

ISA Recommended Packing List

What to do after getting your U.S Visa?

- Learn to cook (necessary)
- Book Air tickets
 - Ensure that you allow at least 2-3 hours lay over time (time between the arrival of one flight and the departure of another one) In case your flight gets delayed you still have some buffer time.
 - As far as possible try and book your tickets with a single airline as your baggage will remain with them. Some airlines do not take care of baggage transfers (make sure to check with them).
 - Some airlines offer international students to carry 3 bags of 23kilos each (69 kilos in total) as check in baggage.
- **Health Checkup**

Do get a complete full body health checkup and carry the necessary reports with you. If you have any major health condition, it is advisable to get a comprehensive checkup. Despite insurance, medical bills can get very expensive.
- **Dental Checkup**

Do not ignore this step, most insurances do not cover dental issues and paying them from yourself will definitely burn a hole in your pocket. Some say it is cheaper to fly back to India to get a dental issue fixed.
- **Eye Checkup**

Get an eye test done and make sure you carry at least 2 extra pairs of glasses or contact lenses. Even if you do not wear glasses, getting a test done won't hurt as prescription glasses cost you close to \$200 or more in the U.S.

Now for shopping, if you have roommates travelling with you make sure vessels and necessary items are equally distributed, staying independent is a good option, however, remember you can always buy stuff once you're here. Lighter and lesser luggage is more convenient. Make sure you are able to handle all your luggage by yourself. DO NOT OVERSHOP

Clothes:

Item	Quantity	Comments	Check
Full/Half sleeve shirts	3-4	For formal events	
Formal Trousers	3-4	For formal events	
Suit	1-2	Necessary for events like Career Fair	
Jeans	4-6	Helps in the cold weather	
T-shirts	6-8	Regular wear, you get loads of free T-shirts when you get here.	
Shorts	3-4	Regular wear, remember you cannot wear shorts outside due the cold weather.	
Traditional Dress	2-3	Diwali and Holi night are two major ISA events. Make sure you get your ethnic wear and dress your best.	
Swimming Trunks	1-2	If you are planning to swim after coming here	
Tie	1-2	For Formal events and Career Fair	
Belts	2	One formal and another of your liking	
Undergarments	20	You might do your laundry only once in 2 weeks, having extra underwear is always a good thing.	
Night clothes or Pajamas	2-3	If you have the habit of wearing them.	
Socks	10-15	More the merrier, you will wear snow boots that get really stuffy.	
Towel	2-3	One Turkish and one thin is recommended	
Handkerchiefs		As required	
Napkins		As required	
Sweater	1-2	Full sleeves are recommended	

Item	Quantity	Comments	Check
Sweatshirt	1	Optional	
Blanket	1	Optional, you get good comforters for \$15-20 at Walmart. If it is occupying too much space avoid it.	
Bed spread/ cover	2	Available here, get a double as a double bed sheet fits a single mattress and not vice-versa.	
Snow jacket	1	DO NOT BUY expensive ones in India, buy them here they are cheaper and are of greater quality. Wear your heaviest jacket on your flight.	
Scarf, Woolen cap, gloves and	1 of each	Buy them at your local sports stores (Decathlon has good options)	

Footwear:

Shoes	1-2	Wear your heaviest shoes on your journey but make sure they are comfortable to wear	
Formal shoes	1	Expensive in the U.S required for formal events and Career Fair	
Flip flops	2	Indoor use only	
Shoe Polish	1		
Winter or snow boots	1	Best bought here, heavy and cumbersome to carry.	

Personal accessories:

Wallet	2	Make sure you have enough space for cards.	
Shaving Kit and extra blades	Stock up and carry as many as you can	Shaving blades are expensive in the U.S. (if possible, just get a trimmer or a shaver instead)	

Item	Quantity	Comments	Check
Trimming scissors	1		
Toothpaste	1		
Toothbrush	2		
Comb	2		
Soap	2	Just for initial days, get used to using body wash.	
Nail cutter	1	DO NOT FORGET THIS	
Hair Oil	1	Pack properly to avoid spills in your bag.	
Lip Balm	2-3	Necessary	
Vicks Inhaler	4-5	Expensive here. This can also be used as a keychain.	
Moisturizer	1 small	Buy a good one once you get here	
Small mirror	1		
Mug	1	Unless you do not mind using paper after your business. Mugs are not very common here	
Body Spray	1		
Powder	1		
Facewash	1 small		

Utensils and Kitchen Items:

Generally, every type of utensils are available in Walmart at a reasonable rate except pressure cooker, Indian Tawa and thick heavy kadai.

Plates	4	2 big and 2 small	
Water glasses	3-6	Get steel ones	
Cups and Bowls	3-6	DO NOT bring the breakable ones	
Spoons	5-8		
Forks	3-4		
Spatula	2	For cooking purpose	
Big Spoon	4	For serving gravy and rice	
Tongs	1		
Pressure Cooker	1	4-5-liter cooker is recommended.	
Cooker spares	2 at least	Rings and valves	
Peeler	1		
Knife	2	Expensive here	
Tea/ coffee filter	1		
Grater	1 small		

Item	Quantity	Comments	Check
Large Vessel (kadhai)	1		
Frying Pan	1		
Small dishes	2-3	For cooking quick breakfast	
Ladle	1	For deep frying (If you make pooris)	
Rolling pin	1	We get ready made chapati at Jim's Foodmart but you can bring one along if you want to make your own	
Tadka Box	1	Easy if you have one	

Food Items:

As far as possible try to get home made masalas in sealed bags. Do not get rice, pulses, sugar, oil, or salt as you run the risk of being stopped at customs. You get these items here. For your initial days try to get ready to eat items.

Note - Dried species are usually allowed, though it has been noted by travelers that curry leaves are not allowed.

Mustard seeds		
Spices, Masalas, Instant Masalas (Turmeric powder, chili powder, coriander powder)		
Asafetida (Hing)		
Cumin (Jeera)		
Elichi, clove, Cinnamon		
Pickles (you can eat them directly with rice)		
Pav Bhaji, Sambar, Rasam powder, garam masala		
Ginger Garlic paste (stock up, very expensive here)		
Tamarind Paste		
Coffee powder (Coffee here tastes different)		
Chutney powder (easy to eat with rice)		
Dried red chili		

Stationary Items:

Pens	2	You get a lot of them when you arrive here	
Pencil/pen pencils	2	Do not forget to get a lead box if you're getting a pen pencil	
Eraser	2		

Stapler	1	Get Stapler Pins, get pocket sized staplers if possible.	
Tape	1		
Item	Quantity	Comments	Check
Glue stick	1		
Pencil sharpener	1		
Ruler	1		
Steel scale	1		
Notebooks	2-3		

Miscellaneous Items:

Glasses/contact lenses	2/enough for a year	Very expensive here, get 2 big bottles of contact lens solution if you plan on wearing them everyday	
Passport size photos	20	Get as many as possible as its expensive to get it done here	
Scientific calculator	1	Expensive here, change battery in India	
Books(religious) Dictionary	Optional		
Sunglasses	2	Polarized is preferred	
Water bottle	1	Recommended (keep it empty during before your flight)	
India to U.S converters	2-3	Necessary	
External hard disk	1TB	You can buy one once you get here	
Pen drives (16/32gb)	3		
Charging cables	2 extras		
Torch light	1	Optional	
Universal Extension board	1	Optional.	

**If you wish to bring musical instruments, check with your airline, you will have multiple occasions to showcase your talent.

**If you have a passion for photography, bring your camera, Houghton has many surprises for you.

What goes in your carry-on? (you get 7kg of carry on and 5kg allowance in your laptop bag, a total of 13kg)

- At least 2 extra pairs of clothes and 4 pairs of undergarments (helpful in case your check in bags go missing)
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Small Towel
- Instant food
- Comb
- All Documents
 1. Passport and Visa
 2. I20
 3. Admission letter
 4. Credentials (all the supporting documents you carried to your VISA interview)
 5. Transcripts
 6. Marks cards 10th/12th
 7. GRE and TOEFL/IELTS score reports
 8. Experience certificates
 9. Copy of your SOP
 10. Housing contract (if you have one)
 11. Driver's license (it is strongly recommended to get one before you get here, you can legally drive with an Indian driver's license for 1 year in the state of Michigan. It is also easier to get a local Driver's license if you hold an Indian driver's license)
 12. If you have paid the semester fee, carry the receipt of payment
 13. Cash (not more than \$300) get more in your forex card if required.
 14. Vaccination certificates (not mandatory)
 15. A notepad with all contacts, addresses and phone numbers (in case your phone gives up on you)
 16. Indian currency amounting to 2000 rupees in case you have to pay for something at the airport before you depart.
 17. If you have an Indian credit or debit card, make sure you activate it for International use if you decide to bring it along with you for emergency.
 18. Keep prescription of all the medicines you are carrying.
 19. A set of photocopies of all the important documents.
 20. If you are bringing Cash, Get a receipt from your forex agent. Even if you are getting an unbelievable price for exchange ALWAYS GET A RECEIPT.

- Laptop and charger in case you are planning to get one from India. DO NOT PUT your charger in your check in luggage.
- Extra pair of glasses (if you wear them)
- Phone chargers and cables

Note: Do not put your power bank in your carry on**

Things to leave at home:

- Multiple copies of all the original documents you are carrying
- A copy of your airline ticket
- A copy of the address you are going to be staying
- Contact list of the people you know at the university and the university phone number
- Entrust the power of attorney to one of your family members (preferably parents)
- Sign on at least 20 blank sheets of paper and write your name below it. In case you require extra transcripts or documents your parents will be able to use this.
- If possible, make all your bank accounts joint.
- Sign on a few blank cheques and hand them over to your parents.

Note: In case you leave anything at home, your family can always ship it over to you, do not freak out**

Packing tips:

- Try and buy soft top suitcases as sometimes the hardtop ones tend to break due to mishandling at the airport. (If you've already bought your bags don't worry it's ok)
- Roll your clothes to make more space, try and make maximum use of space and keep checking the weight of your luggage.
- While packing the baggage, the idea is to 'Not keep all your eggs in one basket'. Distribute the items evenly among the three bags. Do NOT keep all utensils in one, all clothes in one and all food items in another. For instance, if you are keeping frying pan in one bag, keep the Kadhai in another.
- Put a photocopy of your passport, visa, U.S address and Indian address in each of your bags.
- DO not lock your suitcase, you can use TSA locks if you really insist on locking them.
- Use identification marks on your bags to easily identify them while picking them up at the airport on arrival.

- Tie a rope around your bag to prevent it from splitting open during transit.

Note: Begin your packing well in advance to avoid forgetting little things in the end (this happens)**

Before you leave your home:

- Talk to your family and eat at least 2 meals with them.
- Remain calm and get some rest.
- Activate your phone for International usage.
- Be sure to call the airline and confirm your ticket just before 2 days of travel. (flight timings can change at times)
- Leave for the airport early and reach at least 4 hours before departure.
- Do not think twice to spend on urgent needs.
- In case you encounter any situation, or you are stopped at the airport for an extra security check, DO NOT PANIC. It might be a simple routine check stay calm, understand the situation and look at all the possible options to deal with it.

Once you reach the U.S.:

- Do not leave the airport until someone arrives to pick you up.
- Reach the right terminal and collect your bags.
- If you are asked to open your bags for customs, do so patiently, if asked about masalas tell them they are dried Indian spices.

**You can carry your laptop and the phone that you are already using. Local Sim cards can be used on your phone. Check your phone compatibility in US at <https://willmyphonework.net/>

**Use this address on your bags if required:

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