Welcome to the Visa section of travel.state.gov, an official source of information about United States (U.S.) visa policy and procedures. We hope you'll use this site to learn about different types of U.S. visas, the application process, and to better understand the requirements you need to meet in order to receive your visa.

Millions of foreign visitors travel to the U.S. each year. Others come to live here permanently. International visitors and immigrants add greatly to our nation's cultural, education and economic life. We welcome them. At the same time, we need to do everything we can to keep everyone here, safe. We believe in secure borders and open doors.

A citizen of a foreign country, wishing to enter the U.S., generally must first obtain a visa, either a nonimmigrant visa for temporary stay, or an immigrant visa for permanent residence. The type of visa you must have is defined by immigration law, and relates to the purpose of your travel. If your destination is the U.S., please watch this brief video, which explains new visa policies and procedures for visitors to the United States -- a nation with secure borders and open doors.

If you are visiting temporarily, see Temporary Visitors to the U.S.
If you are visiting permanently, see Permanent Immigrants to the U.S.
Questions? See Questions about Visas.

Please visit the News section of the U.S. Department of State website for information on developments in U.S. visa policy, press releases and more.

Questions About Visas?
What types of visas are available for people to come to the United States?
After I have my visa, I will be able to enter the U.S., correct?
How do I know whether to contact the Department of State or Department of Homeland Security about my issue?
My visa expires in 5 years, what does this mean?
How can I find out how long I am authorized to stay in the U.S.?
What are indefinite validity visas (Burroughs visas) and are they still valid?

What types of visas are available for people to come to the United States?
There are more than 20 nonimmigrant visa types for people traveling to the United States temporarily. There are many more types of immigrant visas for those coming to live permanently in the U.S. The type of Visa you need is determined by the purpose of your intended travel. For an overview of visa types, please see Immigration Classifications and Visa Categories on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIDS) Website. For specific information about each type of visa, please review the information available on the Visa page.

After I have my visa, I will be able to enter the U.S., correct?
A visa does not guarantee entry into the U.S. A visa allows a foreign citizen to travel to the U.S. port-of-entry, and the Department of Homeland Security U.S. immigration inspector authorizes or denies admission to the U.S.

How do I know whether to contact the Department of State or Department of Homeland Security about my issue?
Contact the Department of State, Embassy or Consulate abroad with questions about U.S. visas, including application, the status of visa processing, and for inquiries relating to visa denial.

Once in the United States, the traveler falls under the jurisdiction of Department of Homeland Security. The Department of Homeland Security, USCIS is responsible for the approval of all petitions, the authorization of permission to work in the U.S., the issuance of extensions of stay, and change or adjustment of an applicant’s status while the applicant is in the U.S.
My visa expires in 5 years, what does this mean?
A visa must be valid at the time a traveler seeks admission to the U.S., but the expiration date of the visa (validity period/length of time the visa can be used) has no relation to the length of time a temporary visitor may be authorized by the Department of Homeland Security to remain in the United States. Persons holding visas valid for multiple entries may make repeated trips to the U.S., for travel for the same purpose, as long as the visa has not expired, and the traveler has done nothing to become ineligible to enter the U.S., at port of entry.

How can I find out how long I am authorized to stay in the U.S.?
At the port of entry, upon entering the U.S., the Department of Homeland Security, US immigration inspector, provides you a small white card, Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record in your passport. Visa Waiver Program travelers receive Form 1-94W. On this form, the U.S. immigration inspector records either a date or “D/S” (duration of status). If your I-94 contains a specific date, then that is the date by which you must leave the United States. Your Form I-94, or I-94W is a very important document to keep in your passport, since it shows your permission to be in the U.S. To learn more see Duration of Stay.

What are indefinite validity visas (Burroughs visas) and are they still valid?
Indefinite validity visas (Burroughs Visas) are tourist/business visas manually stamped into a traveler's passport which were valid for ten years. Effective April 1, 2004, all indefinite validity Burroughs visas became void. Therefore, if you have an indefinite validity visa you must apply for a new visa for travel to the U.S.
U.S. Embassy in Dhaka, Bangladesh and the Consular Section in Dhaka
U.S. Embassy in Bridgetown, Barbados and the Consular Section in Bridgetown
U.S. Embassy in Minsk, Belarus and the Consular Section in Minsk
U.S. Embassy in Brussels, Belgium and its services for Americans, nonimmigrant visa services and immigrant visa services
U.S. Embassy in Belize City, Belize and the Consular Section in Belize
U.S. Embassy in Cotonou, Benin and the Consular Section in Cotonou
U.S. Consulate in Hamilton, Bermuda
U.S. Embassy in La Paz, Bolivia and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Consular Section
U.S. Embassy in Gaborone, Botswana and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Brasilia, Brazil
U.S. Consulate General in Sao Paulo, Brazil
U.S. Consulate in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
U.S. Embassy in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei and the Consular Section
U.S. Embassy in Sofia, Bulgaria and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Burkina Faso and the Consular Section
U.S. Embassy in Rangoon, Burma and the Consular Section in Rangoon
U.S. Embassy in Bujumbura, Burundi and the Consular Section in Bujumbura
U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia and the Consular Section in Phnom Penh
U.S. Embassy in Yaounde, Cameroon and the Consular Section in Yaounde
U.S. Embassy in Ottawa, Canada
U.S. Consulate General in Toronto, Canada and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Praia, Cape Verde
U.S. Embassy in N’Djamena, Chad
U.S. Embassy in Santiago, Chile
U.S. Embassy in Beijing, China and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Consulate General in Chengdu, China
U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou, China and its services for Americans, nonimmigrant visas and immigrant visas
U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai, China and the Consular Section in Shanghai
U.S. Consulate General in Shenyang, China
U.S. Embassy in Bogota, Colombia
U.S. Embassy in Kinshasa, Congo, the Democratic Republic of and the Consular Section in Kinshasa
U.S. Embassy in San Jose, Costa Rica and the Consular Section in San Jose
U.S. Embassy in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire and the Consular Section in Abidjan
U.S. Embassy in Zagreb, Croatia and the Consular Section in Zagreb
U.S. Interests Section in Havana, Cuba
U.S. Consulate General in Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
U.S. Embassy in Nicosia, Cyprus and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Prague, Czech Republic and the Consular Section in Prague
U.S. Embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark and its American citizens services and visa services
U.S. Embassy in the Republic of Djibouti and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and the Consular Section in Santo Domingo
U.S. Consulate General in Guayaquil, Ecuador and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Quito, Ecuador
U.S. Embassy in Cairo, Egypt and the Consular Section in Cairo
U.S. Embassy in San Salvador, El Salvador and the Consular Section in San Salvador
U.S. Embassy in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea and the Consular Section in Malabo
U.S. Embassy in Asmara, Eritrea and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Tallinn, Estonia and the Consular Section in Tallinn (American Citizen Services) and Consular Section in Tallinn (VISA Information)
U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the Consular Section in Addis Ababa
U.S. Embassy in Suva, Fiji and the Consular Section in Suva
U.S. Embassy in Helsinki, Finland and the Consular Section in Helsinki
U.S. Embassy in Paris, France and the Consular Section in Paris
U.S. Consulate General in Marseille, France
U.S. Consulate General in Strasbourg, France
U.S. Embassy in Libreville, Gabon and the Consular Section in Libreville
U.S. Embassy in Banjul, the Gambia
U.S. Mission in Germany and the Consular Sections in Germany
U.S. Consulate General in Frankfurt, Germany and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece and its services for Americans, nonimmigrant visas and immigrant visas
U.S. Consulate General in Thessaloniki, Greece
U.S. Embassy in Guatemala City, Guatemala
U.S. Embassy in Conakry, Guinea and the Consular Section in Conakry
U.S. Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana
U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince, Haiti and the Consular Section in Port-au-Prince
U.S. Embassy to the Holy See (Vatican City)
U.S. Consulate General in Hong Kong and its services to Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Tegucigalpa, Honduras and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Budapest, Hungary and the Consular Section in Budapest
U.S. Embassy in Reykjavik, Iceland and the Consular Section in Reykjavik
U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Consulate General in Calcutta, India and the Consular Section in Calcutta
U.S. Consulate General in Chennai (Madras), India
U.S. Consulate General in Mumbai, India
U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Indonesia and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, Iraq
U.S. Embassy in Dublin, Ireland
U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Israel and the Consular Section in Tel Aviv
U.S. Consulate General in Florence, Italy and the Consular Section in Florence
U.S. Consulate General in Milan, Italy and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Consulate General in Naples, Italy and the Consular Section in Naples
U.S. Embassy in Rome, Italy and the Consular Section in Rome
U.S. Embassy in Kingston, Jamaica and the Consular Section in Kingston
U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, Japan and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Consulate in Fukuoka, Japan and the Consular Section in Fukuoka
U.S. Consulate in Nagoya, Japan and the Consular Section in Nagoya
U.S. Consulate General in Naha, Okinawa, Japan and the Consular Section in Naha
U.S. Consulate General's Consular Section in Osaka-Kobe, Japan
U.S. Consulate in Sapporo, Japan and the Consular Section in Sapporo
U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem and the Consular Section in Jerusalem
U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan and the Consular Section in Amman
U.S. Embassy in Almaty, Kazakhstan
U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya and the Consular Section in Nairobi
U.S. Embassy in Seoul, Korea and the Consular Section in Seoul
U.S. Embassy in Kuwait and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan and the Consular Section in Bishkek
U.S. Embassy in Vientiane, Laos and the Consular Section in Vientiane
U.S. Embassy in Riga, Latvia
U.S. Embassy in Beirut, Lebanon and the Consular Section in Beirut
U.S. Embassy in Maseru, Lesotho and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Monrovia, Liberia and the Consular Section in Monrovia
U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru and its services for Americans, nonimmigrant visas, and immigrant visas
U.S. Embassy in Vilnius, Lithuania and the Consular Section in Vilnius
U.S. Embassy in Luxembourg and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Skopje, Macedonia and the Consular Section in Skopje
U.S. Embassy in Antananarivo, Madagascar and the Consular Section in Antananarivo
U.S. Embassy in Lilongwe, Malawi and the Consular Section in Lilongwe
U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and the Consular Section in Kuala Lumpur
U.S. Embassy in Bamako, Mali and the Consular Section in Bamako
U.S. Embassy in Valletta, Malta and the Consular Section in Valletta
U.S. Embassy in Majuro, the Marshall Islands
U.S. Embassy in Nouakchott, Mauritania and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Port Louis, Mauritius and the Consular Section in Port Louis
U.S. Embassy in Mexico City, Mexico and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Consulate General in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico and its services for Americans and immigrant and nonimmigrant visa services
U.S. Consulate General in Guadalajara, Mexico
U.S. Consulate in Merida, Mexico
U.S. Consulate in Monterrey, Mexico
U.S. Consulate General in Tijuana, Mexico
U.S. Embassy in Kolonia, Micronesia and the Consular Section in Kolonia
U.S. Embassy in Chisinau, Moldova and the Consular Section in Chisinau
U.S. Embassy in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and the Consular Section in Ulaanbaatar
U.S. Embassy in Rabat, Morocco and the Consular Section in Rabat
U.S. Embassy in Maputo, Mozambique and the Consular Section in Maputo
U.S. Embassy in Windhoek, Namibia and the Consular Section in Windhoek
U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu, Nepal and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands
U.S. Consulate General in Amsterdam, Netherlands and the Consular Section in Amsterdam
U.S. Consulate General in Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
U.S. Embassy in Wellington, New Zealand
U.S. Consulate General in Auckland, New Zealand and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Managua, Nicaragua and the Consular Section in Managua
U.S. Embassy in Niamey, Niger and the Consular Section in Niamey
U.S. Embassy in Abuja, Nigeria and the Consular Section in Abuja
U.S. Embassy in Oslo, Norway and the Consular Section in Oslo
U.S. Embassy in Muscat, Oman and the Consular Section in Muscat
U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan and the Consular Section in Islamabad
U.S. Consulate in Karachi, Pakistan
U.S. Consulate in Lahore, Pakistan
U.S. Consulate in Peshawar, Pakistan and the Consular Section in Peshawar
U.S. Embassy in Panama City, Panama
U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and the Consular Section in Papua New Guinea
U.S. Embassy in Asuncion, Paraguay
U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru and the Consular Section in Lima
U.S. Embassy in Manila, the Philippines and the Consular Section in Manila
U.S. Consulate General in Krakow, Poland and the Consular Section in Krakow
U.S. Embassy in Warsaw, Poland
U.S. Embassy in Lisbon, Portugal and the Consular Section in Lisbon
U.S. Embassy in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea and the Consular Section in Port Moresby
U.S. Embassy in Manila, the Philippines and the Consular Section in Manila
U.S. Embassy in Asuncion, Paraguay
U.S. Embassy in Lima, Peru and the Consular Section in Lima
U.S. Embassy in Moscow, Russia and the Consular Section in Moscow
U.S. Embassy in St. Petersburg, Russia and the Consular Section in St. Petersburg
U.S. Consulate General in Vladivostok, Russia
U.S. Consulate General in Yekaterinburg, Russia and the Consular Section in Yekaterinburg
U.S. Embassy in Kigali, Rwanda and the American Citizens Service and nonimmigrant visa information
U.S. Embassy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and the Consular Section in Riyadh
U.S. Consulate General in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
U.S. Consulate General in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and the Consular Section in Dhahran
U.S. Consulate General in Edinburgh, Scotland
U.S. Embassy in Dakar, Senegal and the Consular Section in Dakar
U.S. Embassy in Belgrade, Serbia & Montenegro and the Consular Section in Belgrade
U.S. Embassy in Freetown, Sierra Leone and the Consular Section in Freetown
U.S. Embassy in Singapore and its services for Americans, nonimmigrant visas and immigrant visas
U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, Slovakia and the Consular Section in Bratislava
U.S. Embassy in Ljubljana, Slovenia and the Consular Section in Ljubljana
U.S. Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa and the Consular Section in Pretoria
U.S. Consulate General in Barcelona, Spain and the Consular Section in Barcelona
U.S. Embassy in Madrid, Spain and the Consular Section in Madrid and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka and the Consular Section in Colombo
U.S. Consulate in Khartoum, Sudan and the Consular Services available from Khartoum
American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)
U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe, Tajikistan and the Consular Section in Dushanbe
U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and the Consular Section in Dar es Salaam
U.S. Embassy in Bangkok, Thailand and the Consular Section in Bangkok
U.S. Consulate General in Chiang Mai, Thailand
U.S. Embassy in Lome, Togo and the Consular Section
U.S. Embassy in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago and the Consular Section in Port-of-Spain
U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia and its services for Americans, non-immigrant visas and immigrant visas
U.S. Embassy in Ankara, Turkey
U.S. Consulate in Adana, Turkey
U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul, Turkey and the Consular Section in Istanbul
U.S. Embassy in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan and the Consular Section in Ashgabat
U.S. Embassy in Kampala, Uganda and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Kiev, Ukraine
U.S. Embassy in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in London, United Kingdom and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Montevideo, Uruguay
U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan and the Consular Section in Tashkent
U.S. Embassy in Caracas, Venezuela and its Consular Section in Caracas
U.S. Embassy in Hanoi, Vietnam and the Consular Section in Hanoi
U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
U.S. Embassy in Sanaa, Yemen and its services for Americans and visa services
U.S. Embassy in Lusaka, Zambia and the Consular Section in Lusaka
U.S. Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe and its services for Americans and visa services