Packing Guidelines

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Luggage

Pack lightly! Keep in mind that you will be carrying your luggage through subways, hoisting it into buses, and walking several blocks with it. Your stuff needs to fit into small compartments on trains filled with people and into very small apartments without impacting the daily life of your host family. You are responsible for knowing luggage limits for each airline and paying any fees associated with your luggage. Remember you will also carry your study documents, some communal items, and everything you accumulate along the journey, so arrive with some empty space in your bag.

You'll want to have a bag that is easy to handle, waterproof (or at least water-resistant) and durable.

If carrying prescription medications, you should carry a letter from your doctor to prevent any concerns at customs or in transit. (Please see the “General Health Tips” section in the Health and Safety pre-departure document). Please check the current requirements of the Transportation Security Administration (http://www.tsa.gov) as well as those of the airline on which you are flying for domestic and international baggage restrictions. You are responsible for your own possessions, including properly tagging and checking luggage and retrieving any items lost in transit.

Clothing Guidelines

Be sure to research what kind of weather to expect in each of the cities you visit, as well as local clothing customs. www.bbc.co.uk/weather has some great country guides. You will be traveling in both urban and rural areas, and will need to dress accordingly in order to avoid offending anyone. This means: no torn, dirty or even well-worn clothing (seen as disrespectful), and no hats worn indoors. Semi-formal, professional dress will be required for high-profile organizations, but one or two nice outfits should suffice. There won’t be many dry cleaners and clothes washing won’t have options like “delicate” or “permanent press”. Clothes may be washed by hand and will typically be hung out to dry. This means you will benefit from bringing items that are durable and won’t take more than an afternoon (day at most) to dry.

Computers and Other Electronics

IHP Health and Community programs modified its technology policy from discouraging (yet allowing) students from bringing technology such as laptops, netbooks, tablets, and e-readers to encouraging and integrating such resources into academic activities where appropriate. The decision to do so is in response to student and faculty requests made
during previous programs as well as our own sense of the pedagogical, economical and environmental advantages of this shift.

When considering how you will use your computer or other electronic device on IHP, though, remember:

• Computers (like cell phones) are frequent targets of theft and may get stolen. Keep them safe.
• Computers can break and are frequently more difficult and expensive to repair abroad. Invest in reliable equipment and take care of it. Faculty and coordinators cannot be expected to help students with computer repair or replacement and use of your computer equipment is at your own risk.
• Computers can detract from the experience of studying abroad (just as they can detract from your experience at home). The more time students spend with computers, the less time they spend exploring the communities and connecting with homestay families, which are the most memorable aspects of students’ experience. Be thoughtful about the quality and quantity of your use of computers.
• In general, computers are not allowed in the classroom (faculty sessions, guest lectures, presentations, etc.).
• Wireless internet is often not available, including in homestays. Be prepared for much less consistent and much slower access to the internet.
• Assignments will not require any online research or resources. Assignments are based largely on primary research in the field and assigned articles.
• For students needing more technology resources, internet cafes are easy to find, inexpensive, and can provide word processing, internet access, Skype, printing, and online photo-uploading capabilities.

Any technological devices or electronics that you choose to bring are your personal property and responsibility. It is recommended that you insure it. SIT is not responsible for any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country, theft, or loss.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage, and electrical adapters: Electric Power Around The World - HDP Power

Do not bring other personal valuables – such as cameras, iPods, or recording devices—unless you are willing to guard them or to lose them. Items such as audio devices and cameras are usually safe at host family homes, but you may wish to consider how such items will be protected on field trips, on weekends, and in hostels.

Don’t forget your adapters or you’ll fry your electronics!

Gifts
As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with gifts to offer your homestay families in gratitude for their hospitality and as a means to share a part of your culture with them. We suggest one or two gifts that the whole family can enjoy; you do not need a gift for each member. You may also wish to consider gifts for people outside your homestay family. Try to choose gifts that represent you or the part of the country and/or community you live in. Think about what your city, state, or local artisans produce. Draw upon your personal interests or hobbies for ideas. Pack a couple of small gifts for children, such as small games, bubbles, or a Frisbee. Even if your homestay family does not have small children, chances are that you will engage with children in your homestay community. Once you are on the program and learn more about the local cultures, you will discover other ways to thank your family, and you can pick up gifts for host families in the next country along the way. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

What You Can and Cannot Obtain in Country
You will be able to obtain much of what you need while traveling. However, specific products may not always be found in each country, and it can be difficult to procure items during rural homestays. If there is something you absolutely cannot live without, it’s a good idea to make sure you pack it.

If you take prescription medications, make sure to obtain enough for the duration of your program.
before leaving your home country. It can be
difficult or even impossible to obtain specific
medications in other countries.

If you have further questions, please contact your
admissions counselor and/or ask an alumni mentor:
http://studyabroad.sit.edu/pn/admitted-
students/contact-a-former-student/

These packing guidelines are based on suggestions
from past students and your academic director.
The clothing you bring may be adapted to your
own style, within cultural norms of acceptable
dress.

**Suggested Packing List**

**Clothing**
- 7 T-shirts or modest tank tops
- 3 long-sleeved shirts (varying degrees of warmth)
- 2 warm sweaters, sweatshirts, or fleeces for layering
- Light, packable rain jacket
- 3 pairs of pants (that are easy to wash and air dry)
- 1 pair of non jeans and nice shirt for men
- 1 pair of athletic shorts/pants
- 2-3 pairs of long shorts, skirts, or dresses (covering your knees)
- 14 pairs of underwear
- 8 pairs of socks
- Shower shoes
- Comfortable, durable sandals; also consider dressier flat shoes or sandals
- Sneakers or lightweight, comfortable multi-purpose shoes that are suitable for hiking
- Hat or cap (for sun)
- Scarf or bandana
- Bathing suit
- Belt
- Pajamas
- 1 pair thermal leggings/long underwear and shirt
- For men: a nice shirt and tie
- For women: a modest dress or skirt/top combo
- Fleece or light-weight jacket that you can layer over other tops as necessary

**Personal Hygiene Products**
You will be able to buy and/or restock many of these supplies while you travel. Only bring small amounts to keep your luggage a manageable size.
- Toothbrush, toothpaste, floss
- Shampoo, conditioner, soap
- Deodorant
- Quick-dry bath towel & washcloth/bandana
- Razor, shaving cream
- Hairbands, headbands, barrettes
- Sunblock
- Skin moisturizer
- Mosquito repellent
- Chapstick with SPF
- Comb or brush
- Nail clippers
- Contact lenses and solution, extra pair of glasses

**Medicines (Optional)**
These items can be purchased as needed along the way. Students may want to coordinate buying some of these items to share once they meet at the program launch. Not everyone needs to carry a fully-stocked individual first aid kit but it can be nice to have a few things on-hand just in case.
- Imodium or other loperamide, painkillers, Band-Aids, motion sickness remedy, digestive aids, Q-tips, anti-bacterial hand sanitizer gel, hydrocortisone cream, antibacterial cream, aloe or burn cream, multi-vitamins, cold medicine, decongestant, allergy medicine, re-hydration powder

**Miscellaneous**
- Passport, visas, medical documents, and 1-2 photocopies of each, stored separately from the originals
- Second form of government issues picture ID such as a Driver’s License
- Re-usable water bottle
- Ziploc bags, plastic bags or compression sacks
- Sleep sack (i.e. a sheet sewn at seams to make lightweight sack). This is not required, but may be of good use at a hostel or on retreats/weekends
- Money belt or small necktie bag to carry valuable documents
• Journal
• FAA-approved locks for your luggage
• Sunglasses with UV protection
• Hard case for glasses so they don’t get crushed
• Safety pins, rubber bands, paper clips, stapler and/or duct tape
• Travel alarm clock or watch with alarm
• Pocket knife (keep in checked luggage)
• Small flashlight or head lamp
• Camera, extra memory or film, flash drive for backups
• MP3 player
• Electrical adaptors
• Batteries/charger for electronics
• Pens/pencils, notebook
• One or two books to read and then share
• Photos of your home, family, and friends (consider bringing extra photos to give away)
• Gifts for host family in first country (unique items from your hometown work great)
• List of addresses of friends and family

• Travel pillow (or a pillowcase to hold a sweater for long plane and bus rides)
• Travel mug and coffee filter
• A4 Tyvek or plastic envelopes to keep papers organized
• Clipboard
• Sewing kit
• Small Tupperware
• Stain stick
• Small backpack or purse for day or overnight use
• Lock for your luggage
• Thank you cards for your host families
• USB memory stick
• International cell phone (such as one that can be purchased via STA Travel)

* Remember to place all valuable items and prescriptions in your carry-on luggage while traveling and all sharp items in your checked luggage.
Luggage Guide for IHP Programs

One of the most exciting aspects of IHP is the experience you will gain traveling both from one country to the next, and within the countries of your program. Packing lightly and staying organized throughout your program will make your experience less stressful and more convenient. Below we have outlined different types of luggage that previous students have found useful. We hope that this short guide helps you to think about what to bring and how to best carry it. Please note that we do not expect students to purchase new luggage for IHP – we do, however, want to encourage light and convenient packing!

If you do find yourself in need of new luggage, you can check local thrift stores, or sites such as Craigslist. (Do note, however, that previously-used luggage must still be durable to last the duration of your IHP travels!) You may also be able to check the “returned items” section that is often in the back of EMS (Eastern Mountain Sports) or REI stores. Students can also obtain discounts at both of these stores.

Description: A large rolling bag
Advantages:
- Lots of room to pack and organize your clothes and supplies
- Adjustable straps enable you to increase/decrease its size
- Durable wheels should be able to travel over dirt roads, etc.
- Easy on the back
- Convenient – bring along this bag for the majority of your belongings, and a smaller carry-on with a day’s work of items (ie: wallet, folder, sweater, etc.)
Carry this with:
- A day pack, and/or a purse or every-day bag

Disadvantages:
- If, at the launch, you choose to send home items you no longer need, you’ll still be left with a big suitcase (in other words, you cannot dramatically decrease your load).
- Sometimes, the bag itself can weigh a lot!
- There will be times when you need to carry this up stairs
- It may take up a lot of space in a shared room
- Can take up a lot of space in a taxi, shared bus, or small car

Description: An expandable, mini camping backpack

Advantages:
- Can be used as a day-pack, or to carry 3 – 4 days’ worth of clothing (which may be helpful during a rural stay, or during your vacation)
- Loops and traps allow you to clip-on additional carry-sacks or shoes
- Distributes weight and supplies more evenly, so you’re not carrying everything in one large bag
- Top part of the pack may unstrap, allowing you to use it as a waist-pack.

Carry this with:
- A medium sized rolling bag and a small purse or day-bag.

Disadvantages:
- May be a bit bulkier than a regular backpack
Description: A medium to large sized camping backpack (approximately 70 Liters)

Advantages:
- Easy to carry in any situation (ie: up stairs, up hills, on dirt paths, etc.)
- Easy to quickly fill and/or stuff clothing items, etc. into
- Loops and straps makes it easy to adjust size and/or attach additional stuff sacks, shoes, etc. to the outside
- Allows for hands-free movement throughout airports, etc.
- Top portion may unstrap for an additional waist-pack

Carry this with:
- A day-pack or small purse that can be worn on the front of the body

Disadvantages:
- Can be heavy on the back for those who have back conditions
- May be more challenging to stay organized (try using stuff sacks and/or compression sacks)
- Loose straps should be tied up when checking bag
Description: A packable, compressible duffel bag

Advantages:
- Packs into a larger bag
- Is a good option for students bringing less in the beginning of the trip, with an expectation to acquire clothes or gifts along the way

Carry this with:
- Pack this compressible duffel into your larger bag, and use it toward the end of the trip for additional space

Disadvantages:
- Beware of too much luggage!
- Some airlines allow only a single checked bag and others have strict weight limits. It is the student’s responsibility to know what the requirements are and to stay within them. This option is a good one, however, if a student intends to bring home gifts, and/or is willing to pay an extra fee should he or she incur cost for added weight.