you leave, such as canceling your bills, changing your address, and so on. This will help you stay organized and ensure that you don't forget anything important.

Prepare for the culture shock

The USA may be an English-speaking country, but it is still a different culture. Research the country, the state you will be working in, customs, and social norms to get a better understanding of what to expect. Make sure to pack accordingly, and be open-minded to new experiences.

Create a budget

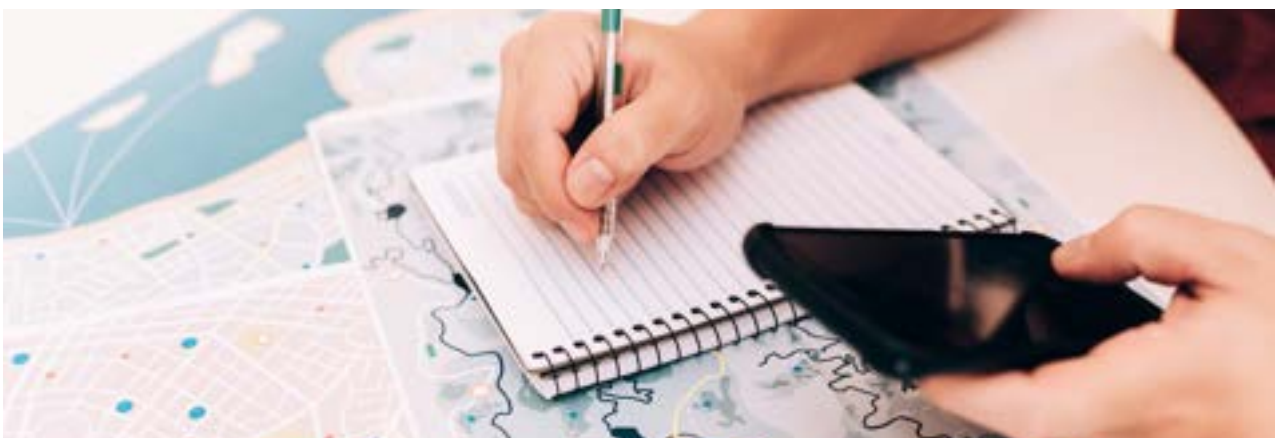
Create a budget and stick to it. Have a plan for how much you will spend each day, week, or month. This will help you keep your finances in check and make sure you don't overspend.

Other Key Things

- **Transportation:** Research transportation options in your destination city and consider purchasing a car or bike if you plan on staying in one place for a longer period of time. Make sure to check if you need a special license to drive in the USA.
- **Banking:** Setting up a bank account in the USA will make it easier for you to manage your finances and get paid. Research different banking options and compare fees and services.
- **Health insurance:** It's important to have health insurance when working and traveling in the USA. The duration of your insurance should cover your entire stay in the USA.
- **Currency:** Get familiar with the currency used in the USA and consider getting your money exchanged before you leave Canada or when you arrive in the USA.
- **Visa regulations:** Make sure you understand the rules and regulations of your visa and ensure you comply with them during your stay in the USA.
- **Taxes:** Make sure you are aware of your tax obligations in the USA and how to file your taxes.
- **Cultural differences:** Be aware of the cultural differences between Canada and the USA. Research the customs and social norms of your destination and be prepared to adapt to the new culture.
- **Safety:** Research the safety situation in your destination city and take necessary precautions to ensure your safety while working and traveling in the USA.

Emergency contact information

Make sure to keep emergency contact information, such as the contact information of your embassy and your insurance provider, on hand in case of an emergency.



Flight Booking Tips

Decide on where and when you want to fly - it's better to be flexible about the dates to find a cheaper rate and/or better connection.

Check flight comparison websites like Expedia, Skyscanner, Kayak, but if possible book directly through an reliable airline (e.g. Air Canada).

Sign up for price alerts by using flight search tools such as Google Flights, Kayak, Hopper, and Skyscanner.

You'll definitely want at least a 1.5 to 2-hour window for layovers. Make sure to have sufficient time to make your connection.

Decide if you want to book a one-way or return ticket. You will need to prove extra funds if you only book a one-way ticket. If it's a return ticket, make sure you can reschedule the return date.



Arrival in the USA - Three Essential Tips

Once you arrive in the USA, there are three essential things to do:

1 Report to your J-1 Program Sponsor

Upon arrival, it's crucial to report to your J-1 program sponsor as soon as possible. They are responsible for overseeing your exchange program and ensuring your compliance with program rules and regulations. Provide them with your contact information and any required documents, such as your DS-2019 form, to finalize your program registration.

2 Attend the program orientation

Participate in the orientation session organized by your J-1 program sponsor. Program orientations are designed to familiarize you with program requirements, cultural adaptation, and important resources available to you during your stay in the USA. The orientation is an excellent opportunity to ask questions and connect with other program participants.

3 Settle in and explore your new environment

Take some time to settle into your accommodation and get familiar with your new surroundings. Depending on the duration of your program, this could be your temporary home for a while. Explore the local area, nearby amenities, and public transportation options. Understanding your neighborhood will help you feel more at ease and confident in navigating the city.



Visa Applications for Canadians: A Detailed Guide on how to Apply for a J-1 Visa

Everything You Need to Know About the USA Exchange Visitor (J-1) Visa

Are you planning to temporarily work in the USA? Then, it's essential to know everything about the application process for the J-1 visa.

The process of getting a visa and settling down in a new country can be a bit challenging, but it can be made simpler if you know what to do. In this chapter, we'll go through everything you need to do to prepare yourself.

The USA J-1 visa for Canadians

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

When applying, each visa applicant must submit to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate the following:

1. DS 2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Status: A SEVIS-generated Form, DS-2019, is issued by the designated Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) sponsor, once you have been accepted into the program. All exchange visitors must be registered in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). It serves as proof of your program eligibility and outlines the details of your exchange program.
2. DS-160 Confirmation Page: The DS-160 is the Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application form that must be completed online. After filling out the form, you will receive a confirmation page with a barcode. Print this confirmation page and keep it for your records. Visit the [DS-160 website](#) to learn more about the DS-160 online process.
3. A Canadian passport valid for travel to the U.S. and with a validity date at least six months beyond the applicant's intended period of stay in the U.S. (unless [country-specific agreements](#) provide exemptions).
4. SEVIS Fee Receipt: The SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee must be paid before your visa interview. You will receive a payment receipt, which you should carry as proof of payment.
5. Visa Application Fee: Pay the visa application fee, which is a separate fee from the SEVIS fee. Check the [U.S. embassy or consulate's website](#) for information on payment methods and fee amounts.
6. One (1) 2x2 photograph. See the required photo format explained in [photograph requirements](#).
7. Find out if there are any additional documentation items required by reviewing the [U.S. embassy or consulate website](#).

Applicants must demonstrate to the consular officer that they have binding ties to a residence in a foreign country which they have no intention of abandoning, and that they are coming to the U.S. for a temporary period. It is impossible to specify the exact form the evidence should take since applicants' circumstances vary greatly.

The USA J-1 visa for Canadians

APPLICATION PROCESS

- Find a designated EVP sponsor: The first step is to identify and apply to an approved Exchange Visitor Program (EVP) in the United States that aligns with your educational or professional objectives. The EVP sponsor will guide you through the application process and issue the DS-2019 form if you are accepted. You can search for designated sponsors [here](#).
- Obtain the DS-2019 Form: Once accepted into the EVP, your sponsor will provide you with the DS-2019 form, also known as the "Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) Status." This form is essential for your J-1 visa application.
- Pay the SEVIS Fee: Before applying for the J-1 visa, you need to pay the SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee. This fee helps fund the administration of the J-1 program. You can pay the SEVIS fee online through the [U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement \(ICE\) website](#).
- Complete the DS-160 Form: Visit the [Consular Electronic Application Center \(CEAC\) website](#) and complete the DS-160 form online. This form is the Nonimmigrant Visa Electronic Application and is required for most non-immigrant visa applications, including the J-1 visa.



The USA J-1 visa for Canadians

- **Schedule an Interview:** After completing the DS-160 form, you must schedule an appointment for a visa interview at the U.S. embassy or consulate in Canada. Wait times for interview appointments may vary, so it's advisable to schedule your interview as soon as possible. Check the wait times [here](#).
- **Attend the Visa Interview:** Attend your visa interview at the designated U.S. embassy or consulate. Be prepared to present the required documents, including your DS-2019 form, DS-160 confirmation page, valid passport, SEVIS fee receipt, and any additional documents requested by the consular officer.
- **Pay the Visa Application Fee:** Before or on the day of your visa interview, you will need to pay the visa application fee, which is separate from the SEVIS fee. Payment methods and fee amounts may vary, so check the specific U.S. embassy or consulate's website for details.
- **Wait for Visa Processing:** After the visa interview, the consular officer will determine whether you are eligible for the J-1 visa. If approved, your visa will be affixed to your passport, and you will receive information on when and how to pick up your passport with the visa.

Please note that the J-1 visa application process may be subject to changes, and it's essential to check the U.S. Department of State's official website or the website of the U.S. embassy or consulate in Canada for the most current and accurate information before applying.



Camps in the USA

Welcome to the vibrant world of camp counselor opportunities in the United States! This program opens the door to an unforgettable summer adventure where you can share your talents, connect with young minds, and immerse yourself in the diverse and captivating camp culture.

Across the USA, an array of camps awaits, each offering a unique and enriching experience. As a camp counselor, you'll have the chance to inspire and mentor campers of all ages, fostering growth, resilience, and lifelong memories. Embrace the great outdoors, participate in exciting activities, and collaborate with fellow counselors from around the world!

Camps in the USA

Camp Mah-Kee-Nac

Camp Mah-Kee-Nac, or Camp MKN, is a prestigious overnight summer camp located in the scenic Berkshire Mountains of Massachusetts. Established in 1929, the camp offers boys aged 7-15 a transformative experience in a stunning natural setting. With a focus on sports, arts, adventure, and social activities, expert counselors guide campers to try new things, build confidence, and form lasting friendships. Campers can enjoy a wide range of activities, including team sports, creative arts, outdoor adventures, and water sports on the private lake. Camp Mah-Kee-Nac's supportive community fosters personal growth and unforgettable memories for all its campers.



Camp Wa-Klo

Camp Wa-Klo is an enchanting all-girls summer camp situated in New Hampshire, USA. Since its establishment, Camp Wa-Klo has been empowering young girls with enriching experiences in a nurturing and inclusive environment. Surrounded by scenic forests and a private lake, the camp offers a diverse range of activities, including arts and crafts, horseback riding, water sports, sports, and outdoor adventures. With a dedicated staff and a focus on fostering personal growth and friendship, Camp Wa-Klo provides girls aged 8-15 with a memorable and transformative summer camp experience.



Camps in the USA

Camp Ozark

Camp Ozark is a premier co-ed summer camp nestled in the beautiful Ouachita Mountains of Arkansas. With a mission to inspire character, faith, and friendships, Camp Ozark has been creating unforgettable memories for campers since its inception. Offering a wide range of activities, from outdoor adventures like rock climbing and hiking to sports, arts, and water activities on the private Lake Ouachita, campers aged 7-17 are encouraged to explore their interests, build self-confidence, and develop lasting friendships. With a dedicated staff and a commitment to providing a safe and fun environment, Camp Ozark promises an exceptional summer camp experience filled with personal growth, joy, and camaraderie.



Camp Lee Mar

Camp Lee Mar is a nurturing and enriching co-ed summer camp specifically designed for children and young adults with mild to moderate developmental challenges. Located in Pennsylvania, USA, the camp offers a supportive environment where campers can participate in various recreational activities, including sports, arts and crafts, swimming, and outdoor adventures. With a focus on fostering social skills, independence, and personal growth, Camp Lee Mar provides campers with a memorable and transformative summer camp experience filled with friendship and fun.



Camps in the USA

Camp Wicosuta

Camp Wicosuta is a premier all-girls summer camp located in New Hampshire, USA. With a strong emphasis on personal growth and empowerment, Wicosuta offers a diverse range of activities that allow campers to discover new talents, build self-confidence, and form lasting friendships. From sports and water activities on the private Newfound Lake to arts, horseback riding, and outdoor adventures, campers aged 7-15 enjoy a supportive and inclusive environment where they can thrive and create cherished memories.



Camp Kippewa

Camp Kippewa is an esteemed all-girls summer camp in Maine, USA, offering enriching experiences for girls aged 7-15. Set by Lake Umbagog, the camp provides a diverse range of activities, fostering confidence, resilience, and lifelong friendships in an inclusive and supportive community. With experienced staff, team-building exercises, and exciting camp traditions, Camp Kippewa empowers girls to grow into strong, self-assured individuals.

Camps in the USA

Camp Ramaquois

Camp Ramaquois is a renowned co-ed summer camp located in Rockland County, New York. With over 100 acres of beautiful wooded grounds, the camp offers a dynamic and exciting environment for campers aged 3-15. From traditional camp activities like swimming, sports, arts and crafts, and outdoor adventures to specialized programs like horseback riding, rock climbing, and robotics, Camp Ramaquois provides a diverse range of experiences to cater to each camper's interests and passions. With a focus on fostering personal growth, confidence, and a sense of community, Camp Ramaquois creates cherished memories and lasting friendships that make each summer unforgettable.



Camp Young Judaea

Camp Young Judaea is a prominent Jewish co-ed summer camp located in the breathtaking Texas Hill Country. With a rich history dating back to 1939, the camp offers a unique blend of Jewish values, culture, and outdoor adventures for campers aged 7-16. Emphasizing leadership, community, and Jewish identity, Camp Young Judaea provides a wide range of activities, including arts and crafts, sports, swimming, hiking, and cultural programs, all in a warm and inclusive environment. Campers form strong connections with their heritage, develop lifelong friendships, and create unforgettable memories during their time at this transformative camp.



The camps listed here are just a few of many other possible camps for the applicants. The ones listed here should give you an idea of the different types of camps that applicants can be placed in depending on their skillset.

Working and Living in Different Cultures - an Overview of Cultural Differences and How to Navigate Them

Cultural differences can be both fascinating and challenging, especially when traveling to a new country for work or travel. As a Canadian visiting the USA, you may encounter various cultural differences that can affect your social interactions, communication style, and work etiquette. Understanding these differences and how to navigate them can help you avoid misunderstandings, adapt more easily to your new environment, and enhance your overall experience in the USA.

General Tips

Respect cultural norms:
Research and learn more about the country, culture, and the people before deciding on your destination.

Get in touch with locals (e.g. join groups, clubs, events) and maintain good communication with new friends.

It is essential to research and learn about the customs and traditions of the USA to avoid any misunderstandings.

Talk with someone who has traveled to the USA before and learn from previous experiences.

Be willing to learn about the local culture. This can help you better understand the differences and make you feel more comfortable.

Observe how locals behave and interact before you act. This can help you get a sense of the social norms and avoid offending anyone unintentionally.

The the USA has a diverse population, and each culture has its own unique set of customs and traditions. Be mindful of these differences and show respect for them.

Visit art exhibits, museums, join walking tours, read literature and watch documentaries to find out more about the USA.

The the USA has a unique vocabulary and slang, so be mindful of the language you use. Avoid using offensive language and try to use the appropriate terms.

Try the local cuisine and be open to trying new foods and drinks and explore the variety of tastes offered.

Learn about culture shock and how to deal with it (5 stages of culture shock).

The the USA is a melting pot of different cultures, and embracing this diversity can be a rewarding experience. Take the opportunity to learn from people of different backgrounds and customs.

Cultural Differences To Consider And Tips On How To Navigate Them

The USA is a country with a rich history and many unique customs and traditions. Here are some cultural differences in the USA and tips on how to navigate them:

- **Communication style:** While Canadians tend to be more reserved and polite, using phrases like "please" and "thank you", Americans are often more direct and assertive in their communication. Don't mistake directness for rudeness and ask for clarification if needed.
- **Personal space:** Canadians generally value personal space and may stand farther apart during conversations. Americans may stand closer during interactions, and personal boundaries can be more relaxed.
- **Punctuality:** American timekeeping can be more relaxed in social settings and arriving a few minutes late may be considered acceptable. Canadians generally value punctuality and expect others to be on time.
- **Health care:** Canada has a publicly funded healthcare system, while the United States relies more on private healthcare. Having travel health insurance to cover medical expenses is crucial.
- **Sports and entertainment:** Sports preferences differ between the two countries, with ice hockey being a significant passion in Canada and American football being more popular in the United States. Engage in discussions about sports and entertainment with an open mind, and show interest in the local favorites.



Cultural Differences To Consider And Tips On How To Navigate Them

- Driving: Driving regulations and road rules are similar in both countries, but some specific laws, such as speed limits, may vary. If you plan to drive, familiarize yourself with local driving laws to ensure safe and legal driving.
- Currency and measurements: Canada uses the metric systems for measurements, while the United States primarily uses the imperial system. The Canadian dollar (CAD) is the currency in Canada, while the United States uses the U.S. dollar (USD).
- Environmental attitudes: Canada often emphasizes environmental conservation and sustainability due to its vast natural landscapes. Americans also value environmental efforts but may have regional variations in attitudes.



Staying Safe and Healthy - A Guide to Staying Safe and Healthy While Traveling Abroad



It's important to take basic safety precautions when visiting a new country. Some tips for staying safe while traveling in the USA include keeping your valuables secure, staying aware of your surroundings, and avoiding poorly lit or unfamiliar areas at night.

Here are some further tips for staying safe and healthy while visiting and working in the USA.

Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy



- Do your research about the destination, stay up to date on any travel advisories or warnings related to the USA / the area.
- Inform yourself about water and food safety, and stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water, especially in hot weather.
- Consider registering your travel plans with your embassy or consultant, which can help provide assistance in case of an emergency.
- Visit a doctor for check-ups and vaccinations before traveling, and keep a list of emergency numbers handy in case you need medical assistance.
- Pack a first-aid kit, and be mindful of the risk of extreme weather events.
- Keep your important documents/valuables safe, and keep (digital) copies online.
- Keep your friends and family updated about your whereabouts, and carry emergency contacts with you.

Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy



- Make sure you book adequate health insurance coverage for your trip.
- Keep up to date with the current situation, news, events, and emergency alerts.
- Be smart about your money, and use local ATMs wisely.
- Have common sense and follow your gut feeling/ trust your instincts.
- Be cautious of unsolicited emails, phone calls, or text asking for personal information or money.
- Invest in a good travel bag/travel lock and rather splurge on extra safety.
- Know your skills, and limitations (e.g. when hiking), and wear sunscreen, a hat, and sunglasses.
- Ask locals for advice, and don't share too much information with strangers (e.g. exact location on social media).
- Avoid unsafe neighborhoods, especially alone at night, and travel in numbers.
- Stay up to date on any travel advisory or warning and be generally street smart (don't do dangerous things for photos!).

Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy

Staying healthy and safe while traveling in the USA is important to ensure that you have an enjoyable and stress-free trip. Here are some tips to help you stay healthy and safe during your visit:

- **Health insurance:** Obtain comprehensive health insurance coverage that meets the requirements of your J-1 visa program. This will help you access necessary medical care without incurring high costs in case of illness or injury.
- **Familiarize yourself with local healthcare:** Research healthcare facilities and medical resources in your area. Know the location of hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies in case you need medical assistance.
- **Carry emergency contacts:** Keep a list of emergency contacts, including your program sponsor's contact information, local emergency services, and the contact details of someone you trust in the USA and your home country.
- **Transportation safety:** If you drive in the USA, familiarize yourself with local traffic laws and regulations. Always wear your seatbelt and avoid distracted driving. If you use public transportation, be cautious of your belongings and be aware of the transit schedule.
- **Avoid risky behaviors:** Refrain from engaging in activities that might put your health and safety at risk, such as excessive alcohol consumption, drug use, or participating in dangerous activities.
- **Keep important documents safe:** Safeguard your passport, DS-2019 form, and other essential documents. Consider making digital copies and storing them safely in case of loss or theft.
- **Seek out support if needed:** If you encounter any challenges or have concerns during your J-1 program, don't hesitate to reach out to your program sponsor, fellow participants, or counselling services offered by your host institution.



Tips for Staying Safe and Healthy

Medical Care and Expenses in the USA

The U.S. has a mixed healthcare system with public and private components, but there is no universal healthcare. Health insurance is essential for covering medical expenses, and J-1 visa programs often require participants to have adequate coverage. Medical expenses in the U.S. can be high, and costs for treatments, medications, and hospital stays can add up quickly. Even with insurance, out-of-pocket expenses like copayments and deductibles are common.

In emergencies, visit the nearest emergency room, but be aware that emergency care can be expensive. Use these services only for true emergencies.

Healthcare availability and quality vary by location, with specialized care more accessible in larger cities. Use in-network healthcare providers to reduce out-of-pocket costs. For prescription medications, consider generic alternatives to save money. Preventive care, such as regular check-ups and vaccinations, helps avoid more significant health issues and expenses.

For non-emergency medical needs, use urgent care centers or walk-in clinics, which are generally more cost-effective than emergency rooms. Travel health insurance is essential if you plan to travel outside the U.S. during your J-1 program.

Understanding the healthcare system and having adequate health insurance coverage are critical to managing medical expenses while in the United States. Consult your J-1 program sponsor or institution for guidance on healthcare options and requirements.



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Chapter 7

Returning Home - Tips on Re-Entry and How to Leverage Your International Experience



General Tips



- Arrange logistics for arrival home, for example where you will live and what do you want to do next.
- Prepare yourself for post-travel depression and reverse culture shock.
- Be patient with yourself and get some rest after returning home.
- Prepare emotionally for friendships that have changed.
- Avoid being a know-it-all about travel and your time abroad.
- Pre-plan your responses to popular questions.
- Make plans, so you have something to look forward to.
- Spend time with friends and family, but don't overwhelm yourself.
- Write down what you have learned and/or create a photo/scrapbook.
- Connect with other travelers.
- Find a new passion apart from traveling.
- Book a new trip - even if it's a short one. Reminder that you can still do Working Holiday programs in other countries as long as you are under 36!

General Tips

As your time in the USA comes to an end, it is important to prepare for your return to Canada. Here are some tips on re-entry and how to leverage your international experience.

Plan Ahead

Returning home can be overwhelming, particularly if you have been away for an extended period. It is essential to plan ahead by considering your accommodation, transportation, and finances. You may need to arrange temporary accommodation, sell or store your belongings, and make travel arrangements. It is also important to have a budget in place and understand any tax or customs regulations that may apply.

Stay Connected

Your time in the USA has likely resulted in new friendships and professional connections. It is essential to maintain these connections by staying in touch and networking. Social media platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram are great ways to keep in contact and share updates. You may also want to attend networking events or join professional organizations related to your industry.



General Tips

Reflect on Your Experience

Your time in the USA has likely been a significant personal and professional growth opportunity. It is essential to reflect on your experience and identify the skills and knowledge you have gained. This can include language skills, cultural awareness, adaptability, and problem-solving skills. These skills are highly valued by employers and can be leveraged when seeking new opportunities.

Update Your Resume and Cover Letter

As you return to Canada and begin your job search, it is essential to update your resume and cover letter to reflect your international experience. This can include highlighting any volunteer work, internships, or projects you worked on while in the USA. You may also want to include any language skills, certifications, or awards you received during your time abroad.

Be Patient

Returning home and settling back into your routine can take time. It is important to be patient and allow yourself time to adjust. You may experience reverse culture shock, which can include feelings of disorientation, frustration, and anxiety. This is a normal part of the re-entry process, and it is essential to seek support from family, friends, or a mental health professional if needed.



General Tips

Stay Open-Minded

Your international experience has likely broadened your perspective and challenged your assumptions. It is essential to stay open-minded and apply this mindset to your personal and professional life in Canada. You may want to explore new hobbies, volunteer opportunities, or career paths that align with your values and interests.

Returning to Canada after your time in the USA requires planning, reflection, and a positive mindset. By leveraging your international experience, staying connected, and being patient, you can successfully navigate the re-entry process and embrace new opportunities.



GO International Work and Travel Program Destinations:



Australia



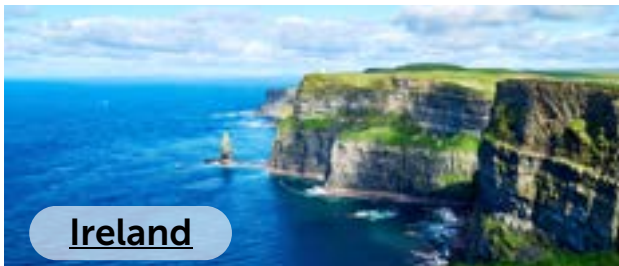
Costa Rica



France



Germany



Ireland



Japan



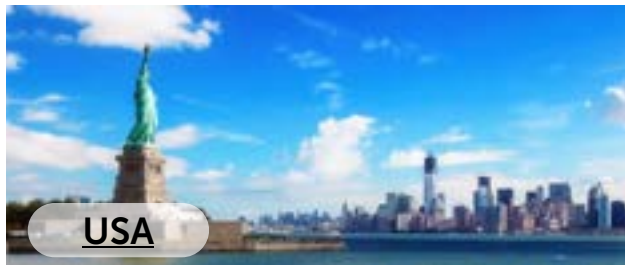
New Zealand



South Korea



UK



USA

Appendix - A List Of Helpful Resources





[USA Embassy.](#)

[Canadian Government info about the USA](#)

[USA Customs](#)

[Canada to USA border wait times](#)

[USA to Canada border wait times](#)

[Amtrak Rail USA](#)

[Greyhound Bus USA](#)

[Buy and Sell on Craigslist USA](#)

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