

It's almost time for the Spring admits to leave for the US. It's exciting, isn't it? And a little scary as well, leaving all your friends, Indian food, your family, your home... It's a new life! A new adventure! Here are a few things I wish I knew or I wish I brought more of to the US:

Stationery here is illogically expensive. Notebooks cost close to a dollar! Imagine paying Rs. 72 for a 100 page notebook! Imagine paying close to Rs. 100 for a ball pen! A few friends of mine did advise me to bring as much stationery from India as I would need, but I didn't take them that seriously. I hope these prices give you an idea about the ridiculously expensive stationery here.

Check what items your state does not tax. For example, Minnesota does not tax clothes. I find clothes here cheaper than even those on sale back home in India. I hadn't read about this before leaving India, and made the mistake of bringing over a substantial portion of my wardrobe, leaving less space in my luggage for other essential stuff.

If your apartment in the US has an induction coil, do not buy stainless steel pressure cookers. These cookers tend to have the induction plate fixed using a layer of aluminium. After a couple of months of use, the layer of aluminium will melt out of nowhere and you won't have a cooker left to use. This happened to me, and I've heard this from a few others as well. Instead, buy those black anodized pressure cookers. They are manufactured as a single piece, and won't melt on you.

Get ready to work hard. Academics here are really intense, and do require a lot of work. There will be times when you have two midterm exams on the same day and also have your on-campus job to go to. There is no way out, you have to manage your time properly if you want to keep sane. Start working on your time-management skills when you still have time.

Abhinay Pramod Tadwalkar: 4.1 Please keep in mind, PLAGIARISM is very strict. It is not worth the consequences. Only collaborate if professor says its okay to collaborate for homework/assignment. I have seen people getting XF or facing plagiarism case in student conduct council.

4.2 You can also get in trouble for sharing your homework/assignment/project. If you want to share (I don't advise), always send it via email mentioning "For reference purposes only" to be on safer side.

4.3 During reports writing follow referencing instructions accurately. Professor's can file plagiarism case though you may have referenced but is not according to the format of referencing professor asked for.

Abhinay Pramod Tadwalkar: People with touch screen laptops, 2in1 laptops, I recommend using them for notes writing using OneNote. Its is easy to take/manage notes for multiple subjects and easy to find/study when needed.

People who will be buying laptop, try getting the touchscreen 2in1s

Kartik Bhardwaj: People moving to the east coast need to be aware about the harsh weather for the next 4 months. Ensure that you get inner layers / thermal clothing from India or wherever you are coming from. You can purchase jackets/sweatshirts/outer layer clothing in the United States.

Adding to that, look for events by your university student groups. They usually have events where they would pack you in a bus and take you to the nearest shopping outlet where you can buy winter gear. Plus you will also get a lot of discounts this way.

Kartik Bhardwaj: Learn to cook basic stuff. You'll hit your budget for eating out/ordering very soon. Frozen food may come to the rescue but you'll outgrow that too. Good food (read: healthy / nutritious) is expensive in the United States and that makes it doubly imperative to learn cooking simple homely foods.

Indian stores here have a variety of frozen Indian foods like naans, chapatis, parathas... I even found samosas and frozen masala patties. Although you could theoretically survive on frozen food, it isn't recommended. Plus you will get tired of the same old taste. Once you start cooking, a whole new world opens up.

Also, about buying fresh veggies, always look for farmer's markets or chains like Fresh Thyme. I'm not sure if Fresh Thyme exists outside Minnesota. (People from other states, please do confirm) These places offer fresh fruits and veggies and competitive prices. Also, do note that onions aren't as expensive here right now as they're back home, so you could carry home onions and sell them and pay off your education loan or something.

Very Important: Bring an umbrella from India. The cheap umbrellas here are just that - cheap. You get better umbrellas in India much cheaper.

I will keep adding to this list as and when I remember more stuff. If you guys want me to write about anything specific, do let me know in the comments.

Edits: (Collated and added to my original post a lot of useful stuff from the comments)

Also linking to Nalin Venkat Sameera's post. It's got some useful information as well:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/msinusfall2017/permalink/2522217664667885/>