

Mountainside Village Apartments in San Bernardino, CA International Students Advice

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Leaving your home for another country can be both exciting and challenging!

You might be challenged and maybe even a little overwhelmed by all that's involved with coming to America for your studies. You'll need to think about things like where you want to live and what University you want to attend. There may be issues surrounding your [VISA](#), taking the [TOEFL](#) exam, or even thinking about what to bring.

We at Mountainside Village want to help alleviate some of your worries with this exciting challenge. We've included information and links to websites on this page to help you as well as various contacts you may need to make the transition from home to the U.S.

Make sure to come back to our site www.MsideVillage.com often as we continually add and update this information.

If you have any other questions about information you may need that is not listed here, please feel free to [email us](#) with your questions and we will be more than happy to help!

TOEFL

Almost all credible schools in the United States require that international students take the TOEFL exam. According to some sources, over 6,000 institutions rely on TOEFL scores as part of their admissions process.

The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) test is a way to measure a person's ability to communicate in English. When coming to study in the United States, It's important that you can understand, read, speak and write in English as you will experience it in a college or university.

Taking the TOEFL Exam

A great place to find information on the TOEFL is the Educational Testing Service: <http://www.ets.org>. Once on that page, select **TOEFL** from the list of tests. This link takes you to the TOEFL page where you'll find information on studying for and taking the exam.

Check for the exams dates EARLY—as soon as you think you want to study in the U.S. Exams are only offered at certain times, and you may have to wait a long time before you can take the test. Even though you might need time to study before you take the exam, register early.

The test is offered in many countries, at either an approved IBT (Internet Based Test) center or through paper based locations. On the TOEFL page, click on “Register for the Test” and you’ll see a drop down list of countries where the test is offered. Once you select your country, you can register online, which is the fastest way to register for the exam. You will also find specific information about where to take the exam.

You must register with exactly the same name and the same spelling of that name that appears on the primary ID you will present at the test center. Do NOT register under any other name or nickname. The ID requirements vary depending on your citizenship and where you are taking the test, but it must be valid (NOT expired) and contain both a signature and photograph. The ID must also be in ENGLISH or you may not be allowed to enter the test without a secondary form of ID. The ETS website has detailed information about this.

If you cannot meet the specified identification requirements or if you have questions about proper identification, you must contact the ETS Office of Testing Integrity (1-609-406-430, fax: 1-609-406-9709, or e-mail: TSReturns@ets.org) before you register. If you do not contact the Office of Testing Integrity before registering and are not admitted to the test, you will forfeit your test fee.

Make sure to keep track of your registration information. Plan to arrive early so that you have time to get to your station and relax. Get plenty of rest the night before your test so your mind is fresh and prepared for the exam.

The [ETS site](#) also has tips and practice exams you can register for to assist you in your preparation for the exam. This is the only website that has practice testing in all four areas covered on the TOEFL exam. It is a good idea to take the timed practice exams, as the TOEFL exam is timed, with specific amounts of time allotted to each area of the exam.

Important Contacts

[VISA](#): Link to the US government website with information pertaining to the different types of Student Visas available for admission to the United States.

[Currency Conversion](#): a link to a universal currency converter.

[Immigration Questions](#): a link to articles which provide additional resources and insight to immigration questions you might have.

[English Grammar](#): this site helps you practice your English grammar.

American Culture

We have listed some popular sites and resources to help you get adjusted to American culture.

- This site lists the top 100 visited websites in the United States:
<http://www.alex.com/topsites/countries/US>
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Student Resources

These sites are good resources for American college students:

- [Rate My Professor](#): This site is great for college students who are planning their class schedule. It features ratings for more than one million professors around the world. Professors are rated by more than 6.8 million students.
 - [BackPack](#): Backpack is the ultimate organizational web app for college students. Backpack allows users to take notes online, create to-do lists, keep schedules online and much more.
 - [Study Hacks](#): Study Hacks is dedicated to 'demystifying student success.' This college blog has become one of the best places on the web to get study advice and academic strategies that actually work.
 - [RefDesk](#): This award-winning site is a great place to find and check facts. RefDesk has an enormous collection of reference materials, searchable databases and other great resources that can't be found anywhere else.
 - [Encyclopedia](#): This site hosts 49 high-quality encyclopedias (Oxford University Press, Britannica, etc.) and 73 dictionaries and thesauruses. Encylclopedia.com users can also search through facts and biographies.
 - [American Fact Finder](#): The American Fact Finder, from the U.S. Census Bureau, is a great place for student researchers to find economic, geographic, population and housing data.
 - [Essay Punch](#): Essay Punch is an interactive online essay writing tutorial. It helps students organize thoughts and improve their essay writing skills.
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Discount Websites for Text Books:

- [Ebay](#)
- [Half.com](#)
- [Amazon.com](#)
- [TextSwap.com](#)
- [BarnesandNoble.com](#)