Honolulu

Study in Honolulu on the beautiful island of Oahu in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. The welcoming ‘aloha spirit’ of the people and the year-round tropical climate make this island a true paradise for learning English with EF.

Contact details:
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Important Note: Factual information contained in this document is subject to change.
Dear Student

Thank you for choosing EF Honolulu for your studies. We are committed to ensuring that your time here on this beautiful island is both enjoyable and rewarding. We believe that whether this is your first visit to the United States or if you are a seasoned traveler, you are guaranteed to have a wonderful time in the exotic destination of Hawaii.

The relaxed and friendly atmosphere of the school, along with the laidback, beach lifestyle of Honolulu makes this a fantastic place to live and study. Our newly renovated school has everything you will need to make maximum progress with your English studies. However, it’s not just about what happens in the classroom that will make your time here memorable. Whether you are a dedicated surf dude, sports addict or shopping fan, there is something for everyone in Honolulu!

We can’t wait to introduce you to the many wonders of our islands and look forward to welcoming you to Hawaii.

Best wishes,
Henrik Nilsson
School Director – EF International Language School, Honolulu
1. Introduction to EF
EF Education First welcomes students of all ages from every corner of the world to learn a language where it is natively spoken. Our innovative curriculum, the Efekta™ system, integrates face-to-face learning with the latest in eLearning technology. An intensively structured academic program along with an array of educational and social activities results in a fast and fun way to learn a language.

EF students come from diverse backgrounds and like you, they have chosen a program to enhance their language skills as part of their academic or career plan. Many have planned for years to take advantage of this opportunity.

A large percentage of EF students apply their new language skills by taking a recognized exam, such as Cambridge, TOEFL, TOEIC and IELTS. Successful completion of such exams provides the necessary language qualifications for university and for professional endeavors. Many students view their time with EF as a chance to explore educational alternatives while honing language and study skills. Students wishing to study at university can access information and make informed academic choices through our EF University Placement Service.

A great aspect of an EF program is the variety of nationalities at our schools. We welcome you to join this international community where you will experience life and language with EF. We take great pride in our continuing dedication to our mission - breaking down barriers of language and culture.

2. Welcome to Honolulu, Hawaii
‘Aloha’ and welcome to the U.S. state of Hawaii. Consisting of eight major islands: Oahu, Maui, Kauai, The Big Island (Hawaii), Molokai, Niihau, Kahoolawe, and Lanai, Hawaii is a truly stunning location set in the Pacific Ocean. With a total population of 1.2 million, the diversity of the cultures and traditions make for a unique destination.

From the first Polynesian settlers in 500 AD to the various arrivals of the last two centuries, the islands of Hawaii are a colorful mix of food, language and customs. Although each island has its own distinct personality and offers its own adventures and sightseeing opportunities, one thing that remains constant is the people. The natural warmth and friendliness of Hawaiians reflects the Islands’ glorious temperatures.

Oahu is the most developed of the Islands with Honolulu as the vibrant capital city. Meaning sheltered harbor, Honolulu, is a city that blends past and present. Head downtown and take a step back in time to the Iolani Palace, built in 1882, the only royal palace in the USA. By the harbor at Pier 9, is where you will find the modern day landmark of Aloha Tower. Ascend to the observation deck for sweeping city views.

Since Hawaii is the birthplace of surfing, what better place to “hang ten” than the two-mile long Waikiki beach. Ideal for swimming, boogie boarding, sailing and any other beach activities you can think of.

A short drive out of town in any direction will bring you face-to-face with uncrowded beaches and beautiful scenery. Head to Oahu’s North Shore perfect for surfing the winter waves. Each December there are three major surf competitions collectively known as the Triple Crown of surfing, with prizes reaching six figures. After spending time with EF in Hawaii, maybe you could claim the crown!

3. Weather watch
Weather in Hawaii is very consistent, with only minor changes in temperature throughout the year. Honolulu enjoys a warm, humid year-round climate, with pleasant breezes and sunny, tropical weather. The heaviest rainfall is from November through April and can last for several days at a time, but the precipitation only averages approximately 71 centimeters (28 inches) per year.

Temperatures range from:
Spring: 19° to 28°C (66° to 88°F)
Summer: 22° to 31°C (72° to 88°F)
Autumn: 22° to 31°C (72° to 88°F)
Winter: 19° to 28°C (66° to 82°F)

4. Travel & transfer service
Transfer service
Arriving at a busy airport in a foreign city can be confusing. EF offers a one-way transfer service from Honolulu airport to your accommodation for an additional fee. We highly recommend that you take advantage of this service.

At least one month before your arrival, you must inform the EF Office in your home country of the exact details of your flight (airline, flight number, date and time).

If you have booked the transfer service, please do not take a taxi, as it will not be possible to reimburse you later.

If you are staying in a student residence, please follow these transfer service instructions:
When you pass through customs and arrive at the baggage claim area, an EF greeter from SpeediShuttle, holding a sign with your name on it, will welcome you to Hawaii. After collecting your luggage, the greeter will assist you to the awaiting shuttle (SpeediShuttle) outside the airport. If you do not see your greeter, go to the information desk to ask for help to contact SpeediShuttle, or call the EF school emergency number for assistance. Please note: you will receive the emergency number and other important contact information from your local EF office prior to departure.
If you are staying in a homestay, please follow these transfer service instructions:
When you pass through customs and arrive at the baggage claim area, your homestay host or a greeter from Charley’s Taxi, holding a sign with your name on it, will welcome you to Hawaii. After collecting your luggage, the host or greeter will assist you to the awaiting car outside the airport. If you do not see your homestay host or the greeter, go to the information desk to ask for help to contact your homestay host, Charley’s Taxi, or call the EF school emergency number for assistance. Please note: you will receive the emergency number and other important contact information from your local EF office prior to departure.

Students arriving independently
You can check-in to the Ohia residence at anytime during the day. After you have checked in, you will be shown to your room by a staff member. If you are staying in a homestay and plan to arrive independently, remember to contact EF or your homestay hosts with your arrival details.

If you would like to take a taxi to the school, follow the signs from the baggage claim area outside to the taxi stand.

5. School Information
EF Honolulu is located just a three-minute walk from one of the most famous beaches in the world - Waikiki Beach.

Located on the 11th floor of a modern and spacious building, the school has classrooms with huge windows, giving you great views of Honolulu’s cityscape, as well as glorious ocean views. The school has a large, fully furnished student lounge where students can do everything from relaxing with friends and watching television, to making use of wireless Internet on their computers. On the ground floor of the building is a Starbucks, Jamba Juice, a surf shop and nightclubs, as well as The Shack, a famous restaurant/bar. In addition to the beaches and fabulous hotels, Waikiki has incredible shopping, steps from the school and the residence.

The school offers the following:
- iLabs for Elekta™ classes and self study
- Computer lab
- Wireless Internet
- Student Lounge with TV
- Fax
- Notice boards to tell you what is happening

Staff
The School Director is assisted by an accomplished staff of teachers and administrators. There is also an Activities Coordinator who organizes EF activities and excursions for students.

6. Academics
EF language courses give students the opportunity to study the English language and the local culture for as long, and with as much intensity, as suits the student and his or her needs.

EF Level Placement Test
Within 24-hours after booking your course, you’ll receive your personalized EF username and password for the online iLab. Before traveling, you will take the EF Level Placement test online. This test will measure your language level and ability, grammar and listening comprehension abilities. Using your test results, our academic team will place you in one of six different language levels.

As your English language skills become stronger, you will be promoted into the next language level. You may speak with your teacher if you feel you have been placed into the wrong level. Please note: you may have both morning and afternoon classes depending on the time of year and course type.

Orientation
When you arrive at the school you will take the EF Level Placement test, if you have not done so already. During your orientation you will receive your class schedule and other important information about the school and the city. Fun activities are planned to help you meet students and staff.

General English Classes
General English classes focus on the development of the four skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They also include work on grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.

Special Interest Classes
Depending on your course type you may also select a number of special interest (SPIN) classes. SPINs allow you to improve your English through the study of a wide range of subject options. Admission to some of these will depend on academic and linguistic level and availability of places. The selection of SPIN classes varies throughout the year and a student may not be able to repeat the same SPIN class. Each lesson is 40 minutes in length.

Class size
The average class size is 15 students with a maximum of 17 students.

Attendance
You are expected to attend all classes. Consistent failure to attend class, for whatever reason, may result in expulsion from the program with no refund of course fees. It is important to note that in order to be eligible for an EF certificate, students are expected to participate in class and must attend at least 80% of all classes.

US immigration regulations require you to attend 80% of all your classes. EF is required to report students who fail to maintain this 80% average to US Immigration Authorities. Consequently, students with low attendance may be asked to leave the program and return to their home country.

Homework
You are expected to complete all assignments set by your teachers in General English and Special Interest classes. If you are taking an examination preparation class you should expect at least one hour of homework per night.

Assessment
You will be assessed at regular intervals throughout the course. Assessment is based on attendance, participation, attitude and performance.

Course books
You should bring money to cover the cost of books, classroom materials and study visits that are not included in the cost of the course. Please see section 17 for the prices of the learning materials.

iLab Learning
All English language school courses include six iLab sessions per week. iLab sessions complement and reinforce classroom learning
in an interactive online learning environment. Please note: iLab is not included in the EF Basic Course.

Exams
You may enroll for several different public examinations during your course. Some can be taken at the school itself, others must be taken at an external examination center and booked several months in advance. Please note: you will be responsible for the cost of all exam registration fees, which cannot be paid at the sales office.

EF University Placement Service
EF International Language Schools offer a University Placement Service (UPS) that provides guaranteed admission into a university or college for qualified students. If you are interested in continuing your studies, you are encouraged to talk with the University Pathways Manager at your school.

Examinations

The credentials you gain will last a lifetime!

7. Accommodation & Meals
Homestay and student residence accommodations are available at the school. Every effort will be made to match you with another student who does not speak your original language, allowing you the opportunity to speak English at home as well as at school. The EF Accommodations Coordinator is available to help you with your housing needs during your stay in your host country.

Homestay
A limited number of homestays are available. Students staying in a homestay will have the opportunity to experience American life and also have the chance to practice their new language skills with fluent English speakers. Students who choose homestay accommodation should do so because they want to live in a family environment and interact with the family members. Families choose to host international students because they want to learn about other cultures and people. Students who live in a homestay must respect the family and their home. Likewise, the family will respect the student. As you get an in-depth look at American life, you will realize that American culture is not the same as your culture, and therefore, family life may be quite different. The relationship between husband and wife, the roles of family members, the relationship with or discipline of children and the relationship with pets are just some examples. If you are open-minded about these differences, life in the family will be a great learning experience.

There is no stereotypical family. Host families may consist of 1) mother and father without children, 2) single mother with children, 3) mother, father and children, 4) retired couple, 5) widowed woman, or 6) single father with children. America is called “the great melting pot”, and families are of many different backgrounds. Some of our host families have emigrated or are first-generation Americans. They will be able to speak English fluently and will speak English with their student, but they may be able to speak another language as well.

Unless you have paid the single supplement and a single placement has been confirmed to you by EF, you will be placed in a double room with another student. You are responsible for all transportation costs to and from the host’s home. You may be placed up to one hour away from the school.

The host will provide bed linens and towels. You will need to bring your own personal toiletries (shampoo, soap, toothpaste, tissues, etc.). As a member of the household you will be responsible for light housework, doing your own laundry and keeping your room clean.

EF carefully chooses appropriate homestays for its students and requires a long-term commitment from hosts. Therefore, changing hosts is considered a very serious matter and will only be considered by the school EF Housing Coordinator as a last resort.

Meals in a homestay
Students staying in a homestay will have breakfast and dinner every day of the week provided by the host. Students are responsible for buying their own lunch during the week, Monday through Friday. All meals will be provided at home on the weekends.

Student residence
The student residence is directly across the street from the school. It is a modern residence where EF students will have the opportunity to mingle with American students who attend Hawaii Pacific University, University of Hawaii and other local schools. Each room comes with an en suite bathroom, two desks and air-conditioning. The residence also has a swimming pool, a TV lounge and laundry facilities.

You and your roommate are responsible for keeping your room clean. Bed linens and towels will be provided upon arrival and are to be returned at the end of the program. Students are responsible for cleaning their own sheets.
and towels using the laundry facilities.

Smoking is permitted only outside the residence building.

**Meals in a student residence**
The residence has kitchenettes, but you can also choose to purchase a meal plan option. The Off-Campus Meal Plan (OCMP) has been designed to specifically meet the unique needs of students. You will receive a personalized card which can be used in participating restaurants. The value of each meal is deducted from the total number of meals on your account.

### 8. Money Matters

#### Currency

The dollar is the basic monetary unit in the U.S. 1 dollar = 100 cents

- 1 cent = $.01 “penny” (100 pennies = $1)
- 5 cents = $.05 “nickel” (20 nickels = $1)
- 10 cents = $.10 “dime” (10 dimes = $1)
- 25 cents = $.25 “quarter” (4 quarters = $1)

Paper currency comes in denominations (values) of $1, $5, $10, $20, $50 and $100. All paper money is the same size and color, so be careful when you pay!

#### Banking

You should open a bank account at the start of your course. During orientation, the EF staff will be on hand to help you open one with a local bank. Depending on your needs, you can have a checking or savings account or both. These types of accounts allow you to have a 24-hour ATM card.

#### Money for expenses

We recommend that you have approximately $200 in cash for expenses upon arrival, with the rest of your spending money in traveler’s checks. We recommend that you take between $75 and $100 per week, excluding excursions, depending on how much traveling, shopping, and eating in restaurants you plan to do during your visit to Hawaii.

You will also need to take money for learning materials used in class (see Section 17 for prices) and for any language proficiency exams you plan to take.

#### Wiring Money

If you need to have money wired to you during your stay, you should have it sent from a bank in your home country. You must have a bank account at a local bank to receive funds. The bank transfer will take approximately ten working days. Internationally recognized credit card companies can arrange a transfer or advance of funds much quicker. Most transfers and advances are provided for a fee.

Banks close to the school include:

- **American Savings Bank**
  321 Seaside Avenue, Honolulu
  (808) 923-1102

- **Bank of Hawaii**
  120 Kalaulani Avenue, Honolulu
  (808) 543-6920

- **Central Pacific Bank**
  2250 Kalakaua Avenue, 103A, Honolulu
  (808) 971-4720

- **First Hawaiian Bank**
  2181 Kalakaua Avenue, Honolulu
  (808) 943-4670

#### Credit cards

We strongly recommend that students travel with either a Visa or Master Card. Credit cards enable you to rent cars, reserve hotel rooms, pay for exams and do various activities, which may be more difficult with cash or traveler’s checks.

#### 9. Phones, faxes & Internet

- **Telephone**
  All long distance calls must be collect calls, charged to the person you are calling, or charged to a prepaid telephone card, which can be purchased at the EF Office. We recommend that students expecting to stay for a long period of time come with or purchase a mobile phone.

- **Fax**
  All EF schools use fax machines to conduct business. You can send and receive faxes from this machine for a small fee, although you are encouraged to limit the use.

- **Internet**
  The school is equipped with Wi-Fi wireless Internet. Students are highly encouraged to bring their personal laptop computers for email and Internet use on the wireless network.

### 10. Health Care & Insurance

The EF staff can recommend nearby hospitals and doctor’s offices if you need medical attention. Please ask the EF staff for assistance if you need medical attention.

Students will have to pay at least $35.00 per visit in cash or traveler checks to visit a local doctor off campus. This is one instance when having a credit card can be very helpful.

Students are also able to go to the local hospital’s emergency room for a cost of at least $30.00 for illness and no cost for an emergency accident, both with EF Insurance. The EF staff will help you to fill out a claim form after the treatment to receive a reimbursement for the charges.

#### Immunizations

EF requires that all students attending an EF school in the United States carry proof that he or she has been immunized against measles I and II, polio, TBC, mumps, rubella, diphtheria and tetanus. Please note that it is not sufficient to have had the diseases as a child. If you do not bring this documentation with you, you will be required upon arrival at the school to obtain the immunizations at an area hospital. The cost to students is approximately $50 (this amount is not covered by insurance).

#### Insurance

All students traveling to the USA are required to have medical and accident insurance upon starting their program of study.

All students are required to bring proof of insurance in English to show that they have proper health insurance when a medical emergency occurs. Students who do not bring proof of insurance will be required to purchase insurance through EF at the school.

**Erika Travel Insurance**

Because security is EF’s number one priority, we have negotiated a comprehensive tailor-made travel insurance package for EF students with Erika Travel Insurance, an international insurance expert. The policy protects you against expenses incurred through accident...
or illness, and provides coverage for loss or theft of baggage and personal effects. It also provides coverage against interruption of your EF program due to illness as well as liability and legal expenses.

The EF staff is trained to assist with your Erika Travel Insurance questions and claims. When you are sick or injured the last thing you want to do is deal with such issues. Let us help you!

11. Activities & Excursions
The EF Activities Coordinator arranges a regular schedule of activities, day-trips, and weekend excursions to local attractions. The cost of these trips is not included in the tuition. The cost of these trips is not included in the tuition.

Weekly activities
The EF Activities Coordinator will organize events, depending on student interest and participation. Day trips will be offered to local attractions and places of interest 2-3 days per week.

Typical activities include:
- Walking tour of Honolulu
- Surfing lesson on Waikiki Beach
- Visits to Chinatown
- Hiking trips
- Visit to the Aloha Tower
- Excursions to Diamond Head
- Snorkeling at Hanauma Bay

Weekend excursions
The number of trips and the cost depends upon the time of year and the number of students wishing to participate. Payment must be made with cash or traveler checks.

Typical excursions include:
- Trekking in Haleakala National Park, Maui
- Waimea Canyon, Kauai
- Whale watching at Papawai Point, Hawaii
- Visit to the 7-Pools Waterfalls
- Maui Volcano Adventure
- Big Island (Hawaii) Tour
- Pearl Harbor
- Oahu Polynesian Cultural Center
- Oahu Island Tour

Winter and spring break excursions
All schools have several trips planned for the long-term students who have a winter and spring break as part of their course schedule. Possible destinations include Mexico, the Bahamas, skiing, an East Coast trip and West Coast trips. More information will be available during orientation.

12. Transportation
Public transportation
The main method of transport on Oahu is a bus system known as The Bus. Serving the entire Island, it has over 80 routes enabling you to travel around easily. Each ticket is $2.25 per trip with a monthly pass costing $40.

Car rentals
Some students choose to rent a car during their stay. The cost is approximately $35 per day. Sometimes it is less expensive to contact an international rental car company in your home country prior to departure and get a “Visit USA” package deal.

Most rental car agencies will only rent to people who are aged 25 years or older. Some agencies will rent cars to students over 21 years, but the rates are higher. All agencies require a credit card. EF does not recommend that younger students rent cars, EF recommends that anyone renting a car (even for short trips) purchase full comprehensive insurance coverage.

Buying a car
If you plan on having a car for the entire length of the program, you may want to consider buying a used car. Prices may range between $4,000 and $10,000. You should also plan to pay an additional 8% in state sales tax, purchase insurance, pay annual state inspection and pay registration fees. You must also have a valid state driver’s license. To obtain a driver’s license in Hawaii you must take a written test, attend a five-hour lecture at a cost of $30 and pay a processing fee of approximately $40. EF recommends that anyone purchasing a car purchase comprehensive insurance coverage.

13. Expectations
Expectations are a normal part of anticipating a new experience. Remember that many of your expectations may have been formed by the unreal world of TV and movies. Arrive at your course center with an open mind!

What you can expect from EF:
- Supportive staff, available for guidance and encouragement.
- An academic program which combines language, special interest, and culture-oriented classes.
- Full program of local activities and excursions at special EF rates.
- Accommodation in either homestay or student residence.
- All designated meals.
- EF Academic Year Abroad Diploma for Academic Year Abroad students with 80% attendance per term and good academic standing and academic records.
- EF Course Certificate for International Language Students with 80% attendance and good academic standing.
- Preparation classes and/or materials for appropriate standardized language exams and availability of University Placement Service (UPS).
What EF expects of you:
- To develop a greater understanding of the world around you.
- To attend at least 80% of all classes and to do your best in class at all times.
- To be respectful of your homestay hosts, your classmates, your teachers and your community.
- To keep your room and shared areas clean.
- To speak English at all times.
- To abide by all laws, rules and regulations of your host country, state, campus and school.

What you can expect from your homestay hosts:
- A comfortable, clean place to live.
- Prepared meals or accessibility to food to prepare yourself according to the meal plan.
- Access to the school in approximately one hour by public transportation. All transportation costs are your responsibility.

14. US Culture & living tips

Food
The multi-ethnic nature of the American culture is perhaps best exhibited in the variety of food enjoyed by Americans. While there are “typical” American dishes such as steak and potatoes, turkey with stuffing and hamburgers, Americans eat foods from around the world.

Mealtimes
- Breakfast: 6am -10am
- Toast, cereal, juice, coffee or tea.
- Brunch: 11am-2pm
- Combination of breakfast & lunch
- Scrambled eggs, pancakes
- Lunch: 12pm-2pm
- Sandwich, salad or light hot meal
- Dinner: 5pm-8pm
- Largest meal of the day
- Meat (beef, chicken or fish) and vegetables

Mail
Mail service is relatively inexpensive and reliable. For best service, be sure to write the complete address and your return address on the envelope.

The normal form of address in the U.S. is:
Name
Street Address, Apartment number
City, State abbreviation, Zip Code
(zip code is also called the postal code)

Alcohol
The legal age for purchase and/or consumption of alcohol is 21 years old. You will be expected to show identification (driver’s license or passport) when purchasing alcohol in a liquor store or bar. Many nightclubs are only open to people who are 21 years and older. Some clubs may be open to 18 and older, but will not allow alcohol purchase. There are also very strict rules regarding “driving under the influence” of alcohol.

Smoking
Over the past few years, smoking is considered more and more a health hazard to those who smoke and those people around smokers. Therefore, it has become much less tolerated in the U.S. compared to other countries. If you smoke, you will be asked to do so in certain areas or most of the time, outside. Many restaurants do not allow smoking at all unless there is a separate room for smokers. Some schools are completely non-smoking and most homestay hosts will not permit smoking in their home. While EF recognizes your right to smoke, we kindly ask that you behave courteously and follow the rules of your school.

Appliances
Electric outlets in the U.S provide a current at 117 volts, 60 cycles (Hertz). Since many other countries operate with a voltage of 220, you might need a transformer to operate non-American appliances. You might also need an adapter to change the shape of the plug, which is either two flat prongs or three prongs for large appliances. Hairdryers and radios can be purchased very inexpensively in the U.S. so it may be better to buy some appliances upon arrival.

Tipping
People who work in the hospitality industry in the U.S. rely on tips from customers more so than in many other countries. Average tip amount:
- Restaurant servers: 15-20% of bill
- Taxi drivers: 10-15%
- Salons: 20% of bill

Sales Tax
Expect to pay 5-8% sales tax on your purchases (amount and the type of item taxed varies from state to state). Remember that a certain percentage will be added to the net total when you purchase something from a store or when you pay for food and beverages in restaurants.

Store hours
Store hours in the US are more liberal than in most other countries. In general, the following rules apply:
- Department stores and shopping malls: Monday to Saturday 10am to 9pm Sunday 12pm to 6pm
- Supermarkets: Monday to Saturday 8am to 9pm Sunday 9am to 7pm (some 24 hours)
- Small retail stores and grocery stores may close every night at 6pm and may not be open on Sunday

Recommended reading:
- Let’s Go USA, Harvard Student Agencies, Inc. Great student travel guide for where to go, how to get around, where to stay and what to eat.
- Lonely Planet Honolulu, Waikiki, O’ahu, Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. Reliable and authoritative travel information for every budget.
- Don’t Know Much About History by Kenneth C. Davis. Everything you need to know about American history!
- Fifty Nifty States by Jerry Atten, Elementary school textbook about US Geography recommended for students who have very limited English skills.

15. Adjusting to a New Culture
The EF community is more than a group of students who have come together to learn English. It is also a multi-cultural group of young adults who are eager to share their own culture and learn the culture of their host country and fellow classmates.

One’s culture is made up of values, beliefs, arts, traditions and practices of a specific community or population. Our culture affects how we view ourselves, how we relate to others and what we value as important in life. We are often unaware of how much our culture affects our lives.

You may have already had some exposure to the new culture you are about to experience. You may have seen television shows, read books, or studied in school about the USA.
While some parts of this culture may already seem familiar to you, experiencing a new culture first-hand will prove exciting. You will be meeting students from all over the world who, like you, are looking forward to spending a year learning and living a language, both inside and outside the classroom.

As a visitor to a new culture, you may experience periods of fatigue and discomfort when you are uncomfortable. Culture shock is what sometimes happens when we try to meet challenges of our new culture by using the values, beliefs, and attitudes of our own culture. As visitors to a new culture, we must learn that cultural differences are merely different - not right or wrong.

It is a good idea to bring traditional objects from your culture to share with other students and your host to teach them about your country.

**Tips on coping with change**

Remember that change does not come without some effort! We humans need a certain amount of stress to motivate us to learn new ways of being. Learning always involves some form of change. You should try the following:

- While you might be tempted to surround yourself with things that are familiar to you, try not to isolate yourself by being only with others from your home country. Keep reaching out to your host, roommates and other students.
- Put off making major decisions such as an accommodation change, until you feel more "at home" with the culture in general.
- Talk to us about your worries or problems. EF Staff are here to help and would prefer to know about any problem you may have so that we can help you. Many EF staff members have studied or lived abroad, so they understand what it’s like to adjust to life in a foreign country!
- Set goals, no matter how big or small, and accomplish them! You will feel good about yourself in doing so, and you will reduce the negative feelings associated with culture shock. For example, set a goal that you will speak English at all times.
- Remind yourself that you came to this country to experience a new culture, to meet others and to explore your new surroundings. Relax, take a deep breath and reflect back on the days before leaving your home country when you were excited about your new adventure. Try to refocus this former excitement towards your experience.

**Keeping a journal**

One way to keep track of emotions and changes that take place over the year is to keep a journal. By recording your experiences and feelings on a regular basis, you will be able to reduce the impact of culture shock. You will have a record of your academic and personal progress to look back on in days and years to come. Be sure to note changes in:

- Language skills
- School performance and involvement
- Campus/host adjustment
- Individual learning and growth

Keeping a journal will help to remind you that culture shock is truly a temporary phase of adjustment.

**Bring pictures and items from home**

If you have room in your suitcases for some music, a costume, pictures, or some typical crafts, it would be good to show other students, as well as to decorate your room to make it seem like home. We have seen costumes and drums from Korea, dancing and music from Austria and a piñata and tortillas from Mexico. Please bring pictures of your friends, family and surrounding area.
16. EF school calendar & holidays
School holidays
EF International Language Schools in North America recognize the following holidays when there will be no classes. If your arrival falls on one of these dates, please check with the school staff upon your arrival for an exact orientation schedule.

2009
November 26 and 27 - Thanksgiving
December 25 - Christmas Day

2010
January 1 - New Year’s Day
February 15 - President’s Day
May 31 - Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
September 6 - Labor Day
November 25 and 26 - Thanksgiving
December 25 - Christmas Day

2011
January 1 - New Year’s Day
February 21 - President’s Day
May 30 - Memorial Day
July 4 - Independence Day
September 5 - Labor Day
November 24 and 25 - Thanksgiving
December 25 - Christmas Day

17. Learning material prices
Course books
The General English course book is included in the price of the course; however, you will also need to purchase additional EF learning materials during registration. All students purchase the English Guide; other books vary according to the Special Interest Classes selected. (Note: the exact number of books you will be expected to buy is determined by your academic level, progress and choice of Special Interest classes).

Costs of additional learning materials:
- English Guides: $10
- SPIN Communication: $10
- Business English: $20

18. Checklist
- Valid passport (with visa where necessary) It’s a good idea to make copies of these and pack them in your suitcase just in case. You don’t need to carry your passport with you while you are in the USA but you must keep it and your other documents in a safe place while you are in the country.
- Passport Photos (4) for EF student identification cards, travel cards and other possible documents
- Flight ticket
- Luggage correctly labeled
- EF Confirmation letter & other EF documents
- Make sure all EF forms are complete, especially the Health Certificate
- Medical and travel insurance documents with proof of insurance in English, if you have secured Erika Travel Insurance from EF, you do not need to have anything translated.
- Immunization documents with a copy of them in English
- Basic medical supplies, any medication you take regularly and a spare pair of contact lenses or glasses if you wear them.
- An International Driving License if you are planning on hiring or buying a car.
- Local currency for first week and for any learning materials that are not included in the cost of the course.
- Money in the form of an ATM card (Automatic Transaction Card), credit cards and/or traveler’s checks (Do NOT bring large amounts of cash in any currency!).
- Electric adaptor for any electrical appliances you plan to bring with you.
- Pencil and/or pen and notebook.
- Items from your hometown or country so you can share your culture with friends, homestay hosts and teachers.
- Personal sports equipment.
- Favorite books, photos and a camera.
- Homestay or student residence details and emergency numbers.