

Applying for Your Student Visa: Korea

What is a visa?

A visa is official authorization allowing you to enter a country and travel, work, live, or study there for a specific period of time. Generally, a visa is an elaborate stamp that is sealed onto one of the pages of your passport. Visas are issued to American citizens by a foreign country's Embassy or Consulate located in the United States. Every country has its own regulations governing the issuance of visas.

Do I need a visa to go to Korea?

A visa is required for persons other than temporary visitors in Korea. If you will be in Korea for 90 days or longer and the purpose of your visit is to study, you should apply for a student (D-4) visa. Tourist visas can not be extended in Korea. You should apply for your visa as soon as possible.

What do I need to apply for a visa?

You will need the following documents to apply for your visa:

- **A valid passport**
 - ◆ Please see page 1 in the Study Abroad Handbook for information on how to apply for a passport.
 - ◆ Apply early for your passport! It may take 6-8 weeks to process your application.
- **Certificate of school enrollment or school attendance**, this letter will be issued by the exchange university where you will study.
- **Completed Application** see <http://www.koreaembassyusa.org/> for the application
- **Passport Photos**, two color photos, 2 x 2 inch.
- **Application Fee**, \$45 by *money order only* (Personal checks will not be accepted)
- **Certificate or remittance or money exchange**, showing that you have access to at least US\$3,000 while abroad
- **Letter of personal reference**, must be a notarized letter stating that the author will pay your costs if you do not have sufficient funds to pay for travel expenses during your stay in Korea, including school fees, housing, etc.
- ▶ **Attention:** This list may not be all-inclusive! Verify this information with the consulate, as the application process can change or may even vary by consulate.
- ▶ You will also find answers to many of your visa-related questions at:
http://www.koreaembassyusa.org/koreaus/consulates/eng_info.cfm.

How do I obtain a visa?

A. In person

- Take the above documents to the Korean consulate that has jurisdiction over your state of residence.
- Call the consulate before you visit to verify hours of operation and location.

B. Via mail

If you apply by mail rather than in person, you should:

- Send all documents, including your passport, in a FedEx, US Overnight Mail, or other express mail service that provides a tracking number for your parcel, to the consulate. **Keep a photocopy of all documents, including your passport, for yourself.**
- If there is a fee for your visa, send a money order--consulates will not accept personal checks.
- Be sure all documents are in order. Missing documents may cause delays in the processing of your application.

- Enclose a *postage paid* FedEx/US Overnight Mail envelope *addressed to yourself*. The consulate will only return your visa and documents if you provide a return envelope.
- Consult the consulate about the time it will take to process your application. Apply early, as any errors may delay the processing of your visa for weeks.
- Do not leave the country until you have received your passport and visa.

General tips for applying for a visa:

Foreign embassies and consulates in the US receive hundreds of inquiries every day so contacting them can be a trying experience. Have patience. Some consulates only receive visitors or calls during certain hours of the day or on certain days of the week; visit their website to learn their hours or call back at different times of the day. You may find that you are placed on hold or that your call is never forwarded to the appropriate person. Don't be discouraged: be persistent, but polite. Remember that US consulates in foreign countries operate in a similar fashion!

Korean Consulates in the US:

Consulate-General of Korea in Seattle

AREA SERVED: Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington

ADDRESS: 2033 Sixth Ave., #1125 Seattle, WA 98121

PHONE: (206) 441-1011 **FAX:** (206) 441-7912

Korean Embassy in the U.S.

ADDRESS: 2320 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20008

PHONE: (202) 939-5600 **FAX:** (202) 387-0413

WEBSITE: <http://www.koreaembassyusa.org/>