



## **BEFORE ARRIVAL INFORMATION**

**Indian Students' Association @ Iowa State University**

*Indian Students Association* is glad to welcome you to Iowa State University. We dearly wish that you have a smooth transition and a wonderful time at Iowa State University. We hope this document serves as a good guide for all your initial queries. For further queries contact the *Indian Students Association* (ISA) Committee '16.



New Students Coordinator

**Rakesh Chowdari Maddineni**

[rakeshm@iastate.edu](mailto:rakeshm@iastate.edu)

New Students Coordinator

**Sahana Sai Narain**

[sahanasn@iastate.edu](mailto:sahanasn@iastate.edu)



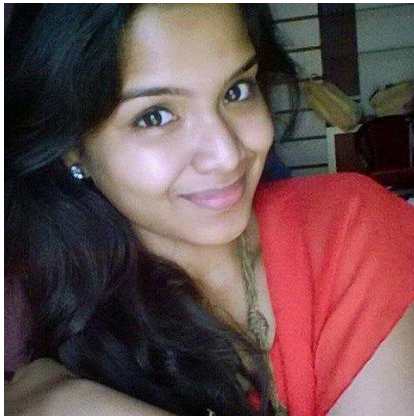
President

**Nitin Janagam**

[nitin@iastate.edu](mailto:nitin@iastate.edu)

Vice-President

**Bhakti Bansode Muthye**  
[banbhaks@gmail.com](mailto:banbhaks@gmail.com)



Secretary

**Prerna Choudhury**  
[prernac@iastate.edu](mailto:prernac@iastate.edu)

Treasurer

**Saniya Shetty**  
[saniyas@iastate.edu](mailto:saniyas@iastate.edu)





Web Developer

**Viraj Muthye**

[vrnuthye@iastate.edu](mailto:vrnuthye@iastate.edu)

Events Coordinator

**Seerat Marwaha**

[seerat25@iastate.edu](mailto:seerat25@iastate.edu)



Events Coordinator

**Mehul Shinde**

[mshinde@iastate.edu](mailto:mshinde@iastate.edu)

## Creative Head

**Sana Shetty**  
[sshetty@iastate.edu](mailto:sshetty@iastate.edu)



## Public Relations Officer

**Suzanna Gudivada**  
[gsuzanna@iastate.edu](mailto:gsuzanna@iastate.edu)



## Public Relations Officer

**Martin Mathew**  
[mcmathew@iastate.edu](mailto:mcmathew@iastate.edu)



## Food Coordinator

**Aditya Chatraband**  
[adityac@iastate.edu](mailto:adityac@iastate.edu)



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**What are the important documents that should be brought to USA?**

**I plan to get my mobile phone from India. Is that advisable?**

**My travel agent mentions “port of entry” all the time. What is it anyway?**

**What is this Immigration Clearance at the port of entry?**

**Now, how do I make a phone call from the airport?**

**Other important notes**

**Textbooks**

**Kitchen and Food**

**General Wear**

**Miscellaneous**

**Assorted Hobbies**

**Stationery**

**Toiletry Articles**

**Medication**

**Money and other related information**

**How many days ahead should I come to ISU before college commences?**

**How do I find or Search for a Roommate?**

**How are part Time Jobs / opportunities at Iowa State University?**

**What are the average monthly Expenses in Ames?**

**On the Day of the Flight**

**Things to be carried in cabin baggage/ luggage**

**Things to be carried with you (pouch/ small bag)**

**Transportation from Des Moines Airport to Ames / University**

**Immediate and Temporary Stay in Ames**

**On-Campus vs Off-Campus Details**

## WHAT ARE THE IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO USA?

---

Below is a consolidated list of things to bring. Remember to maintain your baggage within the weight limits as required by the airlines you travel. Otherwise you may have to pay huge sum after you arrive here (at the port of entry). Usually, the limit is 23 kg (50 pounds to be exact) each, in two suitcases, and 8 kg in a cabin bag. (There are fixed standards for the size of this bag too!) It is always recommended that you should check with the airline authorities to know about particular luggage limitations, since these are frequently changed by several regulations.

**Remember always:** BE CAREFUL with ALL your documents all through your travel. The following documents are quite important for a peaceful stay in the U.S.A:

- Original I-20.
- Original Passport with valid F-1 Visa.
- Demand drafts, Travelers' Checks, and currency. (You can always have your parents do a wire transfer later but it is good to have some money when you land in a foreign country)
- Any sealed documents that the US Consulate gave you.
- Other important documents, such as previous academic records. Vaccination Certificate. Letter of admission/financial aid (if applicable).

You must keep them with you at all times during the flight. Also, make copies of the relevant documents and keep one set at home and one in each of your bags. Carry one set and the originals with you along with essentials including a pair of clothes in your carry-bag in case the luggage is delayed at the airport.

**NOTE:** You might want to leave signed checks at your home in case your parents need to use your Indian account.

## I PLAN TO GET MY MOBILE PHONE FROM INDIA. IS THAT ADVISABLE?

---

Please be informed that not all (non smart phones and non quad band phones) mobile phones from India work here since the operating frequency might not be supported! Also, in the USA, prepaid mobile is a lot expensive, and limited, option, while postpaid plans are generally available with decent and state-of-the-art phones for low cost or for free.

If you have a smart phone, bring it along.

To be eligible for a postpaid mobile connection, which does not need a deposit, you will need to have sufficient credit history. You can get a mobile phone on a senior's or a relative's Social Security Number (SSN) and later transfer the phone when you build your own credit. Another option would be to get a credit card as soon as possible and do all your purchases on it for one month. After you pay your first month bill, you should be able to get a mobile (without any deposit) on your own SSN. You can check whether you need a deposit by trying to order a phone online by filling out all the required details. It will inform you if you need to pay a deposit. If your order is accepted, then you do not need a deposit.

### **MY TRAVEL AGENT MENTIONS “PORT OF ENTRY” ALL THE TIME. WHAT IS IT ANYWAY?**

---

The first place you land at in your destination country (USA) is called the “port of entry”. Here, you check out all your baggage. (You would not need to check your bags anywhere before the port of entry, after you board an outbound flight from India. Your baggage follows you without your intervention, only till the port of entry.) Even if your bags are checked until a later destination, your bags must be claimed in your port of entry without fail. You would face the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration/Customs authorities at the port of entry. You would need to go through some major formalities here, like the customs check of baggage, getting the Form I-20 stamped, getting fingerprinted, etc. You will receive instructions regarding other formalities while in the plane before you reach the port of entry. (**Listen attentively! And, if you do not receive any instructions on how to fill the forms, ask co---passengers and/or the flight attendants.**) You may have to wait at the port of entry for a few hours for your connecting flight to your destination. See that there is a minimum gap of 4---5 hours before your connecting flight from the port of entry, to be on safer side. Formalities at the port of entry consume more time than normal, with many students landing around this time of the year.

Hence, plan properly rather than miss your connecting flight and cause trouble and tension to yourself and others. Remember to carry your baggage all by yourself (not literally, of course) from your port of entry to your final destination. You may have to spend \$1 to \$3 for a cart/trolley (SmartCarte, it is usually branded as) at the port of entry have \$1 currency notes handy. Many people drag the trolleys instead of paying for the carts. If you can, then do.

**Note:** 5\$ in JFK.



## **WHAT IS THIS IMMIGRATION CLEARANCE AT THE PORT OF ENTRY?**

---

The first thing you need to go through at the port of entry, after landing, is the immigration and customs clearance, after which you may board a domestic flight (i.e. within US) to reach your final destination. Before getting down at your port of entry, while you are still in the plane, you will be given one form to fill up – a customs declaration form. On alighting from the plane, you may ask people or follow signs to get to the Immigration Clearance. Keep handy your passport, and the customs clearance form that you filled inside the plane. Generally, you do not have to declare anything. (That is, you write that you are getting dutiable goods of “zero” value; of course, if you are getting any dutiable goods, declare, and if you are not sure, ask someone.) Once you hand over the customs clearance form before reaching the counter for Immigration Clearance, keep your Form I-20 handy, along with your passport. There can be a long queue at the Immigration Clearance counter. If you do not have a lot of time for your next flight, request the people in the queue or the Department of Homeland Security staff at the queues – you may be able to bypass the queue. (If you are a group of people, it is, of course, not fair to ask to let the whole group by pass!) At the counter, present your passport, and Form I-20. The Form shall be duly stamped and returned to you. You might be asked some questions about what things you are bringing, etc. Do not lie. Give factual information to the Immigration Officer. Remember to identify, collect, and check out your baggage at the port of entry.

You might essentially need your Passport, Admission Letter, Form I-20, and Vaccination Certificate (issued by your doctor) when you disembark at the port of entry. Keep them all handy. It is safe to carry by yourself your cash and monetary instruments (drafts, checks, cash etc.)

## **NOW, HOW DO I MAKE A CALL FROM THE AIRPORT?**

---

All airports have public telephones at various locations. You would need money in small change (coins) to make a phone call. If you have currency notes, you can probably get some change in any store in the airport or at counters that sell foreign exchange. Some airports also have wall-mounted machines that give you coins if you deposit currency notes – look around, or ask someone. If you have friends/family in the U.S.A, you may ask them to buy you a calling card for calling within the United States, and ask them for information on using the same to place a call. Remember to get the calling card before you leave India, and carry the details of the calling card with your essential documents (and do not just leave it stored in an email!)

**NOTE:** Make sure that you are in touch with the person at whose place you will have your temporary stay. Send all your travel information and itineraries to them. Sometimes using the calling card is confusing and if you end up reaching the place with no one at home, it will be (with all pun intended) not so much of an awesome start to your stay in Ames. Use the calling card only to touch base with your relatives if you need it in an emergency. Else most seniors will be good enough to allow you to use their cell phones to inform parents/landlords/your relatives (in USA or back in India) in the first few days of your stay.

- **Where to put stuff?**

All your original documents must be in your carry-on luggage in a folder. Photocopies of all original documents must be in each of your check-in bags. Expecting the worst, you should have enough stuff in your carry-on luggage to survive for a day or two if both your checked-in bags get lost during travel or arrive late. Leave sufficient photocopies of all documents especially I-20, passport, VISA page and mark sheets at home. Self-attest them (VERY IMPORTANT).

## **OTHER IMPORTANT NOTES**

---

The following list has been generalized to meet the requirements of students hailing from various geographic locations of India. Specific comments are made as and when necessary. Needless to say, our family can be a good guide for us in such matters as this. Remove the batteries from all your electrical appliances such as calculators, clocks, shavers or you will be forced to do it at the airport.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

---

Textbooks are important and very expensive here.

Don't compromise by leaving your books behind if you know you need them here.

Most students here prefer to borrow books from their school/department library in order to cut down on costs. In the US, many universities also have tie ups with other schools, and you can borrow books from other universities through this system. This is called as an Inter-Library Loan in most places.

Even so, if you feel the need to buy a book for some reason, and are staying with people from the same course/program, buy a book in common. Not recommended, but can be done to save up on costs. That way, if there are 4 books you need, each of you can get 1 or 2 of them and distribute the book load.

Also, you can use the ISU print credit to take the printout of the books available online. Getting 1-2 will definitely help.

You can definitely take it from the library or might get a copy from a senior (get in touch with them) or get “cheap textbooks” (used and paperback copies) online from websites like Amazon (in case you don't get a pdf version online and print it)

## **KITCHEN AND FOOD**

---

In most cases, mothers would be the best judges for this section.

### **IMPORTANT PACKING CAUTION / ADVICE:**

It is strongly advised to pack your food items through a thorough 2 to 3 layers of packing. Tightly sealed boxes (sometimes even these are not allowed) instead of loosely packed zip-lock bags would be preferred. A thorough 2 to 3 layers of packing is advised instead of tightly sealed boxes. This is just to avoid spills in your travel bags and also for airline safety and precautions. This packing can be done in any Sweet shop in your area. Your food items will be discarded without any hesitation by airport authorities if you do not pack your food properly. Sometimes they might even ask you to stop aside and ask you more questions about the food items that you are carrying. Do not worry if your food is discarded. There are quite a few Indian products available here in Ames and in nearby places. Therefore plan for some smart packing that meets the baggage requirements and also something that could provide a smoother maneuvering around through the customs and security-check areas.

a) Pressure cooker (3litres/5litres)

If you have decided about your roommates in advance, plan to get ONLY ONE OR TWO (two being the maximum) pressure cookers for the apartment. Almost all students tend to buy an electric rice cooker in the U.S.A. soon after they land; it is not very expensive, and it proves to be a good and reasonable investment. A pressure pan/cooker which can accommodate an idly stand might be an ideal choice for students who might want to make idlies. Do not forget to get 2-3 spare gaskets and/or safety valves or other wearable/replaceable parts that suit the pressure

cooker you may bring. Microwave usually available in almost all the apartments and also in the residence halls On-Campus.

## Utensils

You can buy a good set of steel/nonstick utensils (that can be used for cooking) in the U.S.A. for a reasonable price. If you prefer to get some utensils from India anyway, get at least some vessels of various sizes – to store and to cook food (1 small/medium kadhai), and (meals) plates (Melanin microwavable eating plates, important --- can buy here also) and tumblers, 2 wooden stirrers, 1 serving ladle, 1 strainer spoon for deep frying, plastic soup bowls, coffee mugs and non-stick pans, tea/coffee filter, etc. If space/weight is a constraint, reduce the number of utensils you carry – you can always buy all these things after settling down in your living spaces.

It would be a good idea to get in touch with your future roommates and decide upon the utensils. Almost everything else is available and it would be a sheer waste of space packing in too many utensils.

### (c) Raw materials for cooking

You get everything mentioned below at the Indian store. If you get these things, you might save some money (things here I guess are expensive than in India). So make a wise decision of how many things to get and what should be the quantity. If you have decided on roommates, you can split things up and each one gets a small quantity of each of these things to suffice until you go for your first grocery shopping. If you have other important things/you are worried about the weight get food sufficient for a week.

(Please note: When it is said “as per preference”, it means that the items enlisted are unavailable except in Indian stores; see the note above.

- i) Do not bring rice, not even in small quantities.
- ii) Sambar/Rasam powder may be brought as per preference, quantities ~1 kg each.
- iii) Tamarind (1~2 kg, preferably seedless) and/or tamarind paste might be necessary.
- iv) Haldi/Turmeric (250 gms), hing/asafetida (20 - 30 gms), etc. might be necessary for at least a few students.

v) Dried curry leaves might be a good choice for some; they do not take up much space or weight. If you are bringing this, make sure the leaves are thoroughly dry before you pack them, as even little wetness can attract fungus. (Coriander can be bought locally!)

vi) Some students may also want to get coriander and cumin powder(s) (available as a mixture of both too), quantities ~1 kg, and cardamom (elaichi), cloves, papads (2 - 3 packets), etc.

vii) Pickle bottles (if you bring this, make sure that the packing is good and leak proof), chutneys, or edible powders and 5 - 6 packets of masalas (Garam Masala, Meat Masalas, whole spices or Khara Masala, Chole Masala - recommended, because chole is cheaply available here and is cooked frequently, Pav Bhaji Masala - recommended, because fast to cook as you can.

viii) Get rava/suji/poha and small packets of salt, sugar and red chilli powder, since they are very useful in the beginning.

ix) As for the vegetarians, the options are limited. You might want to look at the above listed items and plan your travel and the items to bring to the US accordingly.

(d) Make sure you do not carry any knives or peeler in your cabin baggage! Do not bring any electrical appliances as they do not fit in the electric sockets here and do not work at 110 V. If you do then make sure you bring adapter/international converter along for your laptops or phones brought from India. (You might want to use Google to know more about this)

c) You might need deep fry pans or flat pans for your use in the kitchen. (Nonstick cookware is the best choice!). You may buy one after you land here, if you cannot accommodate one in your baggage.

d) Sweets & Savories:

Remember that you cannot really store such fast food for long. Of course, students might still want to get some, and more commonly parents might want to send some! Keep them coming, you would find many thankful souls too. But save your luggage space for something more lasting, say, pickles. And, also be informed that sweets or any foodstuff may be disallowed anywhere on the transit when your bags are scrutinized.

e) Bringing a cook-book will be of help. {Note: you have YouTube too}

f) Most of the spices and lentils (dal) that we use in India are available here at the Indian grocery stores. Lentils have a likely chance of not getting allowed while customs checking.

g) It would be a good idea to bring with you some ready mixes to save cooking time since you will come to know after reaching here that you will be very busy with work almost all the time (eg. Idli, dhoklas, gulab jamun).

h) Don't go overboard in stuffing your bags with food items.

- There is an Asian and Middle-Eastern Grocery Store – PAMMEL in West Ames where one can get most of the products from back home. You can google for further information on other available Indian stores and products in and around Ames.

## GENERAL WEAR

---

a) Iowa in general experiences varying and extreme weather all throughout the year. Dressing according to the weather is the key here. Get clothes that you would feel most comfortable in and clothes that suit summer and winter aptly.

b) It is always a much better option to carry minimal amount of clothes for immediate use and to come to Ames and then do all the shopping as it is better once people actually come here and get to gauge the weather themselves. Students tend to buy more apparel locally over time, for nominal expense at clearance sales and/or discounted prices. Offering a comparison, good leather belts in U.S. cost a minimum of \$10 each!

c) Formals ( business suits/blazers/ties/shoes )for interviews and career fairs.

d) There would be more than a few occasions a year where you might have to represent your culture. Get at least 1-2 pairs of traditional (Indian) dress.

## MISCELLANEOUS

---

a) International debit/credit cards might be carried as a financial backup, but might not be useful for all your purchases and payments.

- American Express card cannot be used to pay fees, though it can be used for other purchases and expenditure.

- Please note that a Visa Electron card (such as “Viswa Yatra’ from State Bank of India) is not regularly usable here, since there is a pay-per-use transaction fee for the same.
- ICICI International travel card is a widely used option these days. It is widely accepted and easy to use. Learn about documents, which will be required by your parents to load money to the international card, from the bank officer in India. This is very helpful.
- The card is a safer way of carrying money; you may use it only once to transfer all the money into your local bank account that you will open after reaching here (ICICI has a tie up with Wells Fargo Bank: Google helps!)

b) Do not bring any electrical appliances because the appliances here run with a different electric socket/plug and at 110 V @ 60 Hz.

c) You may get as many audio/video CDs (of Indian movies or music) for your use. This includes mp3 CDs that you might have burnt on blank CDs. Copyrighted or not, CDs are not generally questioned about (by the U.S. Customs). However, do not declare them unasked, and be informed that you may have to forego the collection if questioned (You may try to convince them that is just a collection of all your “legally owned” music/software.)

Audiocassettes are okay, but videocassettes have a different format in the U.S.A, as you may already know. Headphones/ earphones are good essentials that can be carried along too.

d) Get 2 wallets that have enough pockets to hold credit cards that you have to carry in future.

e)Get a college bag to suit your daily needs. Remember that the bag might have to accommodate bulky books that you may carry from/to library or even large quantities of printed out papers sometimes! College bags cost \$10-\$20 here. A wiser idea might be to get a laptop bag instead, so that it can serve the purpose of a college bag, and it can help you carry a laptop when you might eventually buy one. Make sure that the bag can fit a 15.4” laptop(though you might prefer a 14.1” laptop anyway).

f)You may want to get trivial things like extra buttons for your clothes, needles and threads, safety pins, nail-cutters, scissors, mirror (a classic hanging mirror a small one, about 8” x 4” should do), etc. All these things can be locally bought here as well.

g)Get a couple of bed sheets/ pillow covers. Get slippers to wear around in the house. DON'T get rugs/ thick blankets. You get good blankets (comforters/ rajais) here for reasonable prices.

h)DO NOT carry hangers (they occupy a lot of space and anyway they are available here for almost no cost)

i) Whether you plan to transfer or not, get extra sets of transcripts, letters of recommendation, etc. that you might need if you need to apply to a different school.

j) Please bring all your original certificates of your Bachelors degree (and above). If you have a consolidated marks memorandum, you may not need to bring individual marks memoranda. Similarly, if you have your original degree certificate, you need not bring your provisional degree certificate. You would not really need the certificates prior to your Bachelors degree, but you may want to carry them anyway just so that you do not forget where you put them in India.

k) A photocopy of book is piracy. Get them at your own risk.

l) Copy of address book/telephone book/diary and contact list.

m) Medical history file. This is the most important medical document you should have.

n) **Get at least 2-3 pairs (EVEN MORE) of prescription spectacles** if you use them; as a comparison, prescription glasses cost about \$100 per pair in the U.S.A.

o) Get any portable (literally taken) relics/memoirs that might represent your culture, which can be useful for display on relevant occasions. As mentioned above, stamps and/or currency can be a part of these too. The items can be specific to a remote place in India or to a remote culture, or even common culture or place, of course! Almost anything is welcome, but do plan to get something at all. Statuettes of gods and goddesses, photographs of interesting places to visit, handicrafts, etc. may also be brought for this purpose.

## ASSORTED HOBBIES

---

a) Do not neglect your hobbies; you would regret later when you feel bored, and that is going to happen too often, particularly when the school is not in session!

b) Get any portable (literally as in “able to be carried”) sports/games-related items like chess board and coins (Chess boards and coins may also be bought in the U.S.), swim shorts/swimsuits and swimming goggles (absolutely essential if you want to swim – chlorine in the pool is in higher content than in India) and swimming cap, table-tennis/tennis racquets, etc. Getting a cricket bat and hard/light tennis balls will definitely help. Get in touch with the seniors or other ISU students who stay in Ames over the break especially, they will be able to give you a better idea about this



subject.

- c) For other hobbies like painting or music, bring stuff that you cannot get here easily or inexpensively, which includes the likes of paintbrush set, paints, mixing template, charts etc. or flute, a small violin, etc. Collectors of stamps, coins, currency notes and the likes may want to display some Indian stuff to foreign friends you might soon make here. You may also put the collection to display on more than one occasion a year, when there are international events on the campus.
- d) If you have any certificates pertaining to your hobbies, at least get a few prominent ones; sometimes, they might fetch you some kind of funding in remote places such as the School of Art.

## STATIONERY

---

a) **Get Reynolds pens or any pens** (in bulk quantities, and remember to preserve them!) that you might prefer to use. (Reynolds might be called "The pen that the world prefers" but is not seen much in the U.S.A, unfortunately!) If BiC or PaperMate are your choices, you would, of course, not need to get any, as they are U.S based brands!

b) The punching used for papers (for filing) is of 3 holes here unlike 2 hole punching in India. Thus, avoid getting files and punches, and you can buy the corresponding things here. Of course, you may get zipper folders in which you do not necessarily punch and file your documents.

c) Stapler, staples, glue stick, adhesive tape, bonded/clutch pencils, lead box (0.5 mm), erasers, steel ruler, etc. may be carried or may be bought here for a comparable price.

d) Notebooks would not be necessary to be brought from there, unless you prefer for some reason; they are reasonably priced here. Plain papers for fair/rough work are absolutely unnecessary. You would get them for comparable prices here.

## TOILETRY ARTICLES

---

a) Mugs and buckets are available at WALMART.

b) **Get soapboxes.** Soapboxes are not very uncommon in the stores here, but the soapboxes in the U.S.A. do not generally have drain outlets for remnant water after use!

c) **Tongue cleaners** may be classified among things that are **not available** in the U.S.A. Get about a half a dozen to dozen tongue cleaners, depending on the type/material of tongue cleaners you prefer to use. Do not carry metal tongue cleaners in the cabin baggage – if it is sharp, it can be considered as a “security threat”! (Yes, there were such cases in the past!)

e) Talcum powders and hair oils are among the rare commodities here, unfortunate for some! Get your choicest ones, even if it is the seemingly "most common" Parachute Coconut Oil or Denim Talc. (These will be available at the Indian stores but they are quite often pretty expensive!)

e) One can buy bath soaps, shampoos/conditioners, toothpastes, toothbrushes, shaving foam (or a shaving gel/cream), razor/cartridges, **nail cutter (don't forget this!)**, talcum powder, deodorants/perfumes, etc. here or there. The costs are not very different (Though in most cases, prices for all these might be just a bit cheaper in India even if for U.S based brands!). If you have been loyal to particular brands, you might want to carry a few numbers of each of those for initial use. You may not ever need a detergent cake while you are here, though you might want to carry one. Do not carry detergent powder; liquid detergent is cheaper here!

## MEDICATION

---

**Get general medication that can serve as a makeshift first-aid kit.** The best guide would be a medical shop attendant or a general physician (or a family doctor, of course). A sample list of medication that you might find useful is presented here:

- Crocin/Disprin/Erythrocin/Sporadix/Cosovil/Febrex Plus (fever, and related ailments such as cough, cold, and body---/head---aches),
- Baralgam (abdominal colic pain/backaches),
- Avomin (air sickness),
- Avil (general allergies),
- Eldopar (to prevent loose motions),
- Zandu Balm/Amrutanjan (body---/head---ache),
- Soframycin (superficial wounds),
- Lotomil/Digene/Eno (digestion/gastric trouble),
- Band Aids, nasal inhaler (Vicks),
- Pain relief spray,
- Antiseptic lotion (Dettol),
- Painkiller tablets (Combiflam/Brufen),
- Burn ointment (Burnol),

- B-complex tablets

**(MEDICINES ARE VERY EXPENSIVE HERE. GET ALL YOU NEED WITH A PRESCRIPTION FROM FAMILY DOCTOR)**

## **MONEY AND OTHER RELATED INFORMATION**

---

a) GET TRAVELERS' CHECKS (TRAVELLERS' CHEQUES, TO SOUND MORE "INDIAN", OR TCS) TOTALING TO AROUND \$2000. A SUGGESTED BREAKDOWN IS AS SHOWN BELOW.

$$\$1000 \times 1 = \$1000$$

$$\$500 \times 1 = \$500$$

$$\$100 \times 4 = \$400$$

$$\$50 \times 1 = \$50$$

$$\$20 \times 1 = \$20$$

$$\$10 \times 3 = \$30$$

**NOTE :** You can instead get an International debit card if you are comfortable to manage a single card than so many checks. In which case get some more cash, as there are local places where the card won't work.

b) Get currency of \$1000; you would not need more than this amount initially, before you open a bank account. If you will, you may carry some more money in travelers' checks, which is as good as cash most of the time.

c) Try to get as many \$20's, \$10's and \$5's as you can. They don't take \$100 bills at some places. And lower denominations will help you convert them to quarters (25 cents), dimes (10 cents) and nickels (5 cents) at the airport. It will also be easier to pay at your transit airport (London/Paris/Frankfurt), in case you want to buy some food, or call up your parents using a payphone.

d) If you are carrying more than \$10,000 in all currency and other "monetary instruments", you are required to "declare" it when you land. Do not forget to ask the flight attendants and/or

the Department of Homeland Security about it, if you are carrying amounts larger than \$10,000. There could be similar requirements set forth by the Reserve Bank of India, in order to allow you to carry the same ask your bank about it.

## **HOW MANY DAYS AHEAD SHOULD I COME TO IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY BEFORE COLLEGE COMMENCES?**

---

It is advised for Undergraduate Students to come at least 3-4 days before their reporting date to get used to the Campus, City and the Transportation here. **The Dorms** and other **On-Campus residence** facilities (including **Dining Centers**) open around the same time.

For the Graduate Students, if you are planning to stay On Campus, the same information given above applies. If you are planning to stay off-campus, make sure to get your apartment fixed and ready to move in before you reach Ames or else, you can look into our ISU Desi Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/isudesi/>) for posts on Subleases, Apartment Availabilities and for many other residential options. You can also see the common Craigslist Pages of Ames, for the Apartments (<https://ames.craigslist.org/search/apa>).

The Indian Students Association committee tries to provide possible accommodation for the new students but the accommodation is provided for a **MAXIMUM OF 7 DAYS ONLY before the college begins**. The incoming new / returning students can post on our ISU Desi Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/isudesi/>) for further help regarding other accommodation options.

## **HOW DO I FIND OR SEARCH FOR A ROOMMATE?**

---

Every year, each term (Fall/ Spring/ Summer), Facebook Group will be created (if not, you can create a group and post on Currently present Indian Groups and invite friends to add to the group) by the incoming new students. You can decide your roommates and start searching for your roommates or you can post asking for a roommate or an apartment on our Facebook ISU Desi Page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/isudesi/>) and you can frequently check the posts on this Facebook Page. Every now and the, someone will post about subleasing or asking for a roommate or anything that might be useful to you.

## **HOW ARE PART TIME JOBS/OPPORTUNITIES AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY?**

---

Iowa State University has a plenty of Part time opportunities. Once you come here and get settled, you can start search for part times. You can even search for On Campus employment opportunities on AccessPlus (in the “Student” tab and under “**Student Job Board**” section) after your NetID is activated.

### **WHAT ARE THE AVERAGE MONTHLY EXPENSES IN AMES?**

---

We cannot give you an exact amount of how much your monthly expenses are going to be because it depends entirely on you and many factors like what place you live and what is your apartment rent etc. As an F1 Student VISA holder, every student can work for a Maximum of 20 Hours per week. And as mentioned above, since Iowa State University has a lot of Part Time opportunities, you can easily get through those if you work enough accordingly.

### **ON THE DAY OF THE FLIGHT**

---

- As it is going to be a long flight, wear something comfortable preferably cotton, a full, shirt and trousers. Wear your shoes and a jacket.
- Be at the airport at least 3-4 hours in advance before boarding time.
- Relax during flight, sleep as much as possible.
- For vegetarians, watch out before you eat for you may get non-vegetarian food even if you had asked for vegetarian. Always ask about the food before eating if you are particular.
- If you want something vegetarian, make sure you specify that you want "No Meat". They may not understand if you say "Vegetarian" or "Veggie" or “Veg”.
- Never hesitate to ask questions. People are friendly and helpful.
- But Trust No One. Be wary of strangers who appear to be extra friendly.
- Drink lot of fluids to get over with the jet lag as soon as possible.
- Walk around the aisle every two hours to prevent leg cramps and deep-vein-thrombosis.
- Do not joke irresponsibly on the flight.
- In case your baggage does not arrive when you landed, do not waste too much time hunting for it. Mention it to the airline representative and give them a forwarding address with phone number where you can be reached (Have your New Students’ Coordinator(s) or host’s address and phone numbers/email IDs handy). Airline will take care of your luggage. In any event, do not miss your connecting flight.
- In case your flight landed late, or the onward flight is cancelled, it is the responsibility of your airline to arrange for another flight. If the delay involves an overnight stay, the airline will pay for your stay as well as for your meals.

**NOTE:** Please don't panic if it so happens that your flight arrives late and the time for the connecting flight is too near (say, within the next 10-15 minutes) for you to make it due to Immigration and Customs delays. Simply follow the same actions outlined above and get your airline to arrange things for you. Don't be rude, but be firm while dealing with the airline representatives.

### **THINGS TO BE CARRIED IN CABIN LUGGAGE OR BAGGAGE**

---

- Original I-20, copy of passport, copy of ticket, financial documents (CA certificate, Bank Statements), admission letter, affidavit of sponsor, all college or school mark sheets and related certificates.
- Original documents except (passport, tickets) (see below).
- Address and contact of New Students' Coordinators and host.
- A book for reading, in-flight.
- Portable hard-disk (if required).
- Address book/phone book.
- Copies of your photo (passport size).
- One complete set of clothes, in case you need to change.
- In your cabin baggage, keep clothing for 2-3 days, just in case your checked-in baggage arrives here later than you do.
- Have your name and destination and route and flight and date in all bags. Have them prominent and bold enough so that you can identify them easily from an ocean of similar ones. Some even put fluorescent labels, ribbons.
- Do not get too many clothes hangers (you might get a couple for starters, but they are of a different size here, and are available very cheap).
- Do not overload your baggage with blank notebooks, file folders etc.

### **THINGS TO BE CARRIED WITH YOU (POUCH/ SMALL BAG)**

---

- All your money, change, travelers' checks, international debit card(s) etc.
- Original passport.
- Original boarding pass.
- Few Re 1 coins to make calls from the airport (India) in case you are not using any phone.

**NOTE:** Some Indian currency sufficient to go back home from the airport if you plan to surprise your family when you go back home for the first time.

## **TRANSPORTATION FROM DES MOINES AIRPORT TO IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY / AMES**

---

Executive Express is a Shuttle service that attends particularly to the Students of Iowa State University. Visit their page for more information (<https://www.executiveexpress.biz/reservations>). There are many other options like Uber, Jefferson (<https://www.jeffersonlines.com/>) etc but Executive Express is considered to be a safer and easy option.

## **IMMEDIATE AND TEMPORARY STAY IN AMES**

---

There are several Hotels/ Motels in Ames and near the Campus for quick and immediate stay. The Memorial Union in Iowa State University has a hotel but one is advised to make prior bookings before landing in Ames because vacancies are not always assured. Please Google for further details about other options for stay.

## **ON CAMPUS VS OFF CAMPUS DETAILS**

---

<b>Factor</b>	<b>On-Campus</b>	<b>Off-Campus</b>
<b>Cost</b>	Check this link for different OnCampus housing Options <a href="http://www.housing.iastate.edu/places/aps">http://www.housing.iastate.edu/places/aps</a> Usually UG students stay OnCampus atleast for the 1st year of College	Comparitively, less expensive. (One can google for many OffCampus housings). However, this depends on where you stay. Please check the Posts on our "ISU Desi" Facebook page where you can find many people looking to sublease their current Apartments or people looking for roommates. People usually post vacant housing on

		Ames Craigslist page ( <a href="https://ames.craigslist.org/search/apa">https://ames.craigslist.org/search/apa</a> )
<b>Transportation</b>	CyRide provides public transportation to the community throughout the city of Ames. It is free for Students and charged for anyone else. Many buses run frequently in and around Ames from different On Campus locations. Check the Following link for more information on timings. <a href="http://www.cyride.com/">http://www.cyride.com/</a>	CyRide provides public transportation to the community throughout the city of Ames. It is free for ISU Students. Check the Following link for more information. <a href="http://www.cyride.com/">http://www.cyride.com/</a>
<b>Night Transportation</b>	If you are stuck On Campus due to any reason after 12:00 in the night and if you do not have any transportation to your Residence Hall or any Building On Campus, University provides "Safety Escort: Your night-light, every night" (Operates from 6:00 PM till 6:00 AM) which is basically a transportation service from any building/ residence hall (OnCampus) to anywhere OnCampus. Check the Following link for more information <a href="http://www.parking.iastate.edu/escort">http://www.parking.iastate.edu/escort</a>	Many Buses stop running after 12:00 AM almost in all the routes. Please make sure you check the Schedule frequently to not miss the last bus. Check the Following link for more information on Bus schedules etc. <a href="http://www.cyride.com/">http://www.cyride.com/</a>
<b>Security</b>	On-campus housing is more secure than off-campus housing in most universities in the US. However as a whole, Ames is a very safe place to live in. Things like safety escorts make on-campus housing typically a lot safer.	It depends on the area you are staying at. However, as a whole Ames is a very safe city to live in
<b>Food and Grocery options</b>	Dining centers are available near all On Campus Residence Halls. Various Dining Meal Plan options are also available for the on campus residents living in the dorms. Lincoln Way/Welch Avenue near campus has many other options if one chooses to not go for the dining plans(usually for people residing in the on campus apartments). For different Grocery Options,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indian Grocery Store PAMMEL &amp; HyVee Supermarket in West Ames</li> <li>• Walmart &amp; Target &amp; HyVee Supermarket in South Ames</li> <li>• Walmart in North Ames</li> <li>• Many Indian restaurants around Ames and near campus.</li> </ul>
<b>Gas, Rent, Electricity etc</b>	On-campus housing service requests are REALLY quick and efficient.	Talk to people living in that housing area about how responsive the Building managers are to fix a housing service problem like a broken light etc.