

US SHOPPING LIST

Please find below an indicative list of essential items that you are required to buy/arrange for.

I. FOOTWEAR

1. Shoes

- a) **Sport Shoes:** just carry one pair of sports shoes (wear them on the flight to save space). One can buy a very good pair and a reasonable rate as compared to India in the US during sales etc.
- b) **Leather Shoes:** Formal leather shoes (for interviews and formal occasions).

2. Chappals

- (i) As per individuals requirement. Cheap slippers can be found in Walmart etc.
- (ii) A pair of Indian style shoes for Indian occasions.
- (iii) Girls can carry extra pairs of flip flops if going to a warm state like California.

II. For students travelling to northern states

Carry a sweater and a wind cheater.

Carry thermal ware (4 tops and 2 bottoms)

Carry a pair of woolen gloves and 2-3 pairs of woolen socks

Carry a woolen hat (monkey cap)

Buy all other winter ware viz. coat, snow jacket, boots, snow gloves etc from US as and when required.

III. PERSONAL ACCESSORIES

- a) Hangers for clothes;
- b) Wallet: One that has space for cards as you normally don't carry much cash with you.
- c) Shaving kit & blades (get a good stock, they are costly In US). Brush & toothpaste (these are also expensive in US).
- d) Soap (get a couple of bars of bathing soap till you go for the first groceries in US).
- e) Combs & hair oil (if you use hair-oil get a year's supply of your favorites).
- f) Nail cutter
- g) Small scissors, Safety pin bunch
- h) Mini-sewing kit with some buttons
- i) Medicines first aid kit;

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- j) Carry prescribed medicines if required along with prescription
- k) Books
- l) Back pack
- m) Key Chains
- n) Soap box

Summarizing your Personal accessories list:

Sr. No.	Items	Number
1.	Soap bars	2
2.	Towels	2
3.	Shampoo bottles	1 big bottle
4.	Napkins	6
5.	Body Spray	3
6.	Perfume	2 or as per requirement
7.	After Shave	1
8.	Tooth Paste	6 tubes
9.	Tooth Brush	6
10.	Shaving Tube	2
11.	Mach Razor	2
12.	Blades	20
13.	Light shawl	1
14.	Duster (for cleaning)	4
15.	Scrub	2
16.	Sponge	2
17.	Single bed sheets	2
18.	Double bed sheets	2
19.	Nail cutter	1
20.	Rubber band packet	1
21.	Scissors pair	1
22.	Engg Calculator	1
23.	Passport size snap	36
24.	Stamp size snap	36
25.	Photos of your family	As per your choice

IV. UTENSILS

The kind of utensils that you plan to take depends on whether you plan to cook alone or with your housemates. This is because most people don't get time to cook daily. Therefore, students generally cooked once in two days. This has to be kept in mind whilst finalizing the list

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However, below is an indicative utensil list which you may want to refer to:

- a) 2-3 plates,
- b) Glasses
- c) Cups and bowls
- d) Forks (2 each)
- e) Serving spoons
- f) 3 to 4 cooking vessels
- g) Pressure cooker of 3 liters
- h) Cooker containers and spares (rings and valves)
- i) Non-stick frying pan with turner
- j) Tongs and knives
- k) Cutting board for vegetables
- l) 2-3 patella's that fit into each other and that preferably have handles
- m) 1 pressure pan (Prestige), ask your prospective roommate to get one too
- n) Utensils holder
- o) Plates which are microwave proof
- p) 2-3 microwave proof bowls
- q) 6 spoons and a couple of steel glasses
- r) Knife.
- s) Cooker 1 no. + spares
- t) Cookers Containers 2 no (with their lids)
- u) Kadai 1 no.
- v) Nonstick tawa 1 no.
- w) Spoons 6 no.

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- x) Grip 1 no.
- y) Chapati fork/tong 1 no.
- z) Laddle for poori 1 no.
- aa) Spatula types used while making roti) 1 no.
- bb) Knife 2 no.
- cc) Peeler 1 no.
- dd) Serving spoons (for dal, curry and rice) 3 no.
- ee) Knife& Fork 6 no.
- ff) Sauce pan 2 no.
- gg) Steel containers to heat food 2 no. (with lid)
- hh) Rolling Pin/ Belan (to make rotis) 1 no.
- ii) Plate 1 no.
- jj) Katori 3 no.
- kk) Glass 2 no.
- ll) Cutting board 1 no.
- mm) Eating knives 2 no.
- nn) Coffee spoon for salt etc 3 no.
- oo) Small size plastic spoons for masala 1 no.

V. FOOD ITEMS

Some of the common food items that you may consider carrying are:

- a) Spices, Tealeaves, Masalas, Haldi, Dhania, red chili, Instant masalas, etc.
- b) Mustard packet
- c) Tamarind paste
- d) Different dals in small quantity for initial use

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- e) Asafoetida (hing) powder.
- f) Indian instant coffee + Indian tea (This is because it takes time to get used to American products)
- g) Elaichi, clove, cinnamon
- h) Masalas and tea/coffee powder, if you are a regular drinker (until somebody shifts to beer.)

SOME ADDITIONAL POINTS:

- a. Get a couple of bags each of haldi, red chili powder, Garam masala, Dhania, Pickle bottles (if you have enthru, but preferably get sealed ones), rice, Moong Dal. Consider bringing supply which will suffice you for a period of one month.
- b. Most Indian food ingredients are available even in small cities. Don't go loaded with foodstuffs as you may have problem with customs. Try to get "instant" stuff, as people don't have much time for cooking in the US.

Summarizing your Masala list

Sr. No.	Items	Quantity
1.	Dhania & jira	½ kg
2.	Chilli powder	1/2 kg
3.	Haldi	¼ kg
4.	Full jira	200 grams
5.	Mustard Seed	200 grams
6.	Garam Masala home made	200 grams
7.	Pav Bhaji Masala	200 grams
8.	Salt	500 grams
9.	Sugar	½ kg
10.	Hing Powder	1 bottle

VI. STATIONERY LIST

Sr. No.	Items	No.
1.	White Sheets	50
2.	Pencils	12
3.	Cello tape	1
4.	Safety pin	1 packet
5.	Thread black	1
6.	Blue reel	1
7.	White reel	1
8.	Erasers	4
9.	Paper cutter	1

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10.	Stapler	1
11.	Stapler pins packet	1
12.	Stationery compass	2
13.	Blue and Black pen	6 each
14.	Scribing pad	2
15.	Glue Stick	1

Packing:

- Start your packing well in advance
- Put identification marks and labels on both the inside & outside the boxes) apart from this, the airlines will also provide you with adhesive labels).
- Copy of all the certificates/documents (originals in hand baggage)
- Important application materials (SOP, Reco, etc.) (Soft copy)
- Necessary book/notebooks (some suggested books are - Clarks Tables, a good dictionary/thesaurus, a booklet for units conversion) [note: there should be no legal hassles taking Xerox copies of books - but don't flaunt them to Americans/profs]
- Copy of address book/telephone book/diary
- Some stationary and related items suggested (not absolutely necessary) - just for the first few weeks are: common items + rubber stamp with house address + air mail covers + few Indian razor blades for cutting work + screw driver
- Medical history files
- Non-technical books (fiction/religious). [Note: second-hand storybooks are cheap in the US]
- Don't take Indian files (empty) or punching machines - filing system is different in the US (3holes, A4)
- Don't take raincoats.
- Wear your shoes to save space in the box.

Things to be kept in hand baggage:

- Some medicines (including for air-sickness)
- Novel/magazines/books for in flight reading
- Sweater
- Original important documents (I-20, visa, tickets.)
- Enough money (little cash, forex cards)
- Address book/phone book (Indian & US)
- Copies of your photos (passport size)
- Enlisted steps to be followed in case of emergency (accident, theft, etc.)

Things to be kept in person:

- Shorter extract of contact addresses - especially of people coming to pick you up.
- 1 handbag to carry in flight stuff with you (buy a good quality, spacious one 'cause you might have to use it for carrying clothes to the laundry later).
- 1 backpack (get a good one; you will use it almost all the time in US).

Books:

- Contact students at your Univ.
- A good dictionary

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- Your calculator
- Your entire fundamental course texts and notes (for reference of basics).
- Standard mathematical table and formulae handbook. Might also want to buy an alarm clock.
- Good story books if you have a penchant for reading, though you may not find time during the first semester.

Money to be taken with you:

Other than your fee requirements you may have to take \$1000-\$2000 depending upon where you are going (you can get this info from your seniors over there). This you can get from Thomas Cook/American Express and of course any Foreign Exchange banks like SBI, SBH IOB etc. Do these after you buy your ticket.

Documentation:

Carry all documentation safely, and have photocopies to back you up - letter from Univ., mark sheets, etc. (the visa stuff basically). Things to get photocopied: Make three sets of the following copies, keep one set at home and take the remaining two sets with you.

- Visa
- Xth, Inter (10+2), Degree marks sheets, Convocation Certificate of Under graduation.
- I-20 and acceptance letter from the university.
- Take all the I-20's with you if you have more than one.

Important things to do before you leave:

- Give power of attorney (authorization letters) to your father or brother or to someone on whom you rely
- Put your signature on a 10 plane papers, write your name below it, keep these at home, they may need it for any purpose like authorization to collect marks sheets, Provisional certificate, Transfer certificate, Bonafide certificate, Degree certificate, Migration certificate from the university, applying for the refund from the college etc.
- Make all bank accounts joint

Things to be left at home:

- List of addresses/phone numbers at which info about you can be obtained.
- One copy of all your important documents.
- A copy of all relevant parts of medical history files.
- Arrange to collect/redirect mail from your room/hostel.
- Arrange to apply/collect/mail your transcripts (about 10 in number preferable)

A Review & Miscellaneous:

- Get a driving license and an IDP (international Driving Permit)
- Get at least \$750 if you get paid within one month of arriving and at least \$1500 if you get paid after a month and a half of arrival. If you have a very good friend well settled at the place where you are going to, you may take some less cash with you as you can borrow from him and repay later. You'll have several deposits to pay for the first month of stay like gas, telephone, and electricity. You'll have to pay a month's rent as deposit and a month's rent advance (around \$250 per person/month).
- Get your application material if you wish to reactivate your applications at a better place for the next semester/year.

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- Get a set of transcripts in case you apply all over again for a PhD.
- Bachelor's Degree certificate.
- Get 2-3 passport size photographs.
- Get an address/phone number diary.
- Have a set of copies of visa, passport, I-20 in each piece of luggage.
- Depending upon the weather in your area get a folding umbrella.
- Carry Rs.300 - Rs.500/- for airport tax and Rs.600/- for the \$20 you'll get inside the airport.
- Carry medical prescription for all your medicines you bring.
- If you have glasses, get a through eye-check-up before and get 2 extra pairs of glasses.
- Keep passport, visa, I-20, and other admission documents in the handbag you'll carry on your shoulders all the time.
- Confirm your ticket a couple of days prior to the flight directly through the airlines you are flying no matter how reputed your travel agent is.
- Let me repeat this, get a driver's license and an IDP.

IN THE LAST WEEK:

- Call up and find if there is any change of the schedule of the plane (inform the people coming to pick you up of any such change).
- Get ready to face the long journey.
- Bid adieu to all concerned.
- Find out the name of the person who is coming to pick you up at the airport. Remind those people of the flight timings, airline no, your name. Inform all these to your people at home.
- Relax the day before journey, and check all the documents you are taking with you once again.
- Arrange for the conveyance if you don't have a car. You can book with any private transport facility like City cabs.

ON THE DAY OF THE FLIGHT AND ON – BOARD:

- Since it is going to be a long flight wear something comfortable (cotton dress + full sleeves shirt). Wear your shoes - in flight you can remove them (some airlines give in flight shoes - else relax in socks).
- Check all the documents once again and keep them at appropriate places.
- Be at the airport 3-4 hours before the departure.
- Relax during flight, sleep as much as possible.
- For vegetarians - watch out before you eat - you may get non-veg even if you had asked for veg. Veg food is generally bland - fruits/juices are good choices. (Before ordering anything on board check if, you have to pay for it separately). Don't hesitate to ask questions.
- Once out of India be very careful (from sheer experience of seniors). Don't trust anyone. Don't hire a taxi (unless emergency) till you reach your destination. If required don't hesitate to spend money.

ONCE OFF THE PLANE:

You are now in the USA! Once you are out of the plane go straight to the immigration counter - rush for them to beat the queue. It might take 0.5 - 1 hour here. Keep your I-20, passport, admission & aid letters ready. They might ask a few questions like:

- Is this your first time in the US? Student? F-1 Visa? Which Univ.? They will attach an I-94 card to your visa.
- Then go to the baggage counter to fetch your luggage. Pick up a cart (you get this at a machine for \$1) to carry the bags. Then pick up your bags as they come out on the conveyor (suitable eye-catching labels help here) we suggest you tie your baggage with rope of a bright color that is visible from a distance. All this is to make your

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baggage appear distinct. If you don't get your baggage, inform the inquiry section - you may have to wait 0.5 - 1 hour here.

- Cart your baggage to the nearby customs. If asked tell them that you are a student, F-1 visa, school, dept., coming to US for the first time if asked to open your baggage do so slowly - do not mess up the place.
- Carry \$5 bills for hiring a trolley at the US airport since trolleys are not available for free there.

If asked about the "masala powder (podi"s) tell them that they are "dried Indian spices" to make traditional Indian food like curry. Rarely they might ask you to go the agris dept nearby - its a pain. If asked about "vibhuti" tell them that it is a holy Hindu powder.

Note: In most cases, you will not be asked to open your boxes at all & you will be simply waved through.

- Now go & wait at the nearest exit for the guys who are supposed to pick you up. If nobody turns up after some time (say 0.5 hour) make a collect call (at public phone dial a "0", get the operator & ask for a collect call) else call

- o Your Prof
- o Department
- o International Students' Office
- o Admissions Office
- o Any Indian guy in the directory

Go and ask for an announcement to be made over the PA system. Get a card, write your name & hold it up.

- Never leave your baggage unattended. Don't go out of the airport until somebody comes & picks you up. If you have doubts about the guy who comes to pick you up, don't hesitate to ask for his ID. (All this is of course being a little extra cautious). Make sure you are pleasing while you identify his identity. Lest you offend the person who has come to help you.
- Once you reach your friend's house (or your intended destination) call home & inform them of your reaching safely. If you get your hand on Internet, do type few words of your experience and email it.

FIRST FEW THINGS THAT YOU NEED TO DO IN AMERICA:

There are certain primary things to be done on reaching US. They are discussed in this section

- Your first task is to meet the foreign students or the advisors in the International students' office (ISO) or Grad Advisor or administrative secretary. Keep a record of your details (passport, visa details etc). When you leave the US (temporarily or permanently), you have to go there again.
- Meet your prof if you have got an RA or a TA.
- Open a bank account immediately. Ask seniors for a good bank.
- Find an apartment and/or roommates.
- Complete all the official procedures at the school like
 - o Attending the orientation
 - o Getting your student ID
 - o Getting your Social Security Number.
 - o Paying the Fee
 - o Registering for the classes etc..

Generally your seniors or your dept through all these will guide you. So don't worry about that.

A new chapter of your life unfolds here! Work hard to make your dreams come true! I wish you success in all your future endeavors!

ALL THE BEST!!!