

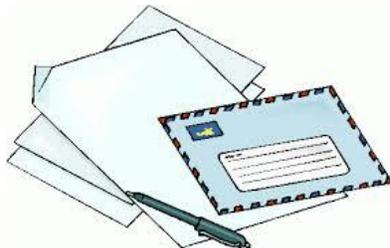
Pre-Arrival Information

Congratulations on your acceptance to the New Westminster School District International Education Program. We are looking forward to your arrival here and have put together some information to assist you with travel.



Contact Your Host Family

What better way to prepare to go to Canada than to get to know your host family? Using email addresses or even a postal address, we recommend that you send your hosts a message to introduce yourself and say, "Hello!"



When to Arrive in Canada - and - Booking Your Flight

Orientation begins the week before school begins. You will be notified of the start date. If staying with a host family arranged through our program, we recommend that you arrive on the Saturday or Sunday before the Monday start date of orientation. If you intend to arrive sooner please confirm the dates with your host family before you book your plane ticket. All students are expected to attend the orientation for the entire week.



Documents to Bring

For your arrival into Canada we suggest that you have the following documents in your carry-on bag and ready to use once you leave the plane:

1. Passport
2. Your Study Permit document from Immigration Canada (if you have applied for a Study Permit)
3. Your Letter of Acceptance (LOA) from the International office
4. Your Host Family profile and contact numbers
5. Electronic Travel Authorization
If you are studying in Canada without a Study Permit (usually one-semester students) you may need to complete an Electronic Travel Authorization or ETA **before** you leave home. For information on the [ETA](#) please check with Canada Border Service Agency.
6. Your signed and completed [Canada Customs Declaration Card](#).
Your declaration card should be completed before you leave the airplane. You will hand this to the customs officer before entering the arrival lobby and after visiting Canada Immigration to receive your study permit and after you retrieve your luggage.



What Not to Bring

We will discuss what to pack for your stay in Canada later. However, since we are discussing entering Canada it is important not to bring [Prohibited Goods](#) such as the following items with you:

1. Fireworks
2. Tobacco Products
3. Alcohol
4. Meats, vegetables, dairy and plants

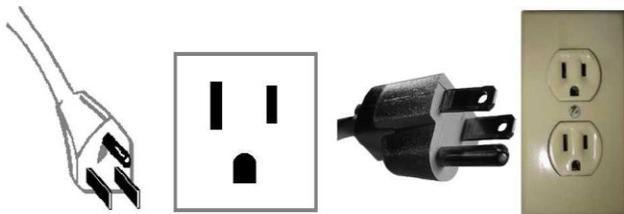
Prescription Drugs and Medicine



If you use a prescription drug or “over the counter” medicine we suggest that you carry these in their original containers. Although unlikely, a Canadian Customs officer can question you on the content and use of any medicinal items.

Electricity

Canada's electrical supply and electrical outlets (sockets, wall plugs) are the same as the United States. The electrical supply is 110 Volts and 60 Hertz (cycles per second). You may want to purchase an electrical adapter if you plan to bring some electronic devices from home to use.



Computers and Phones

Many students use a mobile or "cell" (cellular) phone while living in Canada. As well, students may want to bring a lap top computer to use to complete school assignments or to connect to the Internet. Students can receive information on "pay as you go" cell phone plans from their host families but should not expect their host families to be the guarantor for long-term monthly phone contracts.



Time Changes, Area and Country Codes

British Columbia uses *Daylight Saving Time*. Therefore, during the school year you will hear "fall back" and "spring forward" before the time changes. This refers to the season in which daylight saving either begins or ends.

Usually on the first Sunday of November at 2:00 AM you will "fall back" or, in other words, move your clock back one hour giving you an extra hour of sleep. However, you have to give up that extra hour usually on the second Sunday in March when you "spring forward". At this time you advance your clock one hour ahead. This allows us to enjoy bright evenings almost to 10:00 PM by the summer solstice, June 21st.

The most common area code for the lower mainland in British Columbia is (604), and (778). There will be other area codes in use especially for cellular phones.

The country code for Canada is "1". An example phone call from abroad to New Westminster may look like the following: **011.1.604.123.1234.**

Canadian Money

In Canada we use a variety of coins and bills. In recent years Canada has moved away from one dollar and two dollar bills in favour of one and two dollar coins. As well, from 2015 Canada no longer uses the one cent coin.

Bills

- One Hundred Dollar Bill
- Fifty Dollar Bill



- Twenty Dollar Bill
- Ten Dollar Bill



- Five Dollar Bill



Coins

- Two Dollar Coin (also known as the "twoonie"—borrowed from "Loonie", below)
- One Dollar Coin (also known as the "Loonie" named after the bird that was first featured on the coin in 1987. The bird is known as "The Common Loon".)
- Twenty Five Cent Coin (also known as a "quarter" for $\frac{1}{4}$ of a dollar)
- Ten Cent Coin (also known as a "dime")
- Five Cent Coin (also known as a "nickel")
- One Cent Coin (also known as a "penny")*

***The penny has recently been removed from circulation.**



What Should I Pack?

Because there are four seasons in British Columbia you may want to bring clothes that will allow you to stay warm or cool depending on the season. We are fortunate because in New Westminster we do not experience the harsh biting cold temperatures that other areas of Canada have during the winter months. Here are some suggestions:

Clothing

- A light summer jacket
- A heavier jacket for winter months
- Sweaters for cool evenings and mornings outside and at home
- Jeans or comfortable sportswear
- Adequate amount of socks and underwear
- Shorts and t-shirts for warm and hot days as well as for physical education (P.E.) class.
- Comfortable running or walking shoes for day to day and P. E. class.

School Clothing

- Students do not wear a school uniform in public school in Canada. However, students are still required to follow a simple code for acceptable clothing. This can be found on Page 3 of the [orientation handbook](#)
- If you are taking physical education (P.E.) you will be required to change to appropriate gym wear before class begins. This consists of loose fitting shorts or track pants, and a t-shirt or sports shirt. Students are also required to wear running shoes which will not mark the floors of the gymnasiums.

School Supplies

- Check out the [orientation handbook](#). Usually, one large (or 3-4 small) binders, loose-leaf paper and a well-stocked pencil case will suffice.

Personal Items

- Tooth brushes and tooth paste
- Personal grooming items such as hair gel, deodorant and personal hygiene items.
- Prescription medication and "over the counter medicine". Please note that you should bring these items in their original containers for entry into Canada.

You Can Buy It Here

Packing for a new life in another country is a big job. If you didn't pack everything you wanted or forgot something, don't worry. You can purchase any item from the categories above in local stores here in New Westminster.

Arrival Information at YVR (Vancouver)

Okay, you have packed your suitcase and have your documents and are ready to go to the airport. Great! Let's go over a few things about your arrival in Canada.

Arrival Procedure (Customs and Immigration)

1. As mentioned before when you leave the plane, you should have your documents ready to use.
2. Follow the other passengers to the main Customs and Immigration inspection area.
3. If you are **not** on a Study Permit, go directly to an entry kiosk where an officer will inspect your passport and ask you a few questions. This is where it is handy to have your Letter of Acceptance (LOA) and homestay information ready. Once you have cleared customs & immigration, you can collect your suitcase, hand in your customs declaration form and then meet your host family in the arrival lobby. Easy!
4. If you are on a Study Permit there is one extra step. When you arrive in the Customs and Immigration inspection area you will go to the Immigration Counter to receive your permit. In high volume times (August) there may be a line up and a wait. There will be multilingual volunteers who can assist you if you have questions.
5. When you have received your Study Permit, you then pick up your luggage, hand-in your customs declaration form, and head to the arrival lobby to meet your host family. Easy!

If you are first arriving in Toronto or another Canadian city, you will clear Customs & Immigration there, then transfer to the domestic flight terminal for your short trip to YVR. Once in Vancouver, you simply collect your luggage from the carousel and look for your host family.

Arrival Procedure (Meeting your Host Family)

1. Your host family needs to know your arrival date, flight number, airline and arrival time. Please rest assured that will not be forgotten at the airport. The international arrival lobby can be hectic especially in high volume times (late August and late-morning and early afternoon) so it may take a little time to find them. They should have a sign with your name.
2. If you can't locate your family after five or ten minutes, have a seat in the arrival lobby. **Don't leave the area for other floors of the airport.** Wait by the totem figures in the lobby. Your host family has either been delayed in traffic or can't find you. They will check the area for you.
3. If after 30-45 minutes and you have not met your family, please call the host family numbers that you have been given or the Homestay Manager emergency number at 604.356.4980. Don't worry, you will soon be united with your host family. You can also What's App us at 604.802.7001.

Getting Settled

You have now arrived at your new home and are starting to settle in. Everything is new and exciting. This can be a terrific feeling or it can be a scary feeling. The first few days and weeks will have new challenges in the areas of language, food, and cultural differences just to name a few! Don't worry! We know you are up for the challenge. The few points below may help you to adjust.

Your New Home



Your host family will provide you with a few guidelines for what time dinner is, how to do your laundry, when to be home by and so on. If you are unsure of anything you should ask questions. Check the [homestay guidelines](#) for lots of information.

Shopping



There are stores in New Westminster where you can buy clothes and school supplies. As well, just a few train stations away there are larger shopping centres and malls. You may want to check the following sites:

Royal City Centre (Shopping Mall in Up Town New Westminster)
www.royalcitycentre.ca

Metrotown Centre (Shopping Mall in Burnaby on the Skytrain line)
www.metropolisatmetrotown.com

Transportation



We are fortunate that New Westminster is a small walkable community. Schools, shopping, community centres and our friends' homes are very nearby. As well, New Westminster is very well serviced by public transportation. There are many bus routes leading to the Skytrain. In New Westminster there are five stations that connect with buses that can take you all over Greater Vancouver including to Vancouver International Airport. As a student with your student identification (ID) also called a "GO Card" you are eligible for reduced fares. For more information on transportation check out the Translink web site below:

Translink (The public transportation network for Greater Vancouver)
<http://www.translink.ca/>

Other

Go to Vancouver [Vancouver Tourism](#) to see what you can do while in Vancouver. Don't forget about [New Westminster Parks and Recreation](#) as well as [New West City](#) for lots of ideas and suggestions.