

Shopping List

Here is a list of things that might help you in packing - it is by no means a complete and comprehensive list. Do bring whatever else you feel necessary. The list was prepared based on what most graduate students have brought with them in the past, but it varies quite a bit from person to person.

Clothes :

Usually clothes are machine washed once every two weeks hence two weeks supply of clothes is needed. Get all clothes little loose - clothes may shrink in machine wash or you might probably grow fat.

Shirts and T-shirts 10-15
Jeans/trousers 3-5
Light Jacket for fall
A few sweaters/pullovers/cardigans
A few pairs of formal clothing
A suit (for job interviews and functions)
Undergarments enough for 2-3 weeks
Sneakers/casual footwear 2-3 pairs (get extra shoelaces)
Pair of formal footwear
Slippers
Bed related clothing

Don't worry yourself if you can't bring any of the items listed above most of them are available pretty cheap in the US (made in China). Exceptions are leather goods, formal wear. You will need to buy a heavy winter jacket and snowboots here. You might probably like to buy them once you come here. More or less it is advisable to buy the woolen stuff here. Almost everything is made in China, so don't depend on finding good clothing here. High quality clothing is very expensive.

Books :

Books are very expensive here. A general text book will cost \$60-\$100. Get all the basic textbooks for the courses in your department. Check the courses in your departmental website for the prescribed text books. You might want to check the professors web pages for the recent textbooks used in their courses. You can contact seniors from your department.

Cookware :

A five litre cooker ,extra gaskets and safety valves and a plate are enough. Non stick cookware is available here which is well suited for the electric stoves here and is not expensive. Instead of carrying kgs of vessels get useful textbooks!
All Indian groceries, pickles and other food stuff MUST be sealed completely else they may be removed by the US customs.

Things to put in HandBag

I-20 (keep at least two photocopies)
Passport
Degree and other certificates
All university related correspondence
Toothpaste, toothbrush, soap, comb, cosmetic, shaving material
Reading material (may not be needed)
A change of clothing (in case your luggage arrives late)
Walkman and cassettes or CD players and CD (if you want)
Medicines you might need (headache, stomach, fever, etc)
Address book with names/numbers/addresses of contacts here.
Also note down your I-20 and passport numbers Traveler. s checks serial numbers, etc.
Make several photocopies of your important documents and keep them in separate bags. Keep two copies in your handbag. Get as many transcripts as you can. Make sure your travel-related documents (I-20, passport) are on you all the time.

Travel

Before Leaving :

When buying a ticket to US, try to arrive in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (known as "Philly" to the locals). If your travel agency books you to New York or some other city, then try to get a connecting flight to Philly. **Beware!** - make sure you are not booked to a flight to Newark, New Jersey, which is about 2.5 hours drive from here! Remember, Newark, Delaware does not have an airport.

Please contact someone from the university and inform them of your travel plans. We have provided a list of students who have volunteered to help you adjust to the new life here on arrival. Feel free to contact them with any questions or concerns you might have. If someone in US contacts us on your behalf make sure that they tell us your full name, the program you are joining (e.g. M.S. in chemical engg., etc.) and your expected date and port of arrival. We also need to be informed of ALL the flights you will be taking in addition to your final time of arrival in Philly. This is so in the case of a delay, we know where you are!

Make sure that your tickets are confirmed well in advance - the last thing you. d want is to be rushing around at the last hour trying to get your tickets confirmed. We will attempt to send you the names of other students who are coming from your city or from nearby in case you. d want to travel together.

Money - When you arrive at the airport, you may need to give some tip to the people carrying your luggage or for the busses; so carry around \$50 of \$1 or \$5 dollar bills with you. Unless people ask for money, don't give money to people. They will ask for it. Nobody accepts bills greater than \$50 here, so don. t carry any \$100 bills and if you do, don't show it to anyone. Try to use \$1 bills. Do not carry all your money with you. Either use a credit card (VISA or Master Card) or use traveler. s check. There a few Indian Banks, but they are mostly at large cities and you may not reach them for a long time. Traveler. s checks are accepted at almost every local bank. In case you use a credit card, there will be a small amount (between \$1.00 to \$3.00) of charge every time you use your credit at the ATM machines. And be warned that every time you withdraw money from ATM machines, you will be charged an extra amount for cash advance. Consult your bank about this amount.

In Transit :

As it is going to be a long flight try to wear most cofortable clothing. Always keep attentive at the airports and check for the flight delays, change in departure terminals etc. Drink lots of fluids (beer ??). They help you to get over the jetlag. Sleep as much as possible in the flight.

Though it is not common, your luggage may get delayed or misplaced in transit. Make sure you keep your passport, money, and ticket on yourself - a money belt is the most common way to do this. Keep a few items of clothing in your handbag in case you need to spend a few days without your suitcases. Carry photocopies of your passport and university related documents in your handbag.

Should you miss a connecting flight, keep in mind that you can speak to the airline staff at the ticketing counter and be put on the next available flight. Do not hesitate to ask people authorized to provide assistance at any stage of your travel.

In the flight arriving to Philadelphia, you will be given two forms-immigration form and a customs declaration form. The Immigration form (I-94) asks for your name, passport number, visa number etc. The customs form asks for the agriculture products that you are carrying along with you. Fill them during the journey. Ask the attendants for any help. When you arrive at the airport you will go through the immigration check. The immigration officials are pleasant. They will ask a few questions like "is this your first time ? What is your university ? etc. Keep cool and relaxed. They will stamp the I-94 form and pin it to the passport. You must keep this I-94 all through your stay in US. Now go to the baggage claim and pick up your luggage. Sometimes the customs staff may ask to open the bags. Nothing to worry. Mostly you will not be asked.

Upon Arriving :

We will make every effort to see that you are picked up at the Philly airport. If you have already contacted someone to pick you up then things should be fine. Note that Philly is about 30-40 min from Newark and traffic jams might delay things further - especially if you are arriving around 4:00pm which is the rush hour. So your ride may be a bit delayed but don't worry. Simply wait outside the terminal under the sign of your airline or near the information desk inside if it's dark. You can also try calling us from the airport (for which you will need 35 cents) - keep in mind that it will be a long distance call.

In the event you arrive without contacting anyone for a ride, you can take an airport shuttle. Delaware Express Shuttle and Super Shuttle can take you to Newark for around \$30. Delaware Express Shuttle is quite easy to pick up. When you arrive at the Philadelphia airport, you will go through the immunization process and then go to claim your baggage. After claiming the baggage you can find a "Ground Transport Counter" just opposite to the exit from "baggage claim". Go to the counter and ask about the "Delaware Express Shuttle". If you have not already made a reservation, you can make it at the counter and wait for the shuttle van. Ask the shuttle driver to take you to any of the addresses of the seniors that you have already contacted. If you have not contacted any seniors you can use the below given addresses and telephone numbers. These people will be very much willing to help you.

Addresses :

Sreedhar ---- 607 Lehigh Road , #B-4 ParkPlace apartments, Newark , DE -19711

Naveen ---- 606 Lehigh Rd , #V-1 Parkplace apartments, Newark, DE - 19711

Girish ---- 606 Lehigh Rd , #V-8 Parkplace apartments, Newark, DE - 19711

Telephone :

Naveen ----- (302) 983 -4101

SreeRam ----- (302) 377 -5435

Remember to dial 1 before phone numbers if you are calling from another state or country. If you are calling from India, dial 0-0-1 before the phone numbers. A local call is 35 cents. You will need a 25 cent and a 10 cent coin. Long distance calls (e.g. from Philly to Newark) depends on the talking time. Before you insert coins into the telephone machine, dial the number and the operator will tell you the amount you need. Don't worry if you put too much coins into the machine, it will give them back. If you need coins, there are usually machines that also give you coins for dollar bills.

Finances :

The expenses for a student with and without an assistantship (TA,RA,GA) are as follows:

Type of Fee	Assistants (\$)	Non-Assistants (\$)
Tuition	00.00	6,930.00
Student Health Fee	155.00	155.00
Student Center Fee	52.00	52.00
Health Insurance	165.00	360.00
TOTAL	372.00	7,302.00

Living expenses are same for everyone. The startup expenditure is quite high. The typical expenditure is here.

Type of Expenditure	Amount in Dollars
Housing (with initial deposit)	400-550
Groceries	50-100
Home Appliances (microwave etc.)	50-100
Telephone (machine and connection)	40-50
Books	50-150
Electricity (deposit)	50

The monthly expenditure will be roughly \$500 ± \$100 depending upon the telephone, electricity bills and other expenditures.

Get \$1200 - \$1500 in traveler's checks (American Express and Thomas Cook are widely accepted), \$300 - \$400 in cash (not in \$100 bills). At least \$2 in quarters (25 cents coins) or get dollar bills (\$1 etc). This amount will be useful for the startup

If you are not funded from the university, make sure you bring sufficient funds from home. Contact your department or the graduate students office to ascertain how much you will need to bring along. Payment in installments is possible. There are four installments of \$1800/installment. Non-funded students are not supposed to work off campus - application for on campus jobs (or assistantships) can be made later after you get here. Funded students get their first paychecks around mid September so bring about \$1000-\$1500 to see you through that time. If you are required to attend the English Language Institute course, you will get paid for the month of July

Housing

Both on-campus and off-campus housing options are available. But on-campus housing has lots of demand and mostly not available unless you apply 3-4 months in advance. Most graduate students rent apartments off-campus and there are several complexes within 10-15 minutes walking distance which is ideal for new students. One bedroom apartment rents are around \$550-\$600 and two bedroom ones are around \$650-\$700. Most new students share rooms with other people, in which case your rent becomes around \$200-\$300. If you would like us to book an apartment for you let us know well in advance - if you have some people who have agreed to stay with you, that's even better. You can contact the other new incoming graduate students and make arrangements to share an apartment. Also check the classifieds for people looking for apartments. Try to arrive in Newark around a week or so before the orientation. That will give you enough time to overcome the jetlag and look for an apartment and roommate.

On-campus Housing	Off-campus Housing
Conover Apartments	Park Place Apartments
College Towne Apartments	Towne Court Apartments
Graduate House	Pinebrook Apartments

Miscellaneous

Medical :

We strongly suggest that you go for a comprehensive eye and dental examination. The university health insurance policy does not cover these. A typical eye exam is about \$75 and a pair of spectacles is \$200. Dental problems are even more expensive to correct - anywhere in excess of \$500! So we repeat, please take care of any eye/teeth problems before leaving India. If you wear glasses or contact lenses, ensure you carry an extra pair and the prescription.

Bring your immunization records if possible. The university requires incoming students to take TB (Mantoux) test as well, so please try to get that done in India.

If you are on prescription medicines/drugs, carry sufficient supply to last at least a few weeks. Bring your doctors' prescription in case the customs officials ask for it or you need fresh supply here. Also bring some basic drugs for Headache, fever, body pains etc.

Cooking and Groceries:

Unless you aren't too particular about what you eat, invest some time in learning basic cooking skills before leaving home. Dining out can be expensive.

There is an Indian Grocery store a few miles away where you can find rice, dal, spices and flour. For vegetables and other things we generally go to Pathmark. There is a university shuttle in the evenings to go for shopping.

Weather:

Newark is pretty moderate by US standards. Summers (June-August) are hot and humid with temperatures around 35C. We get a reasonable amount of snow in winter (December-March) and it can get as cold as -15C. Spring and autumn are the best times of the year.

Driving :

If you are a good driver get an International Driving Permit which is valid here for one year and makes it easy to get a US license. If you can't drive you may better take driving lessons before coming here. Driving lessons are costly in US (you can as well buy a car with the amount you spend for lessons).
