

## Before departure

### Prepare for your stay

#### ➤ As soon as possible! / HOUSING

##### ●●● TIP

- Contact your institution's international office, which can guide you in your search for a place to live.
- If you have not arranged permanent housing by the time you arrive in France, consider reserving a room in a youth hostel or hotel for your first few days in the country.
- Make sure you know the proximity of your school to both your lodgings and the center of the city or town.

##### ➤ NOTE

Whether you are looking for a rented room or apartment on the private housing market or space in a student residence, the CROUS network can help. Its housing search site, [www.lokaviz.fr](http://www.lokaviz.fr), posts announcements of rooms in student residences and tells you how to apply. As for private rentals, the LOKAVIZ label provides assurance of three things: (i) the quality of the lodging, (ii) a rent consistent with the advertised rate, and (iii) a location suitable for students.

➤ Reserve temporary lodgings in advance so you will have a place to sleep once you arrive in France

- ✓ A youth hostel (€25–35 a night, depending on the city): [www.fuaj.org](http://www.fuaj.org)
- ✓ A hotel (€50–90 a night, depending on the city): [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com) - [www.hotels.com](http://www.hotels.com) - [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com)
- ✓ Short stays in private homes: [www.atomeparis.com](http://www.atomeparis.com) - [www.airbnb.com](http://www.airbnb.com) - <http://fr.chambrealouer.com/location> - <http://fr.bedycasa.com>...

## Before departure

### Prepare for your stay

#### ➤ As soon as possible! / HOUSING

##### SECURING HOUSING BEFORE ARRIVING IN FRANCE

##### ➤ On-campus housing

With the significant exception of the universities, many schools provide housing for students. As soon as you accept an offer of admission, notify the housing office or the international office to reserve a room.

##### ➤ Private housing (off-campus)

##### ✓ Private student apartment buildings

Rooms and apartments are available in privately owned buildings all over France. Several networks of such buildings publicize openings on the Web: [www.adele.org](http://www.adele.org) - [www.studelites.com](http://www.studelites.com) - [www.estudines.com](http://www.estudines.com) - [www.fac-habitat.com](http://www.fac-habitat.com) - [www.lamyresidences.com](http://www.lamyresidences.com) - [www.icade-immobilier.com](http://www.icade-immobilier.com) - [www.suitetudes.com](http://www.suitetudes.com)

##### ✓ Renting from an individual

Before leaving home for France, you may want to make advance rental arrangements with an individual property owner or an agency so that your lodgings will be available to you as soon as you arrive. You will be asked to send electronic copies of various documents, the originals of which you should be prepared to show when you take possession of the property you have rented.

**WARNING:** Beware of requests to send several months rent in advance. You could become the victim of a scam.

Instead, spend some time at the following sites: [www.entrepaticuliers.com](http://www.entrepaticuliers.com) - [www.pap.fr](http://www.pap.fr) - [www.paruvendu.fr/immobilier](http://www.paruvendu.fr/immobilier) - [www.seloger.com](http://www.seloger.com)

##### ✓ Shared rentals

Growing numbers of students save money by sharing an apartment. It works like this: a small group of students enters into a rental agreement with a property owner. The names of all of the participating students must appear on the rental contract.

[www.colocation.fr](http://www.colocation.fr) - [www.colocation.vivastreet.fr](http://www.colocation.vivastreet.fr) - [pap.fr/annonce/colocation](http://pap.fr/annonce/colocation) - [www.colocationfrance.fr](http://www.colocationfrance.fr) - [www.easycoloc.com](http://www.easycoloc.com) - [www.ma-colocation.com](http://www.ma-colocation.com) - [www.okroommate.com](http://www.okroommate.com) - [www.koloc.org](http://www.koloc.org)

##### ➤ Housing in a Cité Universitaire

Recipients of French government scholarships have priority for rooms in the "Cité U."

##### ✓ Independently mobile students

Inquire about eligibility at the nearest CROUS branch. [www.cnous.fr](http://www.cnous.fr)

##### ✓ Students participating in an exchange program

Some exchange programs offer participants space in the Cité U or in the school's facilities. Ask the coordinator of your exchange program or the international office of your host institution.

For more information:

<http://www.campusfrance.org/en/Living in France/Housing>

## Before departure

### Prepare for your stay

#### 1 month in advance / VISA

##### ●●● TIP

➤ As soon as you receive your admission letter, begin the process of applying for your visa. The earlier you start, the better.

➤ Whatever else you do, do not fail to visit the Campus France office nearest you. Find that office at [www.campusfrance.org/en>Campus France near you](http://www.campusfrance.org/en>Campus France near you) ●●

#### YOUR VISA FOR FRANCE

Several types of visas exist for students and scholars: the short-term visa (less than 90 days), the student examination visa, the extended-stay student visa and residency permit (VLS-TS), and the extended-stay visa for scientists and scholars.

All visas must be applied for at a French consulate or embassy.

Inquire to learn whether:

➤ You may be exempt from the visa requirement (you may not need a visa)

➤ You need a short-term visa (for stays of up to 90 days). Fee: €60

➤ You need an extended-stay visa (for stays longer than 90 days). Cost: €90

Holders of a short-term visa are not required to complete any further formalities once they arrive in France.

Directory of the embassies and consulates

<http://www.mfe.org/index.php/Annuaire/Ambassades-et-consulats-francais-a-l-etranger>

#### GETTING A VISA THROUGH THE CEF PROCESS

If you live in one of the 31 countries that use the CEF process, your academic admission application is being handled by a Campus France local office. Once your admission file is complete (certificate of preregistration, interview, etc.), you will get a message asking you to visit the French consulate in your area to apply for a visa.

## Before departure

### Prepare for your stay

#### 1 month in advance / VISA

#### LIST OF DOCUMENTS OR EVIDENCE TYPICALLY REQUIRED TO OBTAIN A FRENCH VISA

(requirements vary by country and type of visa):

- Passport valid for at least 3 months after the expiration date of the visa (+ photocopies of key pages showing photo, validity date, visas, and so on)
- Visa application form (available from website of French consulate)
- Several recent passport-sized photos (35 mm x 45 mm)
- Proof of identity and of residency in your home country (+ photocopies front and back)
- Evidence of plane and train reservations
- Bank statements for past three months (+ photocopies)
- Original airline ticket and proof of payment (+ photocopies)
- Confirmation of hotel reservation and evidence of housing arrangements
- Self-addressed, stamped envelopes

Other documents or evidence that may be required include:

##### ➤ Of students

- Confirmation of preregistration/admission from an institution of higher education or notification of registration for an entrance examination in France (+ photocopies)
- Tuition statement for the current year and most recent diploma received (+ photocopies)
- Proof of payment of tuition and fees (for institutions other than universities) (+ photocopies)

##### ➤ Of unpaid interns

- Original internship agreement between employer, educational institution, and intern signed stamped by DIRECCTE (*Direction Régionale des Entreprises, de la Concurrence, de la Consommation, du Travail et de l'Emploi*) (+ photocopies)
- Original "attestation d'accueil" (acknowledgment that intern is expected) issued by the authorities of the town or city in which the internship will be completed (+ photocopies)

##### ➤ Of scientists and scholars

- Original exchange or hosting agreement drawn up by an entity approved by the prefecture of police, or employment contract stamped by DIRECCTE.

For more information:

[www.campusfrance.org/en>Prepare your stay](http://www.campusfrance.org/en>Prepare your stay)

**Before departure**  
Prepare for your stay

➔ **1 month in advance / BUDGET**

●●● **TIP**

- ➔ Make sure that your bankcard will allow you to obtain cash from ATMs in France.
- ➔ Consider renting the kits offered by CROUS for €8/month: the bedroom kit (sheets, bedcover, pillow, bedside lamp); kitchen kit (plates, pans, platters, flatware).

- ➔ The average budget for a student in France:
  - ✓ *At least €800 outside Paris*
  - ✓ *At least €1,000 in Paris*

**BUDGET BREAKDOWN**

The budget below takes into account many available student discounts (for leisure-time activities, for example). You'll need more in the first month to cover a variety of one-time expenses.

Monthly expenses	Paris	Rest of France
Rent, (not including housing assistance, such as APL and ALS; <a href="http://www.caf.fr">www.caf.fr</a> )	✓ in a <i>Cité Universitaire</i> : €200/mo. for a room. ✓ €450–750/mo., on average, for a studio	✓ in a <i>Cité Universitaire</i> : €200/mo. for a room. ✓ €400/mo., on average, for a studio
Renter's insurance	€10/mo.	€10/mo.
Transportation	€60–80/mo.	€40–60/mo.
Social security (medical insurance)	€15/mo.	€15/mo.
Food	€150–200/mo.	€150–200/mo.
Leisure	€90/mo.	€70/mo.
Miscellaneous (including utilities)	€80/mo.	€60/mo.

  

Additional expenses for the first month	
Transportation to study site (train, plane)	Fares and schedules at <a href="http://www.sncf.com">www.sncf.com</a>
Security/damage deposit for your room or apartment (amount will vary with rent)	University housing: €200 Individual property: 1 month's rent
University tuition (unless waived)	<i>Licence, DUT</i> : 181€, <i>Master</i> : 250€ <i>Doctorado</i> : 380€, <i>Diplôme d'ingénieur</i> : 596€
Non-university tuition and fees	-----€
Temporary lodging	-----€

**NOTES**

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**Before departure**  
Prepare for your stay

➤ **1 month in advance** / EVERYDAY TRIPS

●●● **TIP**

Write down key locations and routes in the town or city where you'll be studying.  
Find them on a map. ●●

**KEY PLACES DURING MY STAY IN FRANCE**

➤ **Where I'm staying** (temporarily or for the duration of my stay)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **University or school**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_

N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **University library**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_

N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **Closest Internet access**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_

N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Before departure**  
Prepare for your stay

➤ **1 month in advance** / EVERYDAY TRIPS

**KEY PLACES DURING MY STAY IN FRANCE**

➤ **Arrival train station**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

To get there:

by bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Before departure**  
Prepare for your arrival

**Before departure**  
Prepare for your arrival

➔ **1 month in advance / CONTACTS**

➔ **1 month in advance / CONTACTS**

●●● **TIP**

Ask your local Campus France office if they offer sessions on preparing for departure. Many do!

To learn more: [www.campusfrance.org/en>Campus France near you](http://www.campusfrance.org/en>Campus France near you) ●●

**MY CONTACTS IN FRANCE**

➔ **Where I'm staying (temporarily or for the duration of my stay):**

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of contact at residence (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

➔ **My school or university**

✓ **International office**

Contact name (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ **Registrar**

Contact name (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

✓ **Department/UFR**

Contact name (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

**MY CONTACTS IN FRANCE**

➔ **French-language center (FLE)**

Contact name (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

➔ **Foreign students' association at my institution**

Contact name (first, last): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel.: +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

contacts Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Before departure

Prepare for your arrival at the airport

### 1 month in advance

✎ In case of a late-night arrival...

Two night bus lines (N143 and N140, both part of the regional night transport service known as "Noctilien") connect Charles de Gaulle Airport with Paris. Both depart from terminal 2F. Tickets (sold on board the bus) are €7.60. A taxi into Paris costs about €60.

#### ARRIVING IN PARIS

Paris has 2 major airports, Orly and Charles de Gaulle. [www.aeroportsdeparis.fr](http://www.aeroportsdeparis.fr)

✎ Reaching your lodgings in Paris

✓ From Orly

- Orlybus: To Denfert-Rochereau station (Paris 14<sup>th</sup>), with connections to metro lines 4 and 6. The ride takes 20–30 minutes; tickets (the fare is €7.20) are purchased from the machine located next to bus stop. Make sure you have coins.
  - once at Denfert-Rochereau, take the metro to your residence. Your bus ticket won't get you on the metro. You'll have to buy a metro ticket.
- Air France coach, line 1: Stops at the Gare Montparnasse, Invalides, and Etoile. The trip takes about 35 minutes and costs €12.
  - when you get off the bus, take the metro to your residence. Your bus ticket won't get you on the metro. You'll have to buy a metro ticket.
- Taxis: About €40.
- ✓ From Charles de Gaulle (CDG)
  - RER B: The RER regional rail line departs from terminals 1A and 2A. Allow about 50 minutes to reach Châtelet les Halles. Buy your ticket (€9.25) from the machines in the RER station.
    - then take the metro to your residence. Your RER ticket is valid on the metro.
  - Roissybus: Allow 45–60 minutes to reach the Opéra station. Tickets are €10.
    - then take the metro to your residence. Your bus ticket won't get you on the metro. You'll have to buy a metro ticket.
  - Air France coach: Line 2 stops at Étoile and Porte Maillot (€17); line 4 at the Gare de Lyon and the Gare Montparnasse (€17). From any of these stops, you can take the metro to your residence, but you'll have to buy a metro ticket.
  - Taxi: About €60.

✎ Using the metro in Paris

<http://www.ratp.fr/itineraires/fr/ratp/recherche-avancee>

You can use a single metro ticket (€1.70) to transfer from line to line within central Paris. Buy your ticket upon entering the station, either from the attendant or at a ticket machine. You can use your bankcard at the ticket machines.

## Before departure

Prepare for your arrival at the airport

### 1 month in advance

#### ●●● TIP

- ✎ Try not to arrive on a weekend. Monday arrivals are best. That way you'll have all week to get settled before enjoying your first weekend in France!
- ✎ In case your plane is delayed, be sure you keep with you a list of contacts so you can notify anyone who might be expecting you (for example, your airport pickup, your hotel or residence, and the international student coordinator at your institution)
- ✎ Plot out the trip (taxi, train, bus) to your new residence, or to the Paris station from which you will catch your train to the city or town where you'll be studying, (Paris has 6 stations *Gare du Nord*, *Gare de l'Est*, *Gare Montparnasse*, *Gare de Lyon*, *Gare Saint Lazare*, *Gare d'Austerlitz*) ●●●

#### REACHING YOUR STUDY SITE FROM PARIS

✎ Reaching your study site by plane

✓ Getting to Orly from Charles de Gaulle (CDG)

Air France coach, line 3 (about 60 minutes; €20)

✓ Getting to Charles de Gaulle from Orly

Air France coach, line 3 (about 60 minutes; €20).

✎ Reaching your study site by train

✓ Getting to a station in Paris from the airport

Verify the station from which your train will leave and then plan your route accordingly  
From Orly

- Air France coach, line 1: To the Gare Montparnasse
- Orlybus: To Denfert-Rochereau station (Paris 14<sup>th</sup>), with connections to metro lines 4 and 6. The ride takes 20–30 minutes; tickets (the fare is €7.20) are purchased from the machine located next to bus stop. Make sure you have coins.
- From Charles de Gaulle
  - Air France coach, line 4: To the Gare de Lyon and the Gare Montparnasse (€17)
  - Gare RER B, The RER regional rail line departs from terminals 1A and 2A. Allow about 50 minutes to reach Châtelet les Halles. Buy your ticket (€9.25) from the machines in the RER station.
    - then take the metro to your residence. Your RER ticket is valid on the metro.
  - Roissybus: Allow 45–60 minutes to reach the Opéra station. Tickets are €10.
    - then take the metro to your residence. Your bus ticket won't get you on the metro. You'll have to buy a metro ticket.

## Before departure

### Plan for your trip and arrival

#### 1 week in advance

##### ●●● TIP

➤ **Let your institution know** the details of your arrival. Try to make an appointment to register, and gather information on the place and times for that process. Know the name of the institution's international student coordinator, the location and opening hours of the international student office, and the dates of the orientation session for incoming international students.

➤ **Inform your housing contact** of your arrival. Make an appointment to inspect the premises and get the keys. ●●

If your plane or train is delayed:

*don't forget to notify your contacts and reschedule your appointments.*

#### MY TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

##### ➤ My trip

 TRAIN

 PLANE

Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_

Departure time: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival time (local time): \_\_\_\_\_

##### ➤ Route to my study site

From the airport into Paris: \_\_\_\_\_

Within Paris: \_\_\_\_\_

Upon arrival at my study site: \_\_\_\_\_

##### ➤ What to pack

 An adapter to fit French electrical outlets

 Medications

 A French dictionary

 Appropriate clothing (information on the weather in France: <http://france.meteofrance.com>)

## Before departure

### Plan for your trip and arrival

#### 1 week in advance

##### ➤ Good to know

*Here are some things that are best left at home: recreational drugs, psychotropic drugs (except by prescription), digital copies, certain plants and plant products, protected animal and plant species. For full information, consult the French customs service: [www.douane.gouv.fr](http://www.douane.gouv.fr)*

#### DOCUMENTS TO KEEP ON YOUR PERSON

(in case your bags are delayed or lost)

##### ➤ Identity papers

 Nationals of countries in the European Economic Area and Switzerland: national identity card or valid passport

 Other nationalities: passport valid for the duration of your stay and a visa (if required)

 For all: birth certificate (certified copy and translation)

 Driver's license: If you plan to drive or rent a car in France.

##### ➤ Academic documents

 Proof of registration in a French institution of higher education (make sure you have address and contact information for your school or university, the academic department (UFR) in which you will be studying, and the international office)

 Evidence of language proficiency (French, English, etc.)

 Previous diplomas (certified copy and translation)

##### ➤ Health

 Medical and vaccination records (original or copy)

##### ➤ Daily life

 Your cell phone (in case of emergency), with international option activated

 A bankcard that will allow you to withdraw cash while in France (verify agreement between your bank and the ATM systems used in France)

 Printed housing reservation (hotel, hostel, room, apartment)

 Any documents required by the property owner as a condition for taking possession of your room or apartment

 Printed train reservation

 Printed itinerary from airport (train, metro, bus, walking) (see "1 month in advance")

 Your contacts list (see "1 month in advance")

Download "Enjoy French culture shock"

[http://ressources.campusfrance.org/guides\\_etab/quotidien/fr/abecedaire\\_accueil\\_fr.pdf](http://ressources.campusfrance.org/guides_etab/quotidien/fr/abecedaire_accueil_fr.pdf)

## Arrival in France

### ↘ Day 1

#### ●●● TIP

- ↘ Verify the routes and times involved in reaching your lodgings. Plan alternatives in case your plane, train, or bus is delayed.
- ↘ Make sure you have a telephone that will work in France in case of an emergency or transportation problem.
- ↘ Keep with you contact information related to your lodgings and academic institution.
- ↘ Don't hesitate to get into conversations with French travelers! It's a chance for you to meet new people and to learn something about the area in which you'll be studying. ●●

#### ARRIVAL AT THE AIRPORT

- Withdraw cash:** You'll find ATMs at the airport and in train stations
- Buy travel tickets** (into Paris or to another destination in France): Train and bus tickets may be purchased from machines that operate in several languages and accept bankcards
- Collect train tickets that you purchased in advance.** Do this at SNCF kiosks at the airport or at the train station from which your train departs
- Follow the itinerary that you prepared in advance** (see "1 week in advance")

## Arrival in France

### ↘ Day 1

#### ARRIVAL IN THE TOWN OR CITY WHERE YOU'LL BE STUDYING

- ↘ **Transportation**
  - Buy a few metro and bus tickets
  - Follow the itinerary that you prepared in advance (see "1 week in advance")
- ↘ **Reaching your lodgings** (temporary or permanent)
- ↘ **Plot out the route to your academic institution**
  - Contact the institution to plan your initial visit (registration, student ID card, insurance, etc.).
  - Note the route
- ↘ **Have a coffee at a neighborhood café!**
- ↘ **Go for a walk in the city**



## Settling in

## ↘ Week 1

## ↘ Keeping in touch

- Buy a French SIM card in order to have a French phone number where people can reach you.

## And/or

- Buy an international phone card (offering special rates for calls to certain countries).

## ↘ Get to know your institution

- Visit the international office, meet your contacts, gather information on the institution and its services.
- Visit the registrar to complete your registration, pay your tuition, and get your student ID card.
- Enroll in the national health-care plan (*Sécurité Sociale*). This is mandatory and is done at the time of your registration. You will receive an insurance card (*Carte Vitale*) attesting to your enrollment and making possible the automatic submission of claims for reimbursement of your medical expenses by the French health insurance fund (CPAM). Make sure you have CPAM's address.
- Supplemental insurance: Enrolling in the national health-care plan enables you to choose a supplemental insurance plan to reimburse the portion of medical expenses not covered by the national plan. Optional supplemental insurance is available from the following organizations: *La Mutuelle des Étudiants*: [www.lmde.fr](http://www.lmde.fr); *Smerep*: [www.smerep.fr](http://www.smerep.fr); and *Emevia*, a consortium of regional student supplemental plans: [www.emevia.com](http://www.emevia.com)
- Visit your academic department (known as a UFR in the universities) to get the details of your course load and schedule.
- Visit the institution's library to check that your library card works. (Usually your student ID card doubles as your library card.)
- Find out whether your institution has a one-stop shop for international student services (housing assistance, police registration, banking, insurance, public transportation, and so on). If one is available, it could save you a considerable amount of time.
- Sign up for new-student orientation, if one is offered. Orientations are a great way to get to know other students, explore the city and surrounding region, and practice speaking French.
- Locate the CROUS office and the student restaurant. At the CROUS office, buy restaurant tickets and a pass that will offer you discounts on cultural events.
- Investigate the student clubs that operate within the institution. Join those that interest you and begin to meet people!

## Settling in

## ↘ Week 1

## ●●● TIP

Don't try to do everything in the first week. Make a list of must-dos and deadlines, then take your time getting settled. ●●

## ↘ First steps

 Banking

You'll have to open a bank account in France. To do that you'll need to provide proof of residence (such as a lease or electric bill). If you haven't yet found a permanent residence, it is sometimes possible to give the address of the international office at your institution along with a copy of your passport and proof of residence in your home country. As soon as you find a permanent place to live, you can update your address with the bank.

## ↘ Good to know

- ✓ Ask for several copies of your banking information, a document known as a RIB. The RIB allows you to effect transactions on your account (such as paying rent, bills, and insurance premiums) without writing a check. If you work, it will also enable your employer to deposit your pay directly into your account. You will be asked for your RIB in the course of various procedures (renting property, applying for social benefits, enrolling in insurance, getting a telephone, and so on).
- ✓ There is a charge for issuance of a bankcard.
- ✓ There is no charge for checks, but you won't have them until a few days after you open your account. They will be sent to you by mail or held at the bank for you to pick up. Checks are still widely used in France

# Settling in Looking for a place to live

# Settling in Looking for a place to live

## ➤ Week 1

- **Inquire at your university or school**, which may be able to help you in your search (for example, through a dedicated housing website or through student associations)
- **Visit the nearest CROUS office** and participate in one of its "housing days." If you're interested in a room in the Cité Universitaire, inquire regularly—rooms sometimes become available in mid-year.
- **Use website dedicated to student housing** and shared rentals, or visit the offices of real estate companies that handle rentals (see HOUSING, as soon as possible!).

### ➤ Assemble your file

- A RIB (your banking information) for the payment of rent
- A photocopy of your student card
- A check for your security deposit (usually equivalent to 1 month's rent)
- A letter from your guarantors, a copy of their tax forms (avis d'imposition), and proof of their residence

### ➤ Guarantors

To rent an apartment, you'll have to have a guarantor. The guarantor must be a physical person living in France.

- ✓ A guarantor agrees to pay any rent that you fail to pay. The guarantor's monthly income must be at least three times the amount of the rent.
- ✓ Some banks and student insurance schemes offer rental guarantees (a form of insurance) in return for a premium paid by the renter.

### ➤ Security (or damage) deposit

- ✓ Property owners collect a damage deposit from the renter at the time the lease is signed.
- ✓ The deposit is cashed and held by the property owner for the term of the lease. It is returned at the end of the lease, after the premises have been inspected for damage.

### ➤ NOTE

*LMDE, a student insurance company, and Banque Populaire have created a banking and security deposit guarantee that can benefit student customers of the two institutions.*  
[www.labanquedesetudiants.com](http://www.labanquedesetudiants.com)

## ➤ Week 1

- Good to know
  - ✓ *Keep several copies of key documents in case you have to make several rental applications.*
  - ✓ *Do not hesitate to apply for multiple properties, to telephone rental agencies or property owners, or to visit them in person. Such initiatives can speed the process of finding housing.*
  - ✓ *Joint guarantee arrangements, which allow one party to act as guarantor in case of nonpayment of rent (that is, to pay the rent on behalf of the renter), already exist in several regions (Aquitaine and Midi-Pyrénées) and should be generalized throughout France by the end of 2013. Inquire at the student life office of the regional council in your area.*

### NOTES

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## Settling in

## After finding a place to live

## ↘ Week 1

## ↘ Purchase renter's insurance

**Renter's insurance**, which is mandatory, protects against risks that may arise in a residential dwelling:

- ✓ Emergencies (keys and locks, plumbing, heating, gas, electricity), with a telephone contact to coordinate the response.
- ✓ Hazards (fire, storms, natural catastrophes), with back-up services (such as temporary lodging).

## ↘ Good to know

*Depending on the company you choose, your supplemental health insurance plan may offer reductions with certain insurers. Ask when you sign up. Many websites allow you to compare insurance plans based on your type of residence, city, age, and so on.*

*Here are two examples:*

*<http://www.lesfurets.com/assurance-habitation> - <http://www.lelyn.fr/assurance-habitation.aspx>*

## ↘ Open gas and electricity accounts

To start electrical and gas service (you may or may not have gas service in your building), you need only register with EDF by visiting <http://particuliers.edf.com> > *Je déménage* or calling 09 69 32 15 15.

- Be sure you have the number from the electric meter and the name of the former tenant.
- Have your banking information handy in order to arrange for automatic bill payment.
- Copy down the figures on the meter in your unit so you can provide them to EDF when you start your service.

## Settling in

## After finding a place to live

## ↘ Week 1

## ↘ Sign up for Internet, telephone, and mobile phone service

Many Internet service providers offer combined Internet and telephone plans (limited and unlimited packages, with various international calling options). Some even include mobile telephone plans (with a SIM card). Such bundles allow you combine several services on one monthly bill.

You can research these plans on the Web and in specialized retail stores. You may have to wait a few days for your Internet and telephone service to be activated.

Depending on your needs and the city in which you'll be living, there may be websites that help you compare plans and make contact with providers:

<http://www.ariase.com/fr/comparatifs/>

<http://www.dslvalley.com/adsl/comparatifadsl.php>

<http://www.zoneadsl.com/comparatif/offres-internet-telephonie-illimitee.html>

To activate service, you'll need:

- Your banking information (RIB)
- A photocopy of your passport (with visa)
- Photocopied proof of residence (EDF bill, lease)

## Settling in

## Exploring your surroundings

## ↘ Week 1

## MY DISTRICT

## ↘ Municipal library

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ Bookstore

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ The nearest movie theater

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ Gym, park, theater, etc.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

## Settling in

## Exploring your surroundings

## ↘ Week 1

## MY DISTRICT

## ↘ Bank

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ Post office

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ City hall

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ Préfecture/Immigration office (OFII)

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Getting there:

Bus, metro, train: \_\_\_\_\_ N°: \_\_\_\_\_

Frequency: \_\_\_\_\_

## Settling in

Taking care of important administrative and regulatory tasks

## ↘ Week 1

## ●●● TIP

Have your residency permit validated, get a receipt, and make an appointment with OFII. Doing this allows you to apply for housing assistance (through CAF). Your extended-stay visa functions as a residency permit only after it has been validated by OFII. ●●

## ↘ Good to know

**One-stop shop for international student services:** designed for students and staffed by specialists, the one-stop shop allows you to accomplish a variety of tasks, all at once and in one place.

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. : +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

## ↘ OFII (immigration) certification

If OFII services are not among those offered at the one-stop shop at your institution, you will have to send the following to the OFII office responsible for your area (preferably by registered mail with acknowledgment of receipt, a service available at the local post office):

- The form entitled "demande d'attestation OFII" (request for OFII certification) that you received with your visa. Fill in your visa number, the date you entered France or the Schengen area, and your address in France. If you lost this form, you can download it from the OFII website: [www.ofii.fr](http://www.ofii.fr)
- A copy of the pages of your passport containing the information on your identity, the visa you were granted, and the stamp entered by the French immigration authorities at the border (or those of the transit nation) showing the date you crossed the border.

After you submit the form, you will receive an acknowledgment in the mail that will serve temporarily as proof of your legal presence in France until your visa can be validated by OFII.

Within 3 months of your arrival in France, OFII will set an appointment for you to complete your file, undergo a medical examination, and/or undergo an intake interview.

Address of OFII office in your area:

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. : +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

[www.ofii.fr](http://www.ofii.fr) > Venir à l'OFII

## Settling in

Taking care of important administrative and regulatory tasks

## ↘ Week 1

## ↘ Applying for housing assistance (APL, ALS)

In order to apply for housing assistance, you will need a lease or a statement from your landlord, plus a bank account and your residency permit validated by OFII.

CAF allows you to apply for assistance online: [www.caf.fr](http://www.caf.fr)

Address of CAF office in your area:

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. : +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

When you make your application, be sure you have the following documents handy:

- Form CERFA 10840, "Demande d'aide au logement" (request for housing assistance), downloadable from the CAF website ([www.caf.fr](http://www.caf.fr))
- A copy of your lease or rental contract
- A photocopy of your student ID card
- A photocopy of your passport
- A receipt from your landlord for rent paid

**Final steps**

Studying, exploring, enjoying life

➔ **Month 1**

➔ **Your residency permit: the appointment with OFII**

You will need the following documents:

- The notice of your appointment you received from OFII
- Your passport
- Proof of residence
- A passport-size photo
- A way to pay the OFII fee (check or bankcard)

The amount of the fee varies with the type of visa (€58 or €241) and is added to the visa fee, which can be paid using tax stamps. Stamps can be purchased in licensed tobacco shops (*bureaux de tabac*), in tax service centers (*Service des Impôts des Entreprises ou Service des Impôts des Particuliers*), or online at [www.timbresofii.fr](http://www.timbresofii.fr).

➔ **Choose a primary-care physician**

In order for your medical expenses to be reimbursed by the national health plan, you must choose a referring physician and provide that physician's name to the local office of CPAM (*Caisse Primaire d'Assurance Maladie*), the medical insurance fund that handles reimbursements. You do that by filling out and submitting a form that your doctor will give you at your first appointment. The doctor must be a general practitioner (not a specialist).

Address of CPAM office in your area:

\_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel. : +33 (0) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

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**Final steps**

Studying, exploring, enjoying life

➔ **Month 1**

➔ **Participate in campus life!**

Student clubs and associations

Athletics

Libraries

➔ **Explore**

Get to know your town or city, the surrounding region, and France in general through weekend trips and during breaks in the academic calendar.

Start conversations with the French men and woman you encounter, look for ways to spend time with them and talk. The best way to learn a language is to speak it as often as possible.

**NOTES**

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## Exploring France and Europe

## Exploring France and Europe

### VISIT AND TRAVEL

### VISIT AND TRAVEL

#### FRANCE

- ✓ Tourism offices in France: [www.tourisme.fr](http://www.tourisme.fr)
- ✓ France's national Web portal: [www.france.fr/vivre/detente/manifestations-culturelles-et-sportives](http://www.france.fr/vivre/detente/manifestations-culturelles-et-sportives)
- ✓ French Federation of International Musical Festivals: [www.francefestivals.com](http://www.francefestivals.com)
- ✓ National Monuments Center: [www.monuments-nationaux.fr](http://www.monuments-nationaux.fr)
- ✓ National Museums: [www.mn.fr/francais/musees/](http://www.mn.fr/francais/musees/)

One place I want to visit is: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Fare: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Another place I want to visit is: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Fare: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### ✎ Purchase train tickets in advance on the Web

[www.voyages-sncf.com](http://www.voyages-sncf.com)

To ensure a smooth trip and get the best price, buy your train tickets in advance on the Web. If you can, choose the option of printing out the ticket rather than picking it up from a machine at the station (which is more complicated, and you have to use the same bankcard that you used to buy the ticket).

The station from which the train departs is indicated on the ticket and on the purchase confirmation that you will receive by email.

#### EUROPE

- ✓ Europe train pass: <http://francais.interrail.eu/enfr/>
- ✓ Bus: [www.eurolines.fr](http://www.eurolines.fr)
- ✓ Website of the European Union: [http://europa.eu/travel/index\\_fr.htm](http://europa.eu/travel/index_fr.htm)
- ✓ European youth portal: [http://europa.eu/youth/travelling\\_europe/index\\_eu\\_fr.html](http://europa.eu/youth/travelling_europe/index_eu_fr.html)
- ✓ Airline ticket sites: [www.kayak.com](http://www.kayak.com), [www.skyscanner.com](http://www.skyscanner.com), [www.expedia.fr](http://www.expedia.fr)

One place I want to visit is: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Fare: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

Another place I want to visit is: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Fare: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

#### FURTHER...

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Fare: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of trip: \_\_\_\_\_

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

Taking into account the many discounts for which students are eligible, the average monthly student budget is €1,000 in Paris and €800 elsewhere in the country.

### Food, meals, everyday expenses

- ✓ 1 baguette: €0.80
- ✓ 1 coffee: €1–2
- ✓ 1 Camembert cheese: €2
- ✓ 1 croissant: €1
- ✓ 1 kg of pasta: €1
- ✓ 1 kg of potatoes: €1.20
- ✓ 1 kg of rice: €1.90
- ✓ 1 liter of milk: €1.20
- ✓ 6 eggs: €1.50
- ✓ 1 meal at a university cafeteria (RU): €3.05
- ✓ 1 fast-food meal: €7
- ✓ 1 meal at neighborhood restaurant: €10–20
- ✓ 1 sandwich: €3–5
- ✓ 1 newspaper: €1.50
- ✓ 1 postage stamp: €0.50 (Europe)
- ✓ 1 set of photos at a photomat: 4 photos for €5
- ✓ 1 calling card for use with public telephones: 50 units for €7.50; 120 units for €15
- ✓ 1 load of wash in a laundromat: €4.5

### Culture, leisure

- ✓ 1 student-rate movie ticket: about €7.50. Some national theater chains (UGC, Gaumont) offer unlimited monthly admission cards for €30).
- ✓ 1 museum admission: €5–10
- ✓ 1 student-rate swimming pool admission: €1.70
- ✓ 1 newspaper: €1.20
- ✓ 1 DVD player: €50–150
- ✓ 1 MP3 player: €20–150
- ✓ 1 paperback book: about €6
- ✓ 1 night in budget hotel (\*\*): €60
- ✓ 1 theater ticket: €10–30

## HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

### Health

- ✓ Medical visits:
  - General practitioner: €23 and up (of which €14 is reimbursed)
  - Psychiatry, neuropsychiatry, neurology: €37 and up (€24 reimbursed)
  - Gynecology, ophthalmology: €28 and up (€19 reimbursed)
  - Specialist: €25 and up (€19 reimbursed)
  - Dentist: €30 and up depending on service rendered (filling, plaque removal, etc.).

### Household supplies, Internet access

- ✓ 1 month of Internet access: €20–50 depending on the plan or bundle (Internet, TV, telephone, unlimited calling to several dozen countries).
- ✓ 1 cell-phone plan: starting at €30 per month depending on provider (Orange, Bouygues, SFR). Prepaid cards starting at €5 are sold in licensed tobacco shops.
- ✓ Microwave oven: €120–215
- ✓ Vacuum cleaner: €60–110
- ✓ Electric iron: €25–45
- ✓ TV set: €110–200
- ✓ CD player: €55–190
- ✓ Music CD: €20

### Transportation and travel

- ✓ 1 round-trip Paris-Barcelona air ticket: €100–150
- ✓ 1 round-trip Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam Thalys rail ticket: €100–120
- ✓ 1 round-trip Paris-London Eurostar rail ticket: €100–150
- ✓ 1 round-trip Paris-Nice TGV (high-speed train) ticket: €140. If purchased far enough in advance, the price may be as low as €50.
- ✓ 1 night in budget hotel (\*\*): €80
- ✓ 1 monthly public transportation pass in Paris: from €60 (Paris proper) to €123 (outlying suburbs)
- ✓ 1 liter of gasoline: €1.70
- ✓ 1 city bike: €1 per day in Paris, but free for the first 30 minutes. Public bike rentals (through Vélib', Vélov, V3) are available in several large cities. Prices vary.



## WORKING AND INTERNING

### WORKING WHILE YOU'RE IN SCHOOL

A VLS-TS student visa validated by OFII serves as a residency permit and entitles the holder, while enrolled and without prior authorization, to engage in paid employment for up to 60% of the work year (964 hours per year). Hours the student spends in study-related internships covered by a formal internship agreement are not counted toward the employment limit, even if the student is paid during the internship.

#### Employment contract / Offer of employment

These essential documents are subject to specific rules under French labor law. These rules protect you in case of conflict with your employer. They also provide you with the assurance that you are working in full compliance with the law.

The employment contract must specify:

- the job title
- the gross monthly salary and hourly rate
- the duration of the employment
- the place, days, and hours of work

French government portal:

[www.service-public.fr](http://www.service-public.fr) > Etranger - Europe > Etrangers en France

#### NOTE

*Two business days before you are hired, the employer must file with the prefecture of police for the jurisdiction in which you live a declaration of your employment accompanied by your residency permit.*

#### Minimum wage and working hours

France has a national minimum wage, known as the SMIC (*salaire minimum interprofessionnel de croissance*). The gross amount is currently €9.43, of which about 20% is withheld by your employer to pay mandatory social contributions. The work week in France is limited to 35 hours.

## WORKING AND INTERNING

### Finding a job

Consider passing out notices of your availability to businesses in your neighborhood. Look for job notices in the local papers. Check the bulletin boards at your academic institution and in supermarkets. Don't hesitate to let people know you're looking for a job. Here are a few common student jobs:

- ✓ language lessons
- ✓ child care
- ✓ translation
- ✓ telemarketing, conducting telephone surveys
- ✓ server, dishwasher, cook (especially in fast-food restaurants)

### Student jobs with institutions of higher education

International students are eligible for student jobs with public institutions of higher education. If you are hired, you will be asked to sign a contract to perform various activities: welcoming new students; assisting disabled students; tutoring; providing computer support and helping others use new technologies; staffing cultural, scientific, athletic, and social events; working in the career center; and marketing the institution's programs. Contracts are offered for a maximum duration of 12 months between September 1 and August 31. Students are limited to 670 hours of work between September 1 and June 30 and an additional 300 hours of work between July 1 and August 31.

### Useful addresses

- ✓ France's regional student-service agencies (CROUS, *Centres Régionaux des Œuvres Universitaires et Scolaires*) post notices of job opportunities in their offices. [www.crous.fr](http://www.crous.fr)
- ✓ CIDJ (*Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse*, the center for youth information and documentation) and its regional centers (CRIJ) post job notices in their offices and online: [www.cidj.asso.fr](http://www.cidj.asso.fr).
- ✓ Studyrama: [www.studyrama.com](http://www.studyrama.com)
- ✓ L'Étudiant: [www.letudiant.fr/jobsstages.html](http://www.letudiant.fr/jobsstages.html)