

PEPPERDINE



Arrival Guide

Helpful Tips for New International Students

ARRIVAL GUIDE

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PEPPERDINE | Office of International Student Services



WELCOME to Pepperdine! We are thrilled that you will be joining our Pepperdine family, representing well over 75 nations around the world. We are a team of individuals representing all campuses and multiple offices committed to enhancing the international student experience and helping with your transition to the United States. This *International Student Arrival Guide* is meant to help you prepare for your educational journey, but please know that countless community members are also preparing for and here to assist you upon your arrival.

Pepperdine is known for our warm community, which stems from our Christian heritage and commitment to the highest standards of academic excellence. As you grow and learn here, we trust you will also share your unique background, thoughts, and experiences with us, while finding a true sense of home here. We have so much to learn from you as well.

Please don't hesitate to ask if you need any guidance. It is our pleasure and our expertise! Once again, welcome to the United States and to the Pepperdine family!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brooke A. Cutler". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

Table of Contents

1. Visas and Travel Help
2. Airport, Airport Transportation and Hotels
3. Housing
4. Food
5. Health and Safety
6. Daily Transportation
7. University Policies
8. Student Services and Facilities
9. Bank Account and Credit Card
10. Mobile Phone and Internet
11. Pepperdine ID / Access Card
12. Social Customs

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

Pepperdine University Overview

Introduction to Pepperdine University

- Locations of [Pepperdine Campuses](#) - Pepperdine University's main campus is located in Malibu, California. Additional Pepperdine campuses are located around the Los Angeles, Orange County, and San Francisco areas for select degree programs.
- [Printable Map](#) and [Interactive Map](#) of Pepperdine Main Campus in Malibu.

1. Visas and Travel Help

Free Expert Advice

- [Education USA](#) can offer you free expert advice at an [advising center located in your country!](#)
- **International Student Visa** - The Pepperdine University [Office of International Student Services](#) (OISS) assists you with obtaining and maintaining your student visa and immigration status.
 - [Visa Information](#)
 - [Undergraduate Students](#)
 - [Graduate Students](#)
- **Travel Assistance** - For your airplane tickets and travel arrangements, students have recommended some of the following services.
 - [StudentUniverse](#)
 - [STA Travel](#)

2. Airport, Airport Transportation and Hotels

[Los Angeles International Airport \(LAX\)](#) - LAX airport is recommended for your arrival to attend school at Pepperdine.

- **Immigration** - Students with F-1 visas should also have their Form I-20 ready to give to the officer. ***Do not use a B1/B2 visa or ESTA (Visa Waiver Program) to enter the U.S. to study.***
- **Secondary Immigration Inspection** - Secondary inspection is not common, but in the event that you are detained for secondary inspection, answer questions truthfully and patiently. If you are an F-1 visa holder and the officer wishes to contact your Designated School Official (DSO), his/her name is on your I-20, and the phone number during office hours is (310) 506-4246. The after-hours emergency phone number is (310) 506-4442.
- **Customs** - Go through the "Nothing to Declare" exit if you have no goods to declare (per your Customs Declaration Form).

[Airport Transportation](#) - Shared Ride Vans and Ride Share Services (Uber and Lyft) are often recommended by students as the best transportation from the airport to the Pepperdine campus or to

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

other destinations. Rental cars are recommended if you are familiar with driving in the USA. Free hotel buses are available if you plan to stay at a hotel near the airport after arrival.

- **Arriving at the Malibu Campus** - Tell the Public Safety officer in the guard booth that you are a new student arriving for check-in and/or orientation, and you will be directed where to park or where your driver should drop you off. You will NOT be allowed to check in before your approved arrival date.
- **Student Visa Holders** - Upon your arrival, you must log in to the [International Student Portal](#) (with your Wavenet credentials) and complete the Mandatory Arrival Report (MAR) under the “Orientation” menu.

Hotels - If you need a hotel upon arrival to the U.S., we recommend you reserve a room several days or weeks in advance:

- [Hotels near the airport](#)
- [Hotels near the Malibu Campus](#)
- [Villa Graziadio Executive Center](#) accommodation on campus

3. Housing

On-Campus - Pepperdine offers housing for both undergraduate and graduate students on the Malibu campus.

- [Housing On Campus](#)
- [Packing List](#)
- To help you prepare for life on campus, students suggest ordering supplies online from [Bed, Bath & Beyond](#) or [Target](#) for in-store pick up or delivery to campus so that your package is waiting in the mailroom upon your arrival. Note mailroom hours [here](#). If you are shipping your items and arriving outside of these hours, be sure to pack essentials in your luggage.

Meal Plans - [Meal Plans](#) are available to all students for meals at the cafeterias on the main campus in Malibu and can be purchased by emailing housing@pepperdine.edu at any time.

Off-Campus - Local housing options are available to students who choose to live away from the campus community. Nearby communities including Calabasas, Woodland Hills, Agoura Hills, and Santa Monica. The least expensive housing in proximity to campus is in Woodland Hills and communities to the East of Woodland Hills. Students who attend the West Los Angeles, Irvine, or other campuses find plentiful housing options in communities nearby.

- Los Angeles is famous for heavy traffic and this should be considered when you select a place to live. Free traffic App predictors such as [Waze](#) are popular to navigate around traffic and to plan your route to school.
- Off-campus housing resources:
 - [Housing Listings](#)
 - [Rentspree](#)
 - [Apartment Search](#)
- [CORT](#) provides furniture rental packages, housewares and housing information for students living off-campus. Orders can be placed [online](#).

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

Policy Reminders

- **No Smoking** - Pepperdine cares for the health of the campus community, so smoking is not allowed on campus. A Smoking Cessation program is provided to students free-of-charge through the Student Health Center to help students who wish to stop smoking or vaping.
- **No Alcohol or Drugs** - Pepperdine fosters an alcohol and drug free environment to support a healthy campus. Alcohol, marijuana, and illicit drugs are prohibited on campus.

4. Food

Cafeterias - Several cafeterias are available at the Malibu campus.

- **Cafeterias and hours** - The [HAWC](#) at the Malibu campus has late night food until 1:00AM and the Oasis in the Waves Cafe is open with Pizza and Noodles every night until 11:00PM.
- **Menu**
- **Meal Plan** -
 - **Seaver College students:** required to purchase a meal plan for the first two years on campus.
Recommendations:
 - Start with the lowest meal plan because you can always increase but cannot decrease after the Add/Drop Deadline.
 - Download the [GET app](#) in order to buy and keep track of meal points.
 - **Graduate students:** download the [GET app](#) to place money on your student ID, instead of using a credit card. It's easier and tax free!

Food Delivery - Food delivery services are growing plentiful. Many local restaurants offer delivery, and students recommend [UBER Eats delivery service](#).

Food in Malibu -

- [Malibu Farmer's Market](#)
- [Ralph's](#)
- [Whole Foods](#)
- [Malibu Country Mart](#)
- [Malibu Colony Plaza](#)

5. Health and Safety

Health Insurance

- Each year, you must provide proof of a U.S.-based health insurance plan through the [online waiver system](#) OR enroll in the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP). We highly recommend that your plan includes care located close to Malibu or your campus.
- [Important Insurance Information and Deadlines](#)

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

Health Center and Immunizations

- The [Student Health Center \(SHC\)](#) functions like a family doctor's office and provides a wide variety of services including specialized clinics such as flu vaccination, travel medicine, allergy, and STI/HIV testing.
- [Immunization and Health Requirements](#)

Safety

- Download the [LiveSafe App](#) so you can be prepared and feel safe in any situation.
- [Department of Public Safety](#)

6. Daily Transportation

Free On-Campus Shuttles

- **Around the Malibu Campus** - Two shuttle circular routes (Blue and Orange) run throughout the school year. Download the [Pepperdine App](#), click on "Shuttle Tracker," click the menu on the top left and click "Select All Routes". You will now be able to see the active shuttle icons in real time.
- **Shopping Shuttle** - Four daily shopping shuttles go from the Malibu campus to the shops and grocery store down in Malibu during the academic year, from Monday through Saturday.
- [Transit Services](#) has more details.

Public Transportation to Campus - Public transportation to and from the Malibu campus is limited and it is difficult to walk or bicycle to the surrounding Malibu community. It is recommended that students use a personal car to travel to and from campus.

- **Public Bus** - Public bus transportation to and from Malibu is quite limited.
 - [Bus Timetable](#)
 - [Bus routes](#)
- **Shared Ride Services**
 - [UBER](#)
 - [Lyft](#)

Driver's License

- If you plan to drive a car, a valid driver's license is required. For a limited time you may be able to drive with a valid driver's license issued in your own country or a valid international driver's license. For more information, please visit this [U.S. Government website](#).
- To obtain your California Driver's License, first go to OneStop to request an enrollment verification document to bring to the [Department of Motor Vehicles](#) (DMV). For details, see the [Driver License Handbook](#).
- DMV office locations closest to Malibu are in Thousand Oaks, Winnetka, Santa Monica, and Culver City. Appointments are available [online](#), but we recommend you walk in without an appointment and wait in line starting at 7:00am.

Buying a Car - Most students recommend that you buy a car while living in the U.S.

- **New cars** - Students recommend searching online at www.truecar.com which allows you to compare prices and choose the best dealer.

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

- **Used cars** - Students recommend searching online at www.autotrader.com which lists cars being offered by dealers as well as by private owners. If you buy from a private owner, we suggest to:
 - take the car to a mechanic and pay for an inspection to make sure it is in good condition.
 - check [Kelly Blue Book](#) for fair pricing information, depending on vehicle condition.
 - check [Carfax](#) for the vehicle history (previous accidents or damage).
- **Registration**- You must register your car at the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in California using [instructions here](#).
- **Car Insurance:**
 - If you buy a car, the law requires you to buy insurance and keep a paper copy of your proof of insurance inside your car at all times.
 - Insurance costs (“premiums”) for international drivers may get quite expensive, since you would likely be considered a “new driver” in California. Be sure to compare quotes from at least 2-3 insurance companies (e.g. StateFarm, AllState, Geico, etc.) so you can get the best rate.
 - If you cannot afford insurance, you may be eligible for the California Low Cost Automobile Insurance Program. Find out at www.mylowcostauto.com or by calling 1-866-602-8861.

Renting a Car

- [Renting a car](#) can be a good option if you need a car just for a short time (e.g., several days or weeks).
- [Zipcar](#) - Pepperdine offers short-term car rentals from Zipcar with a [student discount](#).

7. University Policies

Student Conduct Policies - Click [here](#).

No Smoking - Pepperdine cares for the health of the campus community, so smoking is not allowed on campus. Vapes, tobacco, and pipes are also not allowed. A Smoking Cessation program is provided to students free-of-charge through the Student Health Center to help students who wish to stop smoking.

No Alcohol or Drugs - Pepperdine fosters an alcohol and drug free environment to support a healthy campus. Neither alcohol nor illegal drugs are allowed on campus.

No Sexual Violence (Title IX) - Pepperdine affirms that all members of our community are created in the image of God and all must be treated with dignity and respect. Discrimination of others in any way is not tolerated. We respect the worth of each member of our community. If you experience or observe any kind of sexual violence, mistreatment, or discrimination, please call the Title IX Office at 310.506.4436.

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

8. Student Services and Facilities

[Pepperdine App](#) - Download the App for live campus shuttle updates, campus maps, cafeteria information, and other tips.

[Student ID Card](#) - Upon arrival, you will receive a Student ID card with Campus Wide ID (CWID) number. With this card, you will be able to access all of the services and facilities listed below, for which we recommend you add a bookmark to save on your internet browser for quick access:

- **[Office of Student Accessibility](#)** works to accommodate students with documented disabilities to allow them equal standing in educational endeavors.
- **[Counseling Center](#)** provides direct service for individual, relationship, and group counseling
- Prevention/Outreach: Proactively educating the campus community
- **[The OneStop Office](#)** will provide your payment status, enrollment verification, and even discounted movie tickets!
- **[Mail Services and Shipping](#)** can receive packages up to 30 days ahead of your arrival; shipments can be picked up at Mail Services during regular office hours.
- **[Free Shuttle Service](#)** is available on-campus (see live schedule on the [Pepperdine App](#) or click [here](#) to view the full shuttle schedule including the “Shopping Shuttle” for off-campus grocery shopping).
- **[Campus Recreation](#)** offers sign-ups for casual sports teams, information on the sports and swimming pool facilities, fitness classes, and outdoor trips.
- **[Museum and Theater Facilities](#)** offer free admission to the Frederick R. Weisman Museum of Art and discounted tickets to many theater shows and performances throughout the year.
- **[Pepperdine Libraries](#)** have locations adjacent to each school and each campus for your research, study, copying and printing needs.
- **[Events Calendar](#)** includes lecture series, service/volunteering opportunities, athletic gatherings, and other ways to connect with your Pepperdine and Malibu community.
- **[Malibu Campus Church](#)** welcomes all students to attend a Christian worship service every Sunday. There are also many other places of worship in the Malibu and Los Angeles area communities.
- **Pepperdine Bookstores** are located adjacent to each school and campus, and offer a wide variety of products and services including textbooks, gifts, clothing, snacks, and school supplies. You can purchase your textbooks after your arrival to campus from one of the following locations:
 - [Seaver Bookstore](#)
 - [Drescher Bookstore](#)
 - [Law School Bookstore](#)
 - [West LA Bookstore](#)

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

9. Bank Account and Credit Card

Bank Accounts - Most students prefer having a U.S. bank account. When opening the bank account, bring your passport and an additional form of personal identification such as an ID card. Most students choose [Bank of America](#), [Wells Fargo](#), [Citibank](#), [University Credit Union](#), or [Chase](#).

On-Campus ATMs - There are two automated teller machines (ATMs) located on the Malibu campus for your convenience. One is located next to the Sandbar and is operated by Wells Fargo. The other is located adjacent to the second floor entrance of the Thornton Administrative Center (TAC) and is operated by University Credit Union. You do not need an account with one of these two banks to use the ATM, however, using an ATM operated by your bank can reduce cash withdrawal fees at these machines.

Credit Cards - It is recommended you have a credit card (such as VISA or Mastercard) to make daily purchases.

10. Mobile Phone and Internet

Social Communication - Students in the U.S. prefer email and texting instead of other platforms like WeChat or WhatsApp.

Phone Reception - Due to the mountainous terrain of the Malibu campus, mobile phone coverage is not evenly spread. Verizon, Sprint, and AT&T offer good mobile phone coverage throughout the campus area. For more information, please visit [Phone and Mobile Services](#).

Discounts are available to all Pepperdine students who choose AT&T mobile plans.

WiFi is available across campus (called “pepperdine”), and can be accessed from all campus buildings and facilities. Enter your student network ID and password to access.

11. Pepperdine ID / Access Card

- Submit your ID card picture online at least 10 business days prior to your arrival on campus.
- Your Pepperdine ID / Access Card allows us to print your card in advance so you can check in to campus housing, use your meal points, or check out books from the library without needing to visit the Onestop office to have your picture taken. It also allows you to choose your own photo, provided it follows the guidelines.
- For more information and to submit your photo, follow [these instructions](#).

ARRIVAL GUIDE

Helpful Tips for New International Students

12. Social Customs

While living and studying in the U.S., you will interact with people from many cultural, social, ethnic, and national backgrounds. Despite all the differences, people generally greet each other by saying, “Hi, how are you?” followed by a standard response of “Fine, thanks.” During introductions, both men and women stand and shake hands. Friends or peers call each other by their first names. When interacting with staff or professors, use his/her title (“Dr.,” “Ms.,” “Miss,” “Mrs.,” or “Mr.,”) and last name. To learn more about American social customs, visit [Culture Crossing Guide](#) and [About the U.S.](#)

Individuality and competition define the American character, but there is also a strong sense of teamwork to get things done. You may think that Americans are always rushed; however, if you ask for help, you will normally find a friendly attitude. As in most countries, customs vary across the country, and it will take time to understand and adjust to your new environment. It is normal to feel lonely, homesick, and overwhelmed, but don’t isolate yourself! Get to know your advisor and the [Office of International Student Services](#) team, stay connected, and use all the amazing on-campus resources.

We wish you a pleasant and successful experience!