

Arriving in the U.S.



Documents to Have On Arrival in the U.S.

Upon arrival, you will go through immigration inspection, where your electronic I-94 entry record will be created. Be sure to have your passport, immigration document, and the rest of the recommended items below with you. Do not pack them in your checked luggage.

We want you to have all the documents that you may need in entering the U.S. When you arrive at the U.S. port of entry or preclearance, the Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officer will mainly ask to see the first three documents below, but they may ask to see other documents on this list. The officer may also ask you to answer additional questions about what you intend to do at Yale or your purpose of travel to the U.S.

Important Note:

Carry these documents with you - don't put them in your checked luggage

1. **Valid Passport***: must be valid at least 6 months into the future at the time of admission.
2. **Valid U.S. Visa ****: except for Canadian citizens, all international travelers also need to have a valid visa in their passport issued by a U.S. embassy or consulate.
3. **Your Immigration Document**: a DS-2019 for J-1 status, an I-797 approval notice for H-1B holders, etc.
4. **Receipt from paying the [Student and Exchange Visitor Information System \(SEVIS\) fee](#) [1]**: if you are an F or J visa holder.
5. **Copy of your hiring letter and proof of funds**: while you may not be asked for it, it is advisable for new scholars to carry these documents as well. Proof of funds can include the same documents you submitted to obtain your DS-2019, such as bank statements.
6. **Visa-Specific Documents**: see [Traveling to the U.S.](#) [2] for visa-specific documents

* All international scholars and family members planning to depart from the U.S. and return after a temporary absence must have a valid passport in order to exit the U.S. The passport must also be valid for a minimum of six months into the future at the time of re-entry to the U.S. Some countries have an agreement with the U.S. that [automatically extends passport validity for 6 months](#) [3], for U.S. entry purposes only.

**U.S. visas cannot be obtained or renewed inside the U.S.

What to Expect at the U.S. Port of Entry

Your visa and other immigration documents are evidence of your eligibility to apply for admission in a particular visa status at a U.S. Port of Entry.

Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is part of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and is the

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government agency that controls admission to the United States. The CBP officer makes the final decision on your admission to the U.S. in a particular status and determines how long you may stay based on your documents.

[1. Meet the CBP Officer](#)

The officer will review your documents, inspect your bag, and ask you a few questions about the purpose of your travel to the U.S.

If all is in order, the officer will admit you to the U.S.

If the officer has additional questions, please see Secondary Inspection below for more information.

[2. Review your I-94 \(after arrival\)](#)

CBP announced the elimination of issuing entry stamps for visitors arriving in the U.S. Instead, each time you enter the U.S. an electronic entry record, called an **I-94 record**, is created. After your entry to the U.S. please [look up your I-94 record](#) [4] as soon as possible to make sure it is accurate. You should be admitted in the correct immigration status for the correct period of stay (D/S – “Duration of Status” for F & J visas). Print or save a copy on your device. If the information on your I-94 record is incorrect, please contact [your designated OISS adviser](#) [5] for assistance in getting this information corrected.

Secondary Inspection

Most Yale students and scholars will clear U.S. immigration after your documents are reviewed by a CBP officer. However, a few may be referred to another officer to verify your student status or for additional questioning. This is referred to as “[secondary inspection](#) [6]”. Although a referral to secondary inspection can be intimidating and make you feel anxious, there is usually little cause for alarm. Be aware that it can take an hour or two to complete this inspection process.

If the CBP officer has questions that can be answered by OISS, ask the officer if they would like to call OISS for confirmation. During office hours, you can [call your adviser directly](#) [5] or the general office number, (203) 432-2305. After hours, call Yale Security at (203) 785-5555, who will immediately contact the OISS director or associate director.

Get to New Haven

[Find out how to get from the airport to your new home!](#) [7]

Source URL: <https://oiss.yale.edu/getting-started/new-scholars/travel-arrival/arriving-in-the-us>

Links

[1] <https://www.fmjfee.com/i901fee/index.html> [2] <https://oiss.yale.edu/travel-visas/for-scholars/traveling-to-the-us>
[3] <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/visa-expiration-date/auto-revalidate.html> [4] <https://oiss.yale.edu/travel/for-scholars/traveling-to-the-us/i-94-record> [5]
<https://oiss.yale.edu/about/connect-with-oiss> [6] <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/what-is-secondary-inspection> [7]
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