

US Visa Advice Session

There are two types of visa

- Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) - for nationals of the countries in the Visa Waiver Programme (VWP)
- Non immigrant visa – for those who are ineligible for an ESTA



Applying for an ESTA





Does my trip qualify for ESTA?

- The purpose of the trip must be business or pleasure
- The duration of the trip must be less than 90 days
- You must be travelling with a signatory VWP carrier (air or sea)



Who is eligible for an ESTA?

The below nationalities can apply:

- Andorra
- Australia
- Belgium
- Brunei
- Chile
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Monaco
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Portugal
- Republic of Korea
- San Marino
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- United Kingdom





You are ineligible if....

- You have ever been cautioned or arrested, even if this did not result in a criminal conviction, (the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act does not apply so even a spent conviction counts).
- You have a serious communicable illness; Cholera, Diphtheria, Plague, Smallpox, Yellow Fever, Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers, including Ebola, Lassa, Marburg, Crimean-Congo, Gonorrhea, Granuloma inguinale, Leprosy, infectious Lymphogranuloma venereum, Syphilis (infectious stage) and Tuberculosis (active).
- If you have previously had one of these that has been treated, you will need medical evidence that it is no longer infectious.



You are ineligible if....

- You have previously been refused admission to the US, or deported from the US, or have previously overstayed on the Visa Waiver Program (ESTA).
- You have travelled to or been present in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, or Yemen on or after 01/03/11. There are some exceptions to this for example where this was on duty as a VWP government employee or in military service for a VWP country amongst others – seek advice if unsure.
- You do not have a biometric passport



Passport requirements (1)

- It must have at least 6 months validity remaining. This is required for both ESTA and visa.
- It must be machine-readable (it will have two lines of letters, numbers and chevrons (<<<) at the bottom of the photo page).
- If it is not machine readable, you can either obtain a new one that is, or apply for a visa instead.



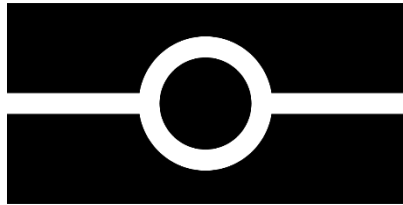
Passport requirements (2)

- It must have a digital photo (printed on, not glued or laminated).
- If your passport does not have a digital photo, you can still apply for ESTA if:
 - Your country joined the Visa Waiver Program before 2008 and you have a valid machine readable passport issued before 26/10/05 or you have an e-Passport with a biometric chip.
 - If your passport does not meet the above requirements, you will need a visa.



Passport requirements (3)

- It must be an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric data.
- It must display this symbol:



- Emergency or temporary passports must still be electronic passports.

When should I apply for ESTA?

ESTA is quicker to process and should take less than 72 hours, however, it is advisable to apply now so that if you are refused ESTA there is still time to obtain a visa.



How do I apply for ESTA?

Apply online via - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/>

You will be asked for:

- Contact details
- Passport details
- Emergency contact
- Details of forwarding travel (if transiting)
- Disclosure of health, criminal record and previous travel
- Bank details (to make the application fee payment)





I already have an ESTA, must I re-apply?

- If you are issued a new passport
- If you change your name
- If you change your gender
- If your country of citizenship changes
- If your responses to any of the “yes” or “no” application questions should change
- After 2 years ESTA validity expires



How do I find out if I am approved?

- You will not receive an email. You have to log in online:
<https://www.esta-registration.co.uk>
- Select “Check ESTA Status”. You will need your application number, passport number, and date of birth.

Your status will show as either:

- Authorization Approved - Print this for your own records but you don't need to present a hard copy when travelling.
- Travel Not Authorized - You will need to obtain a visa.
- Authorization Pending - Check again later.



How much does it cost?

- ESTA costs \$14
- The processing fee is \$4 but if you are approved you also pay a \$10 authorisation fee.
- If your application is refused, the authorisation fee is refunded, but you'll now need to apply for a visa.
- A visa costs \$160
- This is non refundable.



If I am refused, can I appeal?

- No. There's no appeals process for ESTA or visitor visa refusals.
- If ESTA is refused you will not be told why so it may be difficult to identify the problem. You must not provide false information or withhold anything to obtain approval dishonestly. Re-applying with different answers may appear dishonest and result in refusal. You can apply for a visa instead.
- If you misunderstood a question or made a mistake in the ESTA application, you may be able to get help to rectify this; go to <https://help.cbp.gov/> and select "Ask a Question" to explain why you made the error and ask if anything can be done. You may be unable to re-apply.
- If a visa is refused, you cannot appeal, but you can re-apply.



Does ESTA approval guarantee admission to the US?

No!

- This just means that you are eligible to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program.
- Upon arrival at the port of entry in the United States you will be inspected by a Customs and Border Protection Officer, who will determine whether you will be allowed to enter the USA.
- You should ensure you have full documentation in your hand luggage to satisfy them of your intentions.



Applying for a Visa



Visa Applications

For students not eligible for ESTA, a visa application (non-immigrant) must be submitted.

This is submitted to the US Embassy in London.



Is there any advantage of a visa?

Yes, visas do have some advantages over the ESTA:

- Validity for up to 10 years as opposed to 2 with ESTA
- the option to stay in the USA for up to 6 months at a time (as opposed to 90 days under ESTA)
- Visa holders may also apply to extend their stay beyond six months or switch to a different visa while in America (neither of which is allowed under ESTA)



Which visa?

- You must check that the activities you intend to undertake during your visit are permitted under the category you are applying for.
- B1: Business
e.g. attending an educational conference
- B2: Tourism
e.g. short recreational courses not part of a degree



When should I apply for a visa?

- If you are planning to travel in January you should submit your application before the end of November and it is advisable to apply as soon as possible to avoid disappointment.
- Visa processing times may be slower at this time of year because of all the holidays.



What will the visa duration be?

- Standard visitor visas are issued for up to 6 months.
- Some nationalities may get longer if their country has a reciprocal agreement e.g. India.
- If you are applying for the first time you will usually get the minimum period of validity, but if you have previously applied successfully and kept to the rules of that visa, then you may get the maximum.



How do I apply for a visa?

- The application is online, followed by an appointment that you have to book and attend in person (in London)

[Form DS-160](#)

- The form requires a digital photo (requirements coming up).
- After completing this, you will need to print the confirmation page to take with you to the interview.

[US YouTube video](#)





Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application (DS-160)

Apply For a Nonimmigrant Visa

FAQs

Tooltip Language: English [\[View Tool Tip Help\]](#)

Most of this application has been translated. To see the translation point your mouse over any sentence on the page.

Welcome!

On this website, you can apply for a U.S. nonimmigrant visa. Filling out the application on our site is the first step in the process. After you submit your application, you can move on to the next steps, such as signing up for an interview.

Important: Before You Start

1. [Learn about Types of Visas](#)
2. [List of Documents and Information you will need](#)
3. [Browser Requirements](#)
4. [How to complete the application](#)

Other people can assist you with your visa application. Note that under U.S. law (22 C.F.R. 41.103) you must electronically sign and submit your own application unless you qualify for an exemption. Even if someone else helped you complete the application, you (the applicant) must click the "Sign Application" button, or your application may not be accepted.

Please be patient as you use this form. Download times may vary depending on your internet connection speed.

Get Started

Select a location where you will be applying for this visa



ENGLAND, LONDON

Enter the code as shown:

4XK4D



This visa application will ask you to upload a digital photo of yourself.

[Test Photo Photo Standard Guide](#)

Select a location and make sure you have the documents and information you will need.

START AN APPLICATION

Select a location then select an application that you previously saved on your computer.

UPLOAD AN APPLICATION

You will be asked for your application ID and answer a security question.

RETRIEVE AN APPLICATION



Q: Are you a permanent resident of a country/region other than your country/region of origin (nationality) indicated above?

A: ☐ Yes ☒ No

If you have a Tier 4 visa for the UK, you are not a permanent resident of the UK, so answer “no”

Hover over the (i) symbol for extra help to understand the question.

Some questions will have a “not known” or “does not apply” tick box which allows you to proceed.



Provide the following information:

Purpose of Trip to the U.S. ⓘ

TEMP. BUSINESS PLEASURE VISITOR (B)

Specify ⓘ

TOURISM/MEDICAL TREATMENT (B2)

[+ Add Another](#) [- Remove](#)

Intended Date of Arrival ⓘ

10 MAY 2017

(Format: DD-MMM-YYYY)

Intended Length of Stay in U.S. ⓘ

1 WEEK(S)

Help: Arrival Plans ⓘ

If you are unsure of your travel plans, please provide an estimate.

Address Where You Will Stay in the U.S.

Street Address (Line 1)

RITZ CARLTON HOTEL

Street Address (Line 2) **Optional**

50 CENTRAL PARK S

City

NEW YORK

State

NEW YORK

ZIP Code (if known)

10019

(e.g., 12345 or 12345-1234)

Person/Entity Paying for Your Trip ⓘ

SELF



Travel Companions Information

NOTE: Provide the following travel companion information.

Persons traveling with you

Q: Are there other persons traveling with you?

A: ☐ Yes ☒ No

Help: Traveling with Others

You should answer Yes to this question if you are traveling with family, as part of an organized tour, or as part of a performing group or athletic team. You do not need to list individuals who are traveling with you for the purposes of employment with the same employer.



U.S. Point of Contact Information

Contact Person or Organization in the United States

Contact Person

Surnames

Given Names

☒ Do Not Know

Organization Name

☐ Do Not Know

Relationship to You ⓘ

OTHER

Address and Phone Number of Point of Contact

U.S. Street Address (Line 1)

U.S. Street Address (Line 2) *Optional

City

Help: Contact

Your U.S. Point of Contact can be any individual in the U.S. who knows you and can verify, if necessary, your identity. If you do not personally know anyone in the U.S., you may enter the name of the store, company, or organization you plan to visit during your trip.



Primary Occupation ⓘ

STUDENT ▼

Present Employer or School Name

DE MONTFORT UNIVERSITY

Present employer or school address:

Street Address (Line 1)

THE GATEWAY

Street Address (Line 2) *Optional

City

LEICESTER

State/Province

☒ Does Not Apply

Postal Zone/ZIP Code

LE1 9BH

☐ Does Not Apply

Phone Number

01162551551

Country/Region

UNITED KINGDOM ▼

Monthly Income in Local Currency (if employed)

☒ Does Not Apply

Briefly describe your duties:

I AM A FULL TIME STUDENT IN THE FACULTY OF HEALTH AND LIFE SCIENCE. I AM A FINAL YEAR STUDENT OF SOCIOLOGY.



Photo requirements

- Size: 2 inches x 2 inches
- Head measurement (chin to top of hair): 25–35 mm
- Taken in the last 6 months
- White/off-white background
- No glasses allowed (new requirement)
- Neutral expression (no smiling)



What documents do I need?

- Passport (minimum 6 months validity remaining)
- Photo (hard copy needed if digital upload fails)
- Print-out of application confirmation page
- Receipt for payment of application fee
- Itinerary for the whole trip
- Bank statements or Traveller's Cheques
- Accommodation booking(s)
- Return flight booking (if booked - they advise to wait until passport returned)
- Travel Insurance (Worldwide cover from a UK provider – NOT provided by DMU)
- Evidence of ties to the UK and/or your home country (e.g. tenancy, fees paid)
- DMU Enrolment Letter (from Gateway House)



Payment

Paying for the application is done on a different website:

<https://ais.usvisa-info.com/en-gb/niv>



What else should I consider?

- You may need to have been living in the UK for 6 months before you can get travel insurance so check before you book or you may lose your deposit.
- Take a photo of your application reference as you need this to get back into your application
- Processing times are usually around a week, but if additional administrative processing is needed this could add around another 60 days.



Is it worth applying via an agent?

No!

- These services are not endorsed by or associated with the U.S. government.
- They can't guarantee a successful application
- They can't make the processing time any faster
- Their fees increase the cost of applying
- They are unnecessary because all the information you need to apply is available online.



How much money is required?

- There is no guidance for applicants about how much money is needed for a successful application.
- This is assessed by the interviewer. Be prepared to demonstrate possession of or access to a sufficient amount of funds to cover all expenses for the entire trip. It may help if large expenses are paid before you apply for the visa but there is no guarantee you will get the visa so read the terms and conditions carefully to avoid losing money if you have to cancel.



What will the interviewer ask me?

- The interviewer may not ask for any documents. It is a credibility-style interview, which means it is a test of how genuine a visitor you seem to be, and your trustworthiness to abide by the limitations of the visa.
- Familiarise yourself with the itinerary
- Make sure you know what is allowed and prohibited
- Be clear about your intention to exit the US on time
- Answer confidently and offer evidence if possible



Where can I find further information?

Guide to applying: [Video Guide to Applying](#)

Photos: [Video Uploading the photo](#)





Any questions?