

US visa rules require a valid passport (valid for at least six months beyond your stay), a completed online DS-160 application, and proof of fee payment. Recent policies mandate that applicants for many non-immigrant visas must schedule interviews in their country of citizenship or legal residence and cannot apply for faster appointments in other countries. Passport and visa requirements for entry into the US are ultimately determined by immigration officers at the port of entry, not just the visa itself.

General application requirements

- **Valid passport:** Must be valid for at least six months beyond your intended period of stay.
- **Online application:** Complete and submit the online non-immigrant visa application, Form DS-160.
- **Photograph:** Upload a digital photo when completing the DS-160. A physical copy may be needed if the upload fails.
- **Application fee:** Pay the visa application fee and bring the receipt to your appointment.

Recent policy changes

- **Mandatory in-country interviews:**

You must now schedule your visa interview in the country of your citizenship or legal residency. You can no longer apply for faster appointments in other countries.

- **In-person interviews:**

For many non-immigrant visas, in-person interviews are mandatory for all applicants, including children and the elderly.

- **Passport collection:**

Starting August 2025, you must collect your passport and documents in person from the embassy or consulate. A parent or legal guardian can collect them for applicants under 18.

At the port of entry

- **Visa does not guarantee entry:**

Having a visa does not guarantee entry into the United States. An immigration officer makes the final decision.

- **Officer's review:**

The officer will review your passport, visa, and other documents and may ask questions about your travel and background.

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