



1 Document Check-list

Here is a Visa Documents' check-list for you to organize your paperwork in the required sort order. A guide/explanation of each document is included starting on Page 2.

a. Documents prepared by Sponsor

1. DS-160 Confirmation Page
2. Proof Of Payment Of The Visa Application Fee (1 Original 1 Photocopy)
3. DS-2019 Form (Signed Original)
4. SEVIS Fee Receipt

b. Documents prepared by YOU

1. VISA Interview Appointment Confirmation Page (2 copies)
2. 2" X 2" White Background Visa Photo
3. Signed Job Offer
4. Proof of Student Status Letter
5. Current Passport and Old Passport (if any)
6. Financial Statements
7. Academic Results / Transcript

c. Others (Optional)

Other supporting endorsements (e.g. Property ownership documents, family status, marital status, parents, financial ties, tax statements, job offer letter, university offer letter)

Documents Preparation

You will only have 2-3 minutes of interview time, so keep all the documents organized and easy to reach if asked.

1. VISA Interview Appointment Confirmation Page

This is the ending confirmation page proving that you have an appointment at the US Embassy, downloaded from the online visa appointment scheduling system.

2. White Background Visa Photo

The photograph requirements are very strict for U.S. Visa. So make sure you get your photographs as per specifications. Spend a little extra money and get the rightfully authorized photographer to prepare U.S. VISA photograph.

- a. **One 2 inches x 2 inches, white background US photo (if possible, bring 2)**
- b. Shoulder length preferable. **No** big head shot, or too small head size please! Kindly refer to the below websites for photo specifications:
 - <http://www.ustraveldocs.com/my/my-niv-photoinfo.asp>
 - <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos.html>
 - <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/photos/photo-page.html>

note: This is **not the regular passport sized photos with a blue colored background!*

3. Signed Job Offer

You must be in possession of a job offer issued by your US Sponsor/ Employer.

4. Proof of Student Status Letter

If you haven't applied for this yet, please request an official student status confirmation letter from your university/college along with the requirements and details below:

- University letter head and official stamp/ signature of legal representative
- Name of student, Passport/ Identification Number (I/C), Registration/ Student Identification Number, Course of Study, Course Commencement, and Duration of study

5. Original, Current and/or Old Passports

A clear and legible copy of your valid, signed passport is required.

- Your passport must be valid for **at least 6 months** from the start date of your program. If your passport will expire prior to 6 months past the start date for your program, then you must renew your passport before attending the visa interview.

Bring any old passport, especially if you previously had a US visa stamped in it and/or if your passport is new with no travelling records.

6. Financial Statements (ORIGINAL/CERTIFIED COPY only)

Documents demonstrating your financial capacity for at least US 1200 and above. This shows that you have the financial ability to start on your program.

- **Self-sponsored:** Bring your own financial statement in your name, in any form: Bank Book Updates, Bank Statement, Fixed Deposits, Credit Union, etc.

Bank Statements are the most popular form of proof: You can request this from your bank over-the-counter, or printout from your online banking account.

You will need the bank officer to stamp and certify the bank statement.

- **Sponsored by parents/ family members/ relatives/ others:** you will need two (2) financial statements, with one under your name and has at least US 500 inside, and another one under the person who is sponsoring/funding your WAT USA participation, with amount of US 1000 and above. You only need one statement if you have any Joint Account between you and the sponsoring party.

**Note: You can also obtain a letter from the bank that states how long the account has existed, and what the average balance in the account has been. This is optional, but a plus point.*

7. Academic Results/Transcript

Please bring all or 2-3 latest academic results from your college/university. Secondary/senior high results are not needed.

- If you have failed or bad grades, you may want to consider not showing it! Or you will be expected to explain the reason that contributed to the bad grades or how are you going to succeed in the US on the program if you haven't shown motivation in your studies.

**Note: Academic transcripts with marking/grading/scoring is preferred, not the completion certificate.*

8. International Student Documents

If you are an international student, please bring along the following:

- a. **Tuition Fee Receipts** – records of your past tuition fee payments from your university. If you have paid for the following semester that you are returning to after the program, bring along the tuition fee payment receipt.
- b. **Internship Letter (if any)** – if you are returning after the program to pursue your final year internship, please obtain an internship letter from the company before going to the US Embassy.

9. Other supporting documents (optional)

It's **NOT** mandatory to present these documents but if you have them, bring them along with you; if you are unable to get them, it's OK to skip.

- a. **Property ownership documents** – If you or your immediate family owns a property/business, you may want to bring/show the proof of property, business license or financial statements, etc. to show that you do not intend on immigrating to the US.
- b. **Employment/professional documents** – If you have secured a job in your home country before your program starts, you may want to bring the offer letter.
- c. **Current studies documents** – If you have paid any tuition fee, you may want to bring the proof of payment to show your return for the course you are currently pursuing.
- d. **Further studies documents** – If you'd like to further study immediately on completion of your program and have been accepted by a university, you may want to bring the unconditional offer letter issued by the university.
- e. **Scholarship documents** – If you are under any scholarship sponsoring your studies, you may want to bring a scholarship letter to prove your commitment

Visa Interview Tips

Here is a useful video on how US Embassies handle visa appointments:

Title: "Attending a Non-immigrant Visa Interview at the U.S. Embassy"

Link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzzOvF1EE_XE

The US Visa interview success depends 90% on your preparation, and 10% luck. One thing to remember that honesty would be your best friend in this. So it's very important that you provide rightful and reliable information to the visa interview officer. Here are a few tips to get you prepared for the J-1 Visa interview.

1. Dress Code: Smart Casual

Wear something that you feel comfortable in as long as it is within the range of casual smart attire. Dressing code for guys should be a shirt/ polo tee with a pair of jeans/ pants/ slacks and for girls should be likewise, or a clean and sharp dress. Please take note strictly **NO** slippers / sandals/ flip-flops, shorts, mini dress etc in the embassy.

2. Be Brief

Due to the high volume of applications being interviewed in a day, all visa interview officers are under considerable time pressure to conduct a quick and efficient interview. They must make a decision, for the most part, on the impressions they form during the first minute of the interview. Consequently, what you say first and the initial impression you create are critical to your success. Keep your answers to the officer's questions short and to the point.

3. Know your Documents

Be attentive and alert to the instructions of the Visa officer. Be familiar with the order your documents are arranged in. When prompted to produce a document, quickly locate it and pass it to the officer. Any prolonged fumbling or confusion may raise suspicion by the Visa officer.

4. Honesty is the best policy

Honest and clear responses are the ones that would help you secure a visa. You should be cautioned not to lie about having family members in the U.S. The Embassy is now required to check every applicant in a comprehensive multi-agency database. If you are caught in a lie, the visa officer will deny the visa application, and it will be difficult or impossible to successfully appeal the decision.

5. Prove the ties to your home country

You must be able to convince the visa interview officer that you have reasons for returning to your home country. "Ties" to your home country are the things that bind you to your hometown, like: current study, further study, job, family, financial prospects that you own or will inherit, investments, etc. If you are a fresh graduate, the interviewing officer may ask about your specific intentions or promise of future employment, family or other relationships, educational objectives, grades, long-range plans and career prospects in your home country. Bring all necessary documents with you (Bank Statements, Copy of employment letter of the job waiting for you upon return, Family letters of employments and salary, etc).

6. Know the goals of going and returning

You should have a specific academic, cultural or professional objective. Be prepared to explain clearly why you want to participate in the Work and Travel USA program as well as your plan to return home at the end of the program. You may not succeed in convincing the visa officer to issue you a visa if you are not able to provide definite reason and plan of your participation and return.

7. Know the Details about Your Placement

Be ready to provide all the exact details about where you are going to work, the host company profile, your contacts, the job positions, its requirements etc.

8. Speaking at least basic English

Anticipate that the interview will be conducted in English and not in your native language. The visa officer would like to know what the **specific** objective is for working in the USA. One suggestion is to practice before the interview, but do NOT prepare speeches, give vague answers, or make overly solicitous comments about how great and wonderful the United States is! We have prepared a list of questions and answers for your preparation

9. Maintain a positive attitude if all else fails

You may appeal the decision, and the case will be reviewed by an Officer other than the initial Officer who denied the application. Do not engage the visa officer in an argument. If you are denied, ask the officer for a list of documents that he or she would suggest you bring in order to overcome the refusal.

Potential Questions

It's crucial that you show that you do not intend to permanently move to the U.S. and that you have strong reasons for returning to your home country during the visa interview. Any information you give to the interviewer will be investigated, so be sure to tell the truth. We have prepared a list of questions and guidelines below which you can anticipate from a visa interview officer.

- **Where will you work in the U.S.?**

You will need to provide the name and location of the company you will be working and the contact information of someone with the company.

- **What will you work as in the U.S.?**

You are expected to state the position and briefly describe the scope of duties and responsibilities.

- **What is the objective of your visit?**

Objectives include travelling, improving English skills, experiencing new cultures, learning about working with Americans, shopping, making friends, gaining knowledge, etc. So long as the objectives you mention do not possess any immigrant tendency, like searching for permanent job in the U.S.

- **Which places you are going to for sightseeing?**

You are advised to have a concise idea of the places you will be visiting in the U.S., albeit the travelling plans may be altered in the future.

- **What institute do/ did you study in and what is your specialization?**

You are expected to state the name of your university/college and the course you're pursuing now. You will also need to submit a student status verification letter to confirm your status.

- **Who will finance/sponsor your stay in the U.S.?**

It can be sponsored by your parents or your own (self-financed) as long as you are able to provide proof of any sufficient financial support that you have received for your stay in the U.S.

- **What will you do on your return?**

Whether it is continuing your current study, furthering study or working in your home country, you're advised to be clearheaded of your plans upon returning. If you have any supporting evidence to demonstrate that you have reason/s to return, such as job offer letter, university offer letter, etc., do bring it along.

- **Have you visited any other country?**

If you can demonstrate a successful track record of travelling to overseas and then returning, it will show that you have no intention/risk of abandoning your home country. Do not have to worry if you possess no foreign travel experience but make sure you're telling the truth.

- **Tell me about your family.**

By giving truthful information about your family, you will demonstrate to the interviewer that you have a reason to return to your home country. You should provide not only names and contact information but any written documentation you may have about the identity of your family. The interviewer may ask additional questions to validate that you are telling the truth. For example, if you tell him/her about your brother, the interviewer may ask additional questions about this family member, such as his birth date, employment or place of residence.

- **Do you have any family member/relative living in the U.S.?**

If yes, you may be asked about the particular family member/relative's place of residence in the U.S., type of visa he/she's holding, occupation etc. Please note that the US Embassy will have everything recorded in their system, so do not miss or attempt to hide any information regarding this issue.

Note: Rare Scenarios

- **If you have failed or bad grades:**

You may want to explain the reasons that contributed to the bad grades, either personal circumstances (e.g. illness or you simple did not work hard enough) or special circumstances (e.g. death or illness in the immediate family). Show the visa officer your determination to excel in the program and you will try your utmost ability to perform all the required duties in the job.

- **If you're married and have dependants remaining at home:**

Be prepared to address how they will support themselves in your absence. This can be an especially tricky area if you are the primary source of income for your family. If the visa officer gains the impression that your family will need you to remit money from the United States in order to support them, your visa application will almost certainly be denied.

- **If you have applied for the U.S. Green Card Lottery, you may be asked if you are intending to immigrate.**

A simple answer would be that you applied for the lottery since it was available but not with a specific intent to immigrate.

- **If you overstayed your authorized stay in the United States previously:**

Be prepared to explain what happened clearly and concisely (e.g. flight delay, personal issues etc).

- **If you were denied applying a visa previously:**

Explain what reason/s contributed to your failure on obtaining a visa previously (E.g. short of documentation, miscommunication etc).