

COUNTRY

OVERVIEW



& PACKING

GUIDELINES

**Jordan: Geopolitics, International Relations, and
the Future of the Middle East**

Fall 2021

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COUNTRY OVERVIEW

PLEASE NOTE THAT DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE BASED ON SHIFTING CONDITIONS IN THE US AND JORDAN.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small country (population: 10.1 million) with few natural resources, but it has played a pivotal role in the struggle for power in the Middle East. Jordan's significance results partly from its strategic location at the crossroads of what most Christians, Jews, and Muslims call the Holy Land. The desert kingdom emerged out of the post-World War I division of the Middle East by Britain and France. The population at that time was made up largely of Bedouin tribesmen, known as East Bank Jordanians, who were followers of King Hussein's grandfather, Abdullah, himself originally from Arabia. Today, a significant portion of the population of Jordan is of Palestinian origin—that is, from areas west of the River Jordan, including the West Bank, today's Israel, and Gaza. With the exception of persons from Gaza, the vast majority of those persons of Palestinian origin have Jordanian citizenship.

The country's long-time ruler was King Hussein (1953-99). A pragmatic leader, he successfully navigated competing pressures from the major powers (US, USSR, and UK), various Arab states, Israel, and a large internal Palestinian population, despite several wars and coup attempts. In 1989 he reinstated parliamentary elections and gradual political liberalization; in 1994 he signed a peace treaty with Israel. His son, King Abdullah II, assumed the throne following his father's death in February 1999. Since then, he has consolidated his power and undertaken an aggressive economic reform program. Jordan acceded to the World Trade Organization in 2000 and began to participate in the European Free Trade Association in 2001. After a two-year delay, parliamentary and municipal elections took place in the summer of 2003.

Unlike many of the states in the region, Jordan has no oil of its own. Its resources are limited to phosphates and agricultural produce. The economy depends largely on services, tourism, and foreign aid, for which the US is the main provider. Jordan prides itself on its health service, one of the best in the region.

Arabs comprise 98% of the population of Jordan, with the remaining 2% being Circassian and Armenian. As such, Arabic is the official and predominant language in the country with English widely understood among upper and middle classes. Jordanian society is characterized by religious tolerance, where Sunni Muslims represent 94% of the population and the other 6% are Christian.



CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

Jordan is a relatively small country situated at the junction of the Levantine and Arabian areas of the Middle East. The country is bordered on the north by Syria, to the east by Iraq, and by Saudi Arabia on the east and south. To the west are Israel and the occupied West Bank, while Jordan's only outlet to the sea, the Gulf of Aqaba, is to the south. Jordan occupies an area of approximately 96,188 square kilometers including the Dead Sea, making it similar in size to Maine or Portugal. However, Jordan's diverse terrain and landscapes belie its actual size, demonstrating a variety in landscape usually found only in large countries.

Western Jordan has essentially a Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers. However, about 75% of the country can be described as having a desert climate with less than 200 mm of rain annually. Jordan can be divided into three main geographic and climatic areas: the Jordan Valley, the Mountain Heights Plateau, and the eastern desert, or Badia region.

Jordan is a very sunny country with average daily sunshine hours ranging from as much as twelve to thirteen hours a day in summer. Although summer temperatures are high in the desert, the heat is usually moderated by low humidity and a stiff breeze during the day, and the nights are cool and pleasant.

Amman, Jordan: AVERAGE HIGH/LOW TEMPERATURES (°F)					
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	
54/39	56/40	60/43	73/49	85/57	
SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC		
88/62	81/57	70/50	59/42		

LOCAL CUSTOMS

Greetings:

In Jordan, shaking hands is the common greeting between men and women. However, men should wait for an Arab woman to offer her hand and women should similarly wait for an Arab man to offer his hand. Many women prefer to avoid touching a man they do not know well. Many men avoid touching a woman at all if she is not related to them, and in that case they may gesture by holding their hand toward their chests. People stand up when greeting each other. People usually say *Alhamdulillah* to respond to "How are you?" (*Alhamdulillah* means "Thank God") even if they are not well. It's a religious concept, which reveals the idea of thanking God.

Living with Family:

In many households, people take off their shoes when entering, so we recommend that you bring slip-on shoes or sandals.

Eating food:

If you are invited for a meal, everybody may eat from a common plate (this may be less common due

to Covid-19 however); take the food immediately opposite to you only. Somebody will continue offering you food; eat what you can. It is very important to accept Arabic coffee when it is offered to the guest by Jordanians, as it is a cultural symbol of hospitality and should be accepted as an act of goodwill.

DIET

Special Diets:

SIT Study Abroad provides experiential learning opportunities where students become embedded in their host community. As such, we strive to accommodate serious food allergies where possible, but simply cannot ensure that all dietary restrictions or non-medically mandated diets can be accommodated.

Students are encouraged to participate in the local food culture as a central aspect of daily life. By trying to replicate your diet at home you may miss out on an important part of your host culture. Due to the unique living and learning community central to all SIT programs, we cannot separate food and eating communally (including with your host family) from the program experience. Please consider local diet seriously when selecting your program of choice. Your admissions counselor is a great resource in better understanding the local diet.

As in most cultures, food and rituals surrounding shared meals is quite central in Jordan. Families generally eat a good breakfast (this often includes fresh-baked bread, hummus, cheese, olives, and *zeit wa za'tar* (olive oil and thyme), a heavy late lunch around 3 pm (variably this includes cooked lamb, chicken, rice, and a variety of vegetables), and a lighter dinner late at night (similar to breakfast, sometimes containing leftovers from lunch). Like all Arabs, Jordanians think of food sharing as a bonding experience, and so the guests are always pressed over and over to eat more, a situation that makes many students uncomfortable (tip: eat at a slower pace than you usually do, and when full, say *alhamdu-li-lah*, and thank your host every time he/she presses you to eat more).

Vegetarian or vegan diets are rarely followed in Jordan, but people are becoming increasingly aware of the choice, especially in the cities. Luckily, the fact that Levantine food is rich in vegetable-only dishes (such as *fuul*, *hummus*, *tabbouleh*, and *falafel*) makes it easier for Jordanian families and restaurants to accommodate vegetarian or vegan diets. Kosher meats are not available in Jordan, though other foods that fit into Jewish dietary requirements are easily found. If you have inflexible dietary requirements, please let your admissions counselor know as soon as possible so that we might try to find a homestay that can accommodate your needs. If this is not possible, you can discuss other program options that might better meet your needs with your admissions counselor.

Note: if you have special dietary needs, including allergies, please inform our office prior to the start of your program. We will advise you on realistic expectations about avoiding or incorporating certain foods within the program context.

SAFETY, SECURITY, AND HEALTH

Maintaining good health is critical to having a successful semester. To help you do that, we have provided [Health Guidelines and Requirements](#) for your program.

It is very important that you read the Health Guidelines and Requirements document as early as possible and examine it with your medical provider. The guidelines include recommended immunizations; a suggested calendar for immunizations and other prophylaxes; and valuable information on how to avoid exposure to common carriers of disease.

SIT will require COVID-19 vaccination for all U.S. students. Recognizing that not all international students will have access to vaccines by Fall 2021, SIT asks that international students who wish to travel in and who do not have access to a vaccine apply for an accommodation by emailing your admissions counselor.

The Health Guidelines and Requirements will also provide recommendations related to preventing the



contraction and spread of COVID-19. Students will be provided with COVID-19 related information and requirements prior to your travel in order to provide you with the most up-to-date information. General information about SIT's response to COVID-19 can be found on our webpage here: <https://studyabroad.sit.edu/health-safety-and-well-being/risk-management/sit-health-and-safety-update-in-response-to-covid-19/>

Students are thoroughly briefed on safety considerations during in-country orientation and are updated throughout the semester if and when circumstances change. For information regarding safety and security, emergency communications, SIT policies, health and medical insurance, and general program tips, please read the [Safety, Security, and Health](#) document and [Student Handbook](#).

Jordan continues to be a relatively safe and stable country. There is a deeply ingrained culture of hospitality, and you will find that most people treat you graciously and respectfully even when you might disagree on a particular issue. Political hostility, if ever encountered, is usually directed at "the government" (Jordanian as well as the US) in the abstract, and almost never at individuals.

Overall Jordan is a conservative Muslim and family-centered society with strong tribal traditions. Jordanians emphasize conformity and are not very tolerant of openly non-traditional lifestyles or activities that do not fit into their strictly defined male/female gender roles. The society continues to be conservative even as it experiences some rapid change, especially in Amman. This change, however, is happening more at a consumerist level than at the level of social and cultural values,

attitudes, and norms. It is important that you come prepared to respect local cultural traditions, some of which are probably different from what you are used to in the US.

Unfortunately, females could experience, occasionally, unwanted attention and harassment from males on the street, especially if they are not dressed conservatively. Female students will be advised on how to avoid or handle such situations during orientation, but much will come down to female's willingness to abide by local standards of dress and behavior. In short, dressing modestly—covering the arms and knees—will make you feel more comfortable in public. Because of host culture norms, female students may find that host families will closely monitor and/or limit their activities outside the house, especially after dark. This can be disconcerting for many students, so be sure you are ready to make some lifestyle changes before coming. In Jordan, both males and females are expected to be clean and modest: good grooming is a sign of respect for yourself and your hosts. People do read what is written on your T-shirt, even if it is in English, so use your judgment as to the cultural sensitivity of these messages.

Always remember to plan your evening outing in group or with at least one of your friends. Women are advised not to be alone during evenings and nights. Always notify your academic director of any travel plan outside of Amman with family to discuss the feasibility and safety of these plans due to Covid-19. Independent student travel is not allowed during the spring 21 semester. Avoid swimming in ponds and deep seas. Jumping in water from high cliffs is strictly prohibited.

Homestay families are key to the safety and well-being of our students, and they take this responsibility very seriously. Students may rightly feel that their independence is more limited than they are accustomed to on their US college campus. You will be expected to keep your host family informed of your schedule, whereabouts, and changes in plans both because this helps your family support your safety and because such behavior is the cultural norm. The family is the center of life in Jordan, so the whole-hearted embrace our homestay families give to SIT students

ensures they get the truest and safest Jordanian experience.

Jordan has some of the Middle East region's best hospitals and physicians. Many wealthy Arabs travel from nearby countries to receive health care in Jordan. Most doctors are Western-trained and fluent in English. Medical care in Jordan is inexpensive by US standards, though we recommend you bring a credit—**not** debit—card with you in case you are faced with medical costs, as you will have to pay up-front (see insurance information above for more information on medical expenses).

Jordan's national response to HIV/AIDS is characterized by strong political commitment to addressing HIV. One of Jordan's preventative measures is to reduce the spread of the disease by utilizing the country's admission and visa process. As a result, in order to attain temporary residency, the government requires that all guests are tested for HIV and hepatitis in the Ministry of Health Laboratories. If a person tests positive for HIV, he/she will be removed from Jordan. In an effort to deal with this sensitive regulation, if you are diagnosed with HIV prior to participation, please contact your admissions counselor for a confidential conversation to discuss alternate opportunities.



HOMESTAYS

As many SIT Study Abroad alumni will tell you, the homestay experience can be one of the most rewarding and most challenging aspects of the program. We hope you will come prepared for the experience and committed to moving beyond

cultural immersion as you begin to question, distinguish, and analyze the host culture vis-à-vis your own culture and come to a deeper understanding of both.

Family structures vary in every culture. SIT Study Abroad values the diversity of homestay families, and your family may include a single mother of two small children or a large extended family with many people coming and going all the time. Additionally, please bear in mind that, in many countries, the idea of what constitutes a “home” may be different from what you expect. You will need to be prepared to adapt to a new life with a new diet, a new schedule, new people, and new priorities and expectations.

Each program’s homestay coordinator will be responsible for placing students in homestays. These placements are made first based on health concerns, including any allergies or dietary needs, to the extent possible. **Please note: in order to ensure the best fit for students and families, SIT may make final adjustments to homestay placements after student arrival in country. Therefore, SIT will not provide information about your homestay family before you depart for the program.**

In Jordan, you will be staying in a homestay for the duration of your time in Amman. Most homestay families in Amman are middle class and enjoy very high standards of living.

OTHER ACCOMMODATIONS

During excursions, the group generally stays in 3-star hotels.

TRANSPORTATION

Most people in Jordan travel by private car, so the fact that you, as SIT students, will be unable to drive will make life slightly more difficult in this car culture (but it will certainly be safer for you, as Jordan is well-known for its aggressive drivers). Taxis are available throughout the city for reasonable rates, and SIT will include a transportation stipend in your weekly stipend to cover your travel to and from SIT headquarters. During our excursions, the program will take buses.

COMMUNICATION

While you may want to be in regular communication with friends and family from home during the term abroad, please bear in mind that different time



zones, unreliable phone lines, and changing program activities can complicate communication.

It’s important to be clear with family and friends about your availability during the term. Many students recommend making an appointment to call home or to receive a call. You should also consider the impact of constant communication with friends and family at home on your cultural immersion.

PHONES AND E-MAIL

As part of SIT’s commitment to student safety and security, all students are required to have a working smart phone capable of making and receiving both local and international calls throughout the duration of the program. For that purpose students are

required to either (a) bring an open, unlocked smart phone from the U.S. to the program that is able to accept a local SIM card, and is compatible with and usable at the program location, (b) work with the academic director within the first week upon arrival in country to purchase a smart phone locally, or (c) bring a dual SIM smart phone. DO NOT purchase an international plan unless you have a dual SIM phone. We discourage this for regular smart phones because your homestay family will not be able to communicate with you as they would have to call internationally.

During orientation, with assistance from SIT Study Abroad staff, students will learn how to use their smart phone, how to purchase and use an appropriate local SIM card, and how to acquire minutes for calls and texting. SIT Study Abroad requires that each student have a local number for communication with the homestay family and program staff.

While we recognize that alternative communication methods can be free or cheaper than cell service i.e. Facetime, Skype, WhatsApp, etc. those programs alone do not satisfy our need for regular communication with the local program staff and partners, nor do they meet our emergency communication needs. Therefore, local cellular capacity on each student's phone is required for the duration of the program. Students are required to maintain a minimum amount of phone credits at all times for emergency calls. Full compliance with this policy is expected.

Mobile phones are an essential feature of social and cultural life in Jordan, and rates are relatively inexpensive. Your AD will take you during the first day of orientation to the offices of Zain, Orange, or Umniah, major carriers in Jordan, to purchase your local smart phone or local sim card. The initial cost ranges from 40-50 JD (approximately US \$60-75), for a local smart phone and there is no need to sign a long-term service agreement. Local sim cards cost approximately 11 JD (US \$15.50), and for 7 JD (US \$10) per month you will get 1000 minutes and 3GB of internet. Keeping your phone adequately full of credit will cost approximately US \$40 per semester.

You can use your phone as much or little as you like, adding minutes to your account by purchasing "scratch cards" from any mobile phone store in the country—and there seem to be thousands! It doesn't cost you anything to receive calls, even from overseas, which makes a mobile phone the most convenient way for loved ones to stay in touch with you during your stay. Remember, Jordan's time zone is +2 GMT while the Eastern US is -5 GMT.

The SIT program center provides internet access during posted hours. SIT Jordan has ADSL service with wireless for its offices, and students can use the wireless between and after classes but not during class sessions. If your laptop is capable of connecting to wireless networks, then you will be able to access the Internet there. Internet cafes are widely available, with rates averaging US \$ 1.50 per hour. You can also buy an internet USB where you can use the internet anywhere; this will cost about \$40 per month.

MAILINGS

Unlike receiving a package here in the US, receiving a package at your program site is usually **expensive** and **problematic**. Customs agents must inspect all packages and you, as the recipient, are responsible for duty and storage fees. In addition, there are cases of items being lost in the mail or taking so long to reach the recipient that the recipient is nearly back in the US by the time the items are received. For these reasons, sending packages should be done only for emergency situations. Additionally, sending valuables is highly discouraged.

For this program, **DHL and FedEx services are available in country**. Despite cheaper prices, reliance on the US Postal Service is not advised due to delays and unreliability. When given the option, it's always a good idea to send packages certified and with a tracking number that allows the sender to track the package.

Posted letters and packages should be sent to the following address:

Student Name

c/o Dr. Raed Al Tabini

60 Damascus St., Abdoun
P.O. Box 840062
Amman 11181, Jordan

The delivery services listed above sometimes require a phone number to mail a package internationally. Please use the student's cell phone number.

MONEY

In addition to tuition, SIT Study Abroad program fees cover room and board throughout the program. When room and/or board are not taken with the group, students will be given a stipend to cover related expenses. SIT will cover daily commuting costs, if any, and excursions that are part of the normal program itinerary. **Any domestic travel, interpretation services, or supplies necessary for the ISP are the students' responsibility.** Please plan accordingly.

The currency in Jordan is the Jordanian Dinar (1JD=1.41USD). Each *dinar* has 100 piasters (Arabic: *girsh*, plural: *groosh*). The dinar comes in notes of 5, 10, 20, and 50 JD. The easiest way to get money in Jordan is with a bank debit card. ATM machines are widely available. This method also has the advantage of giving you the wholesale exchange rate, which is slightly better than the retail rate that you'll get at currency exchange shops. Credit cards are used often in Amman, so a Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit card can be used to make purchases around town, but mostly at the malls and major retailers.

Traveler's checks can be used, but with a good deal more hassle since not everyone will accept them and most currency exchange shops will also deduct a commission. However, you may want to bring a small amount for emergencies. Though theft is generally not a problem here, you should still be careful with your money. Be sure to bring a lock for your luggage or a small lockbox for your cash and valuables, in order not to be inconvenienced should small fingers find their way into your wallet.

If using a debit and/or credit card, you should contact your bank and/or credit card companies regarding your travel plans. If you don't inform these

companies that you will be away, they will often assume the card has been lost or stolen and will put an immediate hold on the card. You should also check on costs of withdrawal, as these costs vary and can sometimes be very expensive. Renewing and receiving reissued credit and debit cards while on the program will be an expensive and highly inconvenient process. Before you leave for your program, please check the expiration dates on your cards to ensure that they will not expire while you are abroad. It is also very important that you make photocopies of all your debit/credit card information and leave them with someone you trust in case your card(s) is/are lost or stolen.

Following are suggestions for spending money during the program, including estimates for textbooks, ISP-related expenses, medical expenses, personal spending, and gifts. Figures are based on recent student evaluations, though individual spending habits vary widely and **these costs are averages.**

To determine where you might fall in this range, please examine your spending habits during a typical semester at your home school and consider any exceptional expenditures you may have on the program, including travel costs for your planned ISP or a specific personal expense.

Check current exchange rates:

<http://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>

Please budget approximately:

Personal spending: (from past student suggestions)	\$1,000
Books, printing, supplies:	\$200 – 300
Up-front medical costs: (any medical costs will get reimbursed)	\$200
COVID-19 Entry Test(s) (may be required for entry; subject to change and costs may vary)	\$100-250
Visa:	\$60
Possible ISP travel costs:	\$300
Cell phone:	\$80 – \$100

Estimated total:

\$1,440 – 2,250

VISITORS AND FREE TIME

SIT strongly discourages and will not provide support for any visitors to students during the term, due to the rigorous nature of the program and the disruption that such visits cause in program flow and group dynamics. Students should be sure that relatives and friends are aware of this policy and that visits are scheduled for dates after the formal conclusion of the program. Students will not be excused from program components to attend to visitors. See the Attendance and Participation section of the [Student Handbook](#).

Please note that any visitors during the course of the program must plan their own independent accommodations; SIT Study Abroad homestay families can accommodate only their assigned student and, due to cultural and contractual understandings with SIT, should not be asked to host students' guests.

During the program, students follow an intense schedule of classes and field-based learning assignments, even during the ISP. Free time for pursuing an independent interest or hobby during the program will be limited. Your admissions counselor can advise you about particular interests you may have. For example, if you must keep in shape for your next athletic season, or if you play a musical instrument and want to know whether to bring it, we can help you to understand your schedule and any concerns or limitations that may exist. Please note that you will not have a long break during the program, such as Thanksgiving or Spring Break.

Because of the COVID-19 Global Pandemic, SIT has suspended independent travel for all Fall 2021 Programs. SIT defines "independent travel" as travel that is independently organized by a student(s) and is unrelated to program activities; and involves an overnight stay.

Further details regarding the independent travel policy can be found in the [Student Handbook](#) and in the [Conditions of Participation](#), which you signed.



PACKING GUIDELINES

LUGGAGE

Please pack lightly and include only necessary items. You should be able to carry all your luggage significant distances on your own. Try to minimize both the number of bags and weight of your bag(s) since you will likely be acquiring more belongings while abroad.

Most students find that a large internal frame backpack and a smaller daypack/duffel are the most convenient choice of luggage. However, you should also have a smaller bag to use for carrying your books and personal items. You will find that you can store your larger piece of luggage at your homestay during the semester.

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 [Safety, Security, and Health](#) 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.

CLOTHING GUIDELINES

For the warmer season (April to October), you need wash-and-wear summer clothes. During the cooler season (November – March), it can get very cold, especially in the evenings. It will feel much colder than the temperature would suggest, especially inland or in the mountains. Bring warm, comfortable clothes you can wear at home during this season. Plan to dress in layers—as it gets warmer or colder, you can simply eliminate or add layers.

Jordanians dress more formally than Americans, and there are cultural rules concerning dress, especially for women. It is better to dress conservatively rather than not conservatively enough. Long-sleeved blouses and shirts and skirts

that fall below the knee are appropriate; pants are also common attire for Jordanian women. Long sweaters for women are usually helpful; people tend to choose darker colors for the winter. Clothes should not be tight or see-through. (No mini-skirts, tank tops, or short shorts.) Jordan is extremely formal, so bring one dressy outfit. Amman is very sunny most of the year, so bring a hat, sunglasses, and sunscreen. Don't forget a heavy sweater and a bathing suit (you may feel more comfortable if you forego the bikini).

Come prepared with clothing that is culturally appropriate yet will keep you cool. Also, take note of the fact that homestay families will likely not have air conditioning.

Note: Body piercing is a big taboo—nose, eyebrow, tongue, or other piercings bring strange looks, and it is not a common cultural practice in Jordan. However, our homestay families are open minded and tolerant especially to foreigners. Just be aware people may be curious or stare.

EQUIPMENT

No extra equipment is necessary, everything will be taken care of by your host families. Mosquitoes are not a problem in Jordan, so there is no need to bring a mosquito net.

COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS

It is **strongly recommended** that you bring a laptop computer. If you bring a laptop, the computer will be your personal property and responsibility. SIT does not provide personal property insurance and it is recommended that you insure your computer or other valuables for full coverage. For details on SIT's insurance, please see the full Description of Coverage on our [Student Insurance](#). SIT is not responsible for any duty tax you may have to pay when you enter the country, theft, or loss.

Computers are not readily available to students on this program, and computer rental is almost non-existent. If you already have a laptop, it is useful to

bring it with you. You should also think about having insurance in case of theft or loss. There are cyber cafés in Amman, which have word processing facilities. If you expect to use these, you should budget about US\$100 specifically to cover this expense.

We have two computers that can be used by students, but you will have to minimize your working time on them if there is another student waiting. You need to know that all assignments should be typed.

Please see the following website for information about electricity, voltage and electrical adapters. .

With regard to electricity, adaptors, and electrical plugs, you will only need a plug adapter, as all laptop chargers work with 220 voltages. Do not bring any electrical appliances without voltage converters and two-prong adapters. The electric current is 220 volts. Outlets in Jordan use plug types C, F, and G.

A digital camera or an iPod might add to your enjoyment of your experience in Jordan. Usually, audio or video recording of your research interviews are not recommended. Jordanian culture does not accept this easily. However, in some cases, it can be possible. If you are planning on recording, bring a small recording device with you. (Your academic director will explain this to you during the Research Methods and Ethics course).

GIFTS

As you might imagine, it is best to be prepared with a gift to offer your homestay family 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 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 culture, you will discover other ways to thank your family. Remember to bring pictures of your friends and family to share.

WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT OBTAIN IN COUNTRY

Bring enough deodorant, toothpaste, tampons, etc. for the first two weeks or so. US toiletries are readily available. After the first week, students will move in with their host families, and family members will wash or help the students wash their clothes.

ALUMNI CONTACTS

If you have further questions, please contact your admissions counselor and/or [Contact a Former Student](#).

Don't miss the Packing List on the next page!

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.



PACKING LIST

GENERAL

Avoid any clothes that have bad words or inappropriate drawings, especially those that are religiously and politically sensitive.

- 1 nice outfit (conservative dress/skirt, nice shirt/neat pants)
- 1-2 pair casual but neat pants
- 1 pair nice pants
- 1-2 pair jeans
- Long-sleeve cotton shirts or blouses and a few T-shirts
- 2 light sweaters
- Exercise/sports clothes (optional, depending on your interests)
- Swimsuit
- Underwear (one- to two-week supply)
- Socks (one-week supply)
- Hat and sunglasses (the desert sun will be bright)
- A warm winter coat (Amman's hilly location brings sharp winds during cold winters-and even the occasional snow)
- 1 pair comfortable everyday shoes that are fairly dressy and good for walking. Your shoes should be sturdy. Bring an extra pair if you have large feet, because larger sizes are difficult or impossible to find.
- 1 pair sandals for outdoors (Teva or Chacos are great)
- 1 pair sneakers and/or 1 pair light hiking boots
- 1 pair of house slippers
- Scarf (large enough to cover hair: for visiting mosques, churches, and other holy places)
- 2 long cotton skirts

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS

- Passport
- Proof of COVID-19 Vaccine
-
- Yellow WHO Card (if you have one) or list of vaccinations (see the [Health Guidelines and Requirements](#) document for more information)

- 2 photocopies of your passport stored separately from your actual passport
- 2 passport photos (in case your passport is lost or stolen)

HEALTH/TOILETRIES

- Extra pair of glasses or contacts, if needed
- Contact cleaning/soaking liquid, if needed
- Sunscreen (expensive in Jordan)
- Adequate supply of prescription medication (including birth control pills) and vitamins, if needed

To prevent the contraction and spread of COVID-19 students should come prepared with:

- At least 3 reusable masks* and gloves for personal protection (disposable masks will also be available)
- Hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol for use when soap and water is not readily available
- Anti-bacterial wipes or solution to wipe down high-touch surfaces, especially while traveling from the US

*Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others. Masks help reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19 both by close contact and by airborne transmission. Masks must have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric. Do not wear masks intended for healthcare workers (e.g. N95 respirators) or face shields alone (evaluation of the effectiveness of face shields is ongoing but is unknown at this time).

OTHER IMPORTANT ITEMS

- Money belt
- Small tape or digital recorder (optional for field work interviews)
- School supplies, notebook, journal, pens (to get you started during orientation)
- Book bag or small backpack for school use
- Small bath towel
- Small flashlight
- Homestay gifts
- Photos of friends/family from home to share with homestay family

- Water bottle (dehydration is an important health concern in the desert)

