

Information Guide



2017



Berkeley

INFORMATION GUIDE BERKELEY

Welcome

Welcome to Kaplan. This guide will help you make the most of your chosen course and will give you useful information that you can refer to during your stay

So, what’s studying at Kaplan really like?

You have probably already imagined what your life will be like at Kaplan International Berkeley. You may have ideas about life in the United States based on films, television or stories from friends and family. This guide aims to make your transition into the USA as enjoyable and easy as possible and will tell you what to expect when you attend a Kaplan center. We hope that this information will help you to form realistic expectations and encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities ahead.

Will I be able to adjust to a new culture?

At Kaplan we understand that your transition into life in a different culture may be challenging at times – but it will also be fun. You will soon meet people from around the world, try new things, and live in a different culture. One of the best ways to make sure that your transition goes smoothly is to maintain a positive attitude and stay healthy. View your new environment as a place to learn interesting things about yourself and others. Try to get enough sleep, eat right, exercise, and participate in social activities. Take time to observe and enjoy the new things going on around you and appreciate the differences you find in your host country.

I have more questions...

Please contact your local representative if you have more questions before you depart. After you arrive, Kaplan staff at the center will be happy to help you with any problems that you have or any questions you want to ask.

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Before you leave...

We understand that at times you may feel nervous when preparing for your stay in the USA. There are some important things you need to know before you leave that will make your life easier when you arrive. Use our checklist on the next page to ensure that you do not forget anything and are well prepared for the exciting times ahead of you.

Pocket money

We recommend that you budget approximately USD \$250 for every week of your course. This should cover personal expenses, laundry, local travel and Kaplan activities. You will need additional money if you plan to rent a car, take weekend trips or travel. Bring USD \$150 with you in cash. You should also bring a debit or credit card. You will need to check with your financial institution to make sure you will be able to withdraw cash from a US ATM. Do not bring foreign currency. It is not wise to carry around large amounts of cash.

Clothing

Students dress casually for classes. You should bring some nice clothes for going out to restaurants, nightclubs, etc. You should also bring clothing for sports and outdoor activities. You can usually rent sporting equipment. The climate is changeable and may be very different from your own. The typical summer temperature is 21C and in winter 10C to 16C.

Bank account

If you are staying for longer than three months you may wish to open up a US bank account. The school staff will be happy to give you banking information and tell you how to set up an account.

Electrical current

Standard voltage in the USA is 120 volts. To make sure that you are able to use all your electrical appliances bring a converter and an adaptor with you.

Review Quality Assurance Documents

Please review the documents which are required to be filed with the State and which must be made available to you prior to enrollment. The documents, including our Catalogue/ Catalogue Addendum, Terms and Conditions, Pricelist, and School Performance Fact Sheet can be found at: <http://www.study-english-california.com/california-state-disclosures/>

School Notifications

We encourage you to follow and like the school's Facebook page before you arrive and especially during your stay. This will give you an idea of what is happening in the school and help you connect with staff and students to make your experience more enjoyable.

This is also where we will post notification of any unexpected school closures: it is important you check our Facebook page for any messages while you are attending the school, especially if there is severe weather in the area (e.g. snowstorm, flood, etc.). If the school cannot open or school opening will be delayed, we will post a message as soon as possible (the night before or in the morning) to advise you of this, along with information on how to get further updates and any alternate scheduling (if applicable).

The KI Berkeley Facebook page is found at: www.facebook.com/kicberkeley



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☑ Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure that you have packed everything you will need and that you are well prepared for your trip to the United States. Check off each item as you pack it, or complete the task.

- Passport and acceptance letter**
Remember to bring your passport, driver's license and Kaplan documentation (given to you by your Kaplan representative) in your hand luggage so that it is easy to access on arrival. Bring these documents with you to your first day of class.
- Student visa and minor form**
Ensure that your student visa is with your passport and is stored in your hand luggage. Remember your I-20 form if you have an F-1 visa. Students under the age of 18 need a minor form signed by their parents. Bring these documents with you to your first day of class.
- Medical Insurance**
You must bring proof of your Health Insurance with you and store this information in your hand luggage. Also leave a copy with your family at home in case you lose any documentation during your stay. Bring these documents with you to your first day of class. You will not be able to study until you have shown us proof of medical insurance.
- Homestay/residence address details**
Pack your Homestay or residential address details in your hand luggage so they are easy to access on your arrival. You will have received these details from your Kaplan representative.
- Knowledge of local laws and customs**
Quiz yourself about local laws and customs in the United States. Talk to your Kaplan representative about what you should expect and how you should behave in North America.
- \$150 in cash**
Store this cash on your body or in your hand luggage. Try to avoid counting or pulling out your money in busy public places.
- Credit Card/Bank Debit Card**
Students should bring a credit card or bank debit card which can be used for transactions in the United States.
- Correct clothing**
Pack something warm in your hand luggage and ensure that you are wearing layers in case you get hot.
- Adaptor for electrical appliances**
Remember standard voltage in the USA is 120 volts. Remember that the plugs may differ from your home country so bring an adaptor too.
- Deposit if you're staying in residential accommodation**
A housing deposit is usually required if you are staying in a residence. Check the amount with your Kaplan representative or on the relevant residence factfile and have this money ready for when you first arrive at your accommodation.
- Prescription medication**
Pack medication carefully in full packaging in case you are asked questions in customs on your departure or arrival. Remember to bring enough of your prescription medicine with you as US pharmacists will not fill a foreign prescription.
- Emergency information stored in your wallet or purse**
This can be found on the last page of this booklet.
- Take out insurance for your personal belongings**
Personal items cannot be covered by Kaplan International homestay or apartment insurance. We recommend that you cover these items with your own personal travel insurance. Please make sure that you are properly covered in case of loss or theft.

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When you arrive

Arriving at the airport of a foreign country can be overwhelming and stressful. You could be feeling very tired and disoriented. To better prepare yourself, make sure that you have followed the checklist and have read the information below about your arrival and how to get to your accommodation. Do not feel shy about asking airport staff for help, most airport staff will be happy to give assistance.



Kaplan Transfers

If you have paid for our transfer service, an employee from K.I.S.S will be waiting for you at San Francisco International airport (SFO) or Oakland airport (OAK). They will be holding a Kaplan sign. Before your departure you will receive a welcome packet confirming this information.

If there are any problems, you should call the transfer service at 1-888-863-2482. You can also call Kaplan Berkeley's 24-hour phone numbers: 1-916-535-1767 or 1-888-331-2809. Be prepared to tell them your name, location, and the problem you have encountered.

Independent Transfers

Students who opt not to use the transfer service should use either a shuttle, taxi, or take a BART transport from San Francisco to Berkeley. The BART has a stop inside of the International Terminal at San Francisco International Airport (SFO), making it very convenient for students.

If students use BART, they are advised to take a Pittsburgh/ Baypoint train to the MacArthur Station. Here students should exit and transfer to the Warm Springs/Richmond Train, then exit at the Downtown Berkeley Station. From here the Kaplan International school is across the street. The ride time is approximately one hour.

Orientation Information

On the first day of your course you need to report to the Kaplan International Berkeley school.

Address: 150 Berkeley Square, Berkeley, CA 94704.

Orientation schedule:

- English courses: 10:00 am
- GMAT® and GRE® prep courses: 11:00 am Tuesday

Your first day will be a Monday unless there is a national holiday on the Monday - in which case your first day will be Tuesday.

Your course will begin with an all-day introduction, which will include:

- A fun speaking activity
- A placement test to determine the level of the course you require
- A break
- Presentation: Student Visa - policies and procedures
- Homestay/apartment information
- Berkeley Tour
- Presentation: Student Activities

Please bring the following with you:

- Passport (original and a photocopy)
- Your I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility) or student (F-1) Visa
- I-94 (if applicable)
- Your address in the USA
- All your Kaplan documents and a pen and paper for note-taking purposes.
- Proof of medical insurance

At the end of the day you will receive information about your class schedule, classroom number, study level, specific skills, and the hours you are to attend class. You will be assigned to the most appropriate class for your level of English.

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School Facilities

Classrooms

Kaplan International Berkeley has 10 well-equipped classrooms with interactive whiteboards.

Multimedia and Study Center

Kaplan International Berkeley has a large area for quiet study with individual study cubicles. There are 15 computers with internet access and online language learning resources. Headphones are also available.

Library

The Kaplan International school has a library with language learning materials and books for student loan, which includes not only study guides but also fiction books. The Kaplan International school is a block away from the Berkeley Public Library, which has extensive collections of foreign language books and ESL materials.

Student Lounge

The student lounge includes an eating area with several microwaves, as well as a lounge with a television, Playstation, and foosball table.

Location

The Kaplan International school is in the heart of downtown Berkeley, and surrounded by a variety of restaurant and cafe options.

Sports facilities

There are numerous parks with basketball courts, tennis courts, and a baseball field nearby.

Gym facilities

Students can join the nearby gyms, such as the YMCA, at a discounted rate of \$35 per month. In addition students can join the UC Berkeley Gym or 24 Hour Fitness, both of which are just a short walk from the school.

Activities/Social Program

There is a wide choice of activities available to students in Berkeley. Popular activities include hiking in the Berkeley Hills, college sports at UC Berkeley, and visiting local farmers' markets. Plus, the sights and delights of San Francisco are only 20 minutes across the Bay by train. Weekend trips include wine tasting in Napa Valley, skiing in Lake Tahoe, Yosemite National Parks, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and more.



Classroom



School reception



Interactive whiteboards



Student lounge

Sample Timetable

Your timetable may vary according to the type of course you book and the time of year. Classes are from Monday to Friday and your timetable will depend on your English level as well as classroom and teacher availability. Kaplan does not guarantee morning or afternoon schedule. Below are example timetables showing morning and afternoon schedules.

Morning timetable

9:00am - 12:15pm	Integrated Skills
12:15pm - 1:00pm	Break
9:00am - 12:15pm	Specific Skills (Mon-Thu)
2:45pm - 4:15pm*	<i>K +tools/K +clubs</i>

Afternoon timetable

10:45am - 12:15pm*	<i>K +tools/K +clubs</i>
12:15pm - 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm - 2:30pm	Specific Skills (Mon-Thu)
1:00pm - 2:30pm	Integrated Skills

*Intensive English students can attend a maximum of 5 hours of *K +tools/K +clubs* per week. However, this class is optional for Intensive English students.

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Local Information

Transport - buses and trains

Berkeley has an extensive transportation system including local bus lines and train system (BART) which services the East Bay, San Francisco, and local airports.

Banks and Post Office

There are numerous banks all within one-block of the Kaplan International school. The post office is a 3-minute walk.

Restaurants and Cafes

Berkeley is famous for its culinary scene, with some of the most well-known chefs and restaurants in the world. There is also a great variety of cuisines from all around the world to suit every budget.

Department stores and supermarkets

There are several supermarkets and clothing stores within walking distance. Department stores are in San Francisco, just a 25 minute train ride from the center.

Telephone and Internet

The Kaplan International school provides students with wireless internet and nearby cafés and bookstores also have wireless internet capability. Pay phones are located in the Metro (BART) train station across the street from school.



View of Berkeley

Cost of Living

Approximate prices in USD (subject to change)

Lunch	\$8.00 - \$12.00
Hamburger	\$5.00 - \$8.00
Coffee	\$2.50 - \$5.00

Tickets:

Movie	\$8.00 - \$12.00
Bus	\$2.10 per trip
	\$80 monthly pass
Bay Area Rapid Transport (BART) to San Francisco	\$4.00 one way

Sample Activities Schedule

Please note that this is a sample program and activities may change.

Week one

Monday	Orientation
Tuesday	Hiking in the Berkeley hills
Wednesday	Oakland A's baseball game
Thursday	Farmer's market
Friday	Student Party
Saturday	Los Angeles trip

Week two

Monday	Orientation
Tuesday	Movie night
Wednesday	UC Berkeley campus tour
Thursday	Soccer game
Friday	Visit Golden Gate Park
Saturday	Wine tasting in Napa Valley

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 around and let your family know if you will not be at home for dinner or will be going away for the weekend! We want you to be comfortable with your family, but we cannot promise a family of a specific, age, gender, or ethnicity. Every family is different and will have unique lifestyles. Please make sure you understand your house rules upon arrival.

Meals

Please tell your host if there are foods you like very much or do not like at all. Often, it is common for students to go with the host family to the grocery store to pick out food items.

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 center, a local restaurant or from the local stores. A refrigerator and a microwave are available, or you may purchase your lunch in a nearby restaurant.

Dinner: Dinner may be a shared meal in the evening, or occasionally you may prepare your own meal with food supplied by your host. Leftovers (food remaining from a previous meal) are common to have at least once per

week. It is polite to ask for a second helping if you are still hungry.

What to bring

The US has very diverse climates and weather can range from very hot to very cold, therefore please check the weather in the region you plan to visit and pack accordingly. Berkeley's climate tends to be moderate, but the evenings can get quite chilly. Bring a warmer jacket for these occasions. Your host will provide you with bed linen and towels. You can purchase toiletries and other personal items locally, but you should plan to bring specific items with you such as prescription medications if you require them (in adequate supply).

Telephone use

Be sure to discuss phone usage with your host family on arrival. Your host's telephone should only be used for local and incoming calls. Remember to notify your family and friends of any time differences to avoid calls in the middle of the night. Students are asked to limit their calls to no more than 20 minutes, as there is usually one telephone line per household. You should purchase a phone card or use a personal mobile telephone for all long distance or international calls since it is very expensive to make international calls from a home line. Nearly all cell phone providers in the USA offer pre-paid cell phones, which are affordable and can also be purchased after you arrive.

Internet

Most families have either wireless or DSL Internet in their home. However, you should plan to bring your own laptop since many families will not have a computer for you to share. All Kaplan centers are equipped with computer labs as well, with free

Internet access at the center during business hours!

Laundry facilities

Be sure to discuss this with your host family after you arrive as laundry facilities will depend on your homestay option. If your family does not have washing facilities, please take your laundry to a laundromat to wash and dry - please do not wash clothes in the bathroom or hang them to dry in your bedroom or on cupboards. The average cost per load of laundry (wash & dry) in an American laundromat is USD \$5.

Drinking

The legal drinking age in the US is 21 years old; please obey the law and do not drink if you are under-age. It is polite to ask your host family for permission to drink in their home even if you are legally permitted based on your age.

Smoking

When you book your accommodation, please request a family that allows smoking if you smoke. Hosts will request smokers to smoke outside. In most US cities, it is illegal to smoke inside public places. Please make sure you discuss these rules with your host family. It is also considered polite to ask someone for permission to smoke next to them (even if you are outside).

Getting to and from school

Your host will help you find your way to and from school on your first day and also show you how to use public transport. Journey time will depend on the location of your homestay. On average, it takes students about 45 - 60 minutes by train or bus to get from their homestay to the Kaplan International Center.

Homestay accommodation



Things to remember

- You are a part of the family as well as a guest.
- You may have to take part in family chores.
- Purchase a phone card or a pre-paid cell phone for international calls.
- Do not bring or store food items in your bedroom.
- Ask permission before inviting guests or friends to your homestay.
- Notify your family if you are not coming home for the night or will be away for the weekend.
- Ask permission to smoke.
- Ask permission to drink alcohol, even if you are above the legal drinking age of 21 years.
- Speak with your host family as much as possible to get the most out of your homestay.
- Accompany your host on outings and family activities.
- Expect cultural and personal differences and be tolerant of them.
- Be willing to try new foods.
- Ask questions and become familiar with American customs.



Exterior of Kaplan International Berkeley



Kaplan students exploring the local area

Note: For information about residence accommodation, please request the appropriate residence fact file.

Health and Safety

If you or a friend is seriously ill and needs an ambulance call 911 (911 can also be used to contact the Police and Fire departments for other emergency situations). Stay calm and describe to the operator on the line what type of assistance you need and your location. You may be required to describe any symptoms. Explain as much as you can, don't worry if you are not confident with your English - say as much as you can, as clearly as you can.

Medical insurance

Kaplan offers you a low-cost Travel and Medical Insurance Plan that we advise you to take. If you are not taking Kaplan Insurance you are required to show proof of alternative medical insurance. Travel and Medical Insurance is compulsory at all Kaplan schools for the duration of your stay.

If you get sick

If you get sick while you are in the United States you should visit a doctor. You can ask staff at Kaplan reception or your host family where the nearest doctor is. If you have a minor illness you can often ask staff at a local pharmacy for advice. If you are ill, make an appointment to see a doctor and take any relevant insurance or medical documentation with you. You may be required to register with your local doctor.

Medical costs are at the discretion of your local doctor or hospital. A guide to costs in the United States is as follows:

- A consultation with a doctor (minimum USD \$60)
- Prescriptions at a Pharmacy (minimum USD \$25 per item)
- Dental treatment (minimum USD \$150)
- Eye tests or new eyeglasses (minimum USD \$150)

Protecting your belongings

If you are not using Kaplan Medical and Travel Insurance we strongly recommend that you take out insurance for your personal belongings, especially cameras, radios, MP3 players and laptop computers. Personal items cannot be covered by Kaplan homestay or residence. You can cover these items with your own personal travel insurance. Please ensure that you are properly covered in case of loss or theft.



Things to remember

- Call 911 in case of fire, medical emergency or need for the police.
- You must have medical insurance to attend a Kaplan course.

Laws and Customs

You may find that laws are enforced differently in the USA than they are in your home country. The USA's traditions of democracy place much responsibility on the individual. This means that you must obey the country's laws and respect its customs. It is important that you understand the laws, rules, and customs that you may encounter.

Laws

- No one under the age of 21 in the United States may buy or drink alcohol, including beer and wine. It is against the law to buy alcohol for someone you know is under the age of 21.
- Cigarettes are for sale to persons aged 18 and over. It is illegal to smoke when you are under 18.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol is a very serious crime and police make regular random checks.
- Buying, selling and using drugs is illegal.

The police and Kaplan are very strict in enforcing these laws.

Kaplan's rules

Kaplan has rules that must not be broken. These rules may apply to academic work at school as well as life in your residence or homestay.

- If you leave your Kaplan course early, Kaplan may be required to report this to immigration authorities which may affect your immigration status.
- You must attend all classes. If you do not attend classes your representative and parents will be informed. If you do not improve your attendance, you will be sent home.
- Always tell Kaplan if you are going to be absent from school for any reason and tell your host family if you are going away overnight.
- If you commit a criminal offense or have to be severely disciplined you will be sent home and no refund will be given. We will also inform the immigration authorities.
- Be on time for all your lessons.

Customs

Customs are an accepted way of behavior in a country. You need to know the customs of the USA to help you feel comfortable with people. Some important customs to know include:

Women: Women in the United States are equal to men and should always be treated fairly. Men and women share equally in household work and childcare.

Lines: Always stand in line and wait your turn when buying tickets, in a bank, post office or waiting for a bus. Keep to the right when standing on escalators.

Friendliness: Americans talk to strangers in public areas. This is a great way to practice English, but caution should be taken. You should not give out your address and telephone number, or accept inappropriate invitations. Although most people are friendly, some may be reluctant to speak with strangers.

Please and Thank you: These are very important words! Always use them if you ask someone to do something for you, or if they help you or give you information.

Diversity

The USA is a cultural "melting pot" where people of all ethnic and racial backgrounds are treated equally. Differences are common and often embraced; you will see diverse groups of people working, studying and living together.

Tipping

People in North America leave a tip for good service in restaurants, hair salons and other places. The tip rate at most restaurants is about 15 - 20 % of the bill and is not usually included. Fast-food service is not usually tipped unless it is delivered. Porters in stations, airports and hotels should be tipped USD \$1 per bag. Taxi drivers are generally given a 15% tip.



Things to remember

- If you are under 21 years of age it is illegal to drink alcohol
- Buying, selling and using drugs is illegal
- Notify Kaplan if you are going to be absent from school
- Women are treated equally to men in the USA
- Remember to say please and thank you

Important Dates to Remember

National Holidays 2017

New Year	Jan. 2, 2017
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Jan. 16, 2017
Memorial Day	May 29, 2017
Independence Day	Jul. 4, 2017
Labor Day	Sep. 4, 2017
Thanksgiving Holidays	Nov. 23-24, 2017
Christmas Day	Dec. 25, 2017
Christmas Break	Dec. 25, 2017 - Jan 1, 2018

The dates above are the dates for national holidays for the year 2017. For holiday dates in other years, consult your Kaplan representative. If you arrive on a week where the Monday is a national holiday, your first day of school will be a Tuesday. Students enrolled in the Academic Year Program, or another long-term program, will also have a vacation during their stay. Please refer to the Kaplan International brochure, or ask your Kaplan representative for further details of these holidays.

**We look forward to seeing you at Kaplan International Berkeley.
If you have additional questions please ask our staff on arrival.**

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Click below to visit us on:



**Keep these numbers
with you at all times!**

Emergency Kaplan Number:
1-855-976-8069

Emergency Number (Police, Fire, Ambulance):
911