

Homestay accommodation

Our homestay families reflect the diversity of life in the United States. They include young, senior and single parent families and couples with and without children. Hosts have varying ethnic backgrounds and different interests and lifestyles. Please refer to the United States of America homestay accommodation factfile for more details.

Your life in a homestay

Living in a homestay will allow you to practice your English in a real-life setting. It is important to remember that you are both part of a family and a guest at the same time. You may have to help with household chores, keep your bedroom tidy and make your bed each morning. Make sure that you always ask for permission to bring friends round and remember to ask before you change channels on the television!

Meals

Breakfast: Breakfast is usually a light meal consisting of cereal, fruit, toast, juice or coffee. Often these foods will be made available to you and you will prepare your own morning meal.

Lunch: You will be responsible for purchasing your own lunch at the school, a local restaurant or from the local stores.

Dinner: Dinner may be a shared meal in the evening, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host.

What to bring

You can purchase toiletries and other personal effects locally, but if you have specific items that you need, you should bring them with you. Your host will provide you with bed linen and towels. If you have any prescription medications that you are required to take, you should bring a supply with you.

Telephone use

You should purchase a phone card or use your mobile phone to make long distance telephone calls. Your host's telephone should only be used for local and incoming calls. Remember to notify your family of any time differences to avoid calls in the middle of the night. It is often very expensive to make international calls from a home line, which is why we recommend using a phone card. Students are asked to limit their calls to 20 minutes, as they are sharing the line with the entire family.

Laundry facilities

Laundry facilities will depend on your selected homestay option. If your family does not do your washing please take it to a laundromat to wash and dry - please do not wash clothes in the bathroom or dry them in your bedroom or cupboards. The average cost per load of washing in an American laundromat is USD 5.

Getting to and from school

Your host will help you to find your way to and from school on your first day and will show you how to use public transport. Journey time will depend on the location of your homestay but most families are a 5 - 60 minute journey by bus from the school. Explore several options when considering transport to school such as trains, buses or even bike riding.

Smoking

When you book your accommodation, please request a family that allows smoking if you smoke. Most hosts will ask smokers to smoke outside. Always ask your host family upon arrival for their specific house rules regarding smoking. It is general courtesy to ask someone for permission to smoke next to them, even if you are outside.

■ Things to remember.....

- You are a guest as well as part of the family.
- You may have to take part in family chores
- Purchase a phone card for international calls
- Do not hang your laundry to dry in your room
- Ask permission to have a friend come visit you
- Notify your family if you are not coming home for the night
- Ask permission to smoke

NB: For information about residence accommodation, please request the appropriate residence factfile