



ONE TO WORLD
Local Connections. Global Impact.

THE

**INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT'S**

SURVIVAL GUIDE:

**NEW
YORK**

**METRO
AREA**

2019-20 EDITION

The International Student's Survival Guide: New York Metro Area

Welcome to the U.S.! One To World would like to introduce you to our organization and the activities and services that we provide for you during your stay in the United States. **One To World** is a New York City-based non-profit membership organization that advances global cooperation and fosters intercultural understanding by creating face-to-face experiences among local communities, international students and Fulbright scholars. **Our function is to serve as a local resource center, answering questions as you get settled and seeing to it that you enjoy your stay in the New York area to the fullest.**

One To World's programs are designed to:

- Introduce you to a variety of American people and help you experience American life and culture.
- Help you make new friends and meet other international students at universities across the New York area.
- Give you an opportunity to share your academic and regional expertise, as well as your culture, with Americans.

In order to register for any of our programs, please take a few minutes to create your account on our website. You can do this by going to www.one-to-world.org and clicking "create a new student/scholar account" on our homepage. Your email address will be added to our international student mailing list, and you will start receiving emails about our programs very soon. For more information about One To World's upcoming programs, see our [Program Calendar](#).

Every spring and fall, One To World organizes a variety of programs that will allow you to:

- Take **walking tours** around diverse NYC neighborhoods and famous institutions.
- Spend a weekend with **American families** in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania.
- Unwind at **social events**, parties and sports games.
- Volunteer to help local communities through a **community service** program.
- Get to know the "working world" in the U.S. with our **"Campus-to-Career"** series.
- Attend a **foreign affairs conference** at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. or the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md.

- Present your country and culture to NYC public school students through our **Global Classroom** program.

In the meantime, connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) to see great photos from our events and read our recommendations for interesting things happening around NYC!

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ABOUT ONE TO WORLD

The only organization of its kind, **One To World** collaborates with over 400 international educators at its more than 70 member colleges, universities and international exchange organizations in the New York metropolitan area, bringing its four decades of experience with international students to support successful educational outcomes.

One To World offers year-round programs that engage international students off-campus with local communities. We also provide monthly professional development opportunities for international educators through our membership association of 72 universities in the greater New York City area. Founded in 1977 by a small group of foreign student advisors, **One To World** has grown into a vibrant organization serving the needs of almost 100,000 international students and scholars, and the educational institutions they attend.

One To World serves as the officially designated coordinator of enrichment programs for visiting Fulbright grantees in New York, and is a nationally and internationally recognized leader in providing substantive and innovative educational programming, acting as a catalyst for priceless opportunities to build understanding and citizen diplomacy.

One To World is proud to publish this expanded edition of The International Student's Survival Guide: New York Metro Area, an invaluable and proven resource for both newly arrived and long-term resident students and visitors in the region. This 2019-20 edition is packed with practical information for newcomers who come to live in New York City or nearby New Jersey. With this handy guide, readers learn how to find housing, open a bank account, practice their English, explore the area and make informed decisions about products and services as they get settled.

This publication was started in 1979, when our guides were first launched, and we have greatly benefited from the help and advice of countless contributors over the years. We gratefully acknowledge the generations of international students, international student advisors, One To World staff members, and volunteers whose great ideas and specific contributions have made this guide possible. We also express our appreciation to our advertising sponsors for recognizing the importance of this project with their financial support.

PLEASE NOTE:

All pricing indicated throughout this guide is correct at time of publication.



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CHAPTER ONE

PREPARING FOR YOUR ARRIVAL

ARRIVING AT THE AIRPORT



Most international visitors arrive at one of the three main airports in the metropolitan area. All three airports are operated by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. For airport transportation information and general information for each airport, call the Port Authority at (800) 247-7433, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, or check out their website at www.panynj.gov. The Port Authority website also provides links to each airport's main website, where you can access airport maps and guides that detail airline and parking lot locations, travel directions and services. Visit www.panynj.gov/airports to see each airport's website and information.

JOHN F. KENNEDY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (JFK)

GENERAL INFORMATION

(718) 244-4444

www.panynj.gov/airports/jfk.html

JFK is located in Queens, about 15 miles/24 kilometers from Mid-Manhattan. Hundreds of international and transcontinental flights arrive and depart every day. Once you've claimed your baggage, there are several ways to get into Manhattan from JFK. **NYC Express Bus** (www.nycairporter.com) takes you via direct bus to Grand Central Terminal or the Port Authority Bus Terminal. The one-way cost is \$19, and the round-trip cost is \$36. **SuperShuttle** (www.supershuttle.com) is a shared door-to-door van service that takes you to any address in Manhattan for approximately \$30 (plus tolls and tip—see the **Tipping** section to learn more). Another option is a yellow taxi (or “cab”), which can take you to any Manhattan address for a flat rate of \$52 (plus tolls and tip). Taxis line up outside every terminal; follow signs for the taxi stand or ask an airport employee to point you in the right direction. See the **Taxis** section to learn more. You can also use a popular ride-hailing app like Uber or Lyft. See our **Ride-Hailing Apps** section for more information.

Alternatively, if your budget is tight, you can take **The AirTrain JFK** (\$5) from inside any airport terminal to the:

- **Howard Beach Station**, where you can transfer to the A subway train (\$2.75 MetroCard plus a \$1 new card fee).
- **Jamaica Station**, where you can transfer to the E, J or Z subway trains (\$2.75 MetroCard plus a \$1 new card fee) or the Long Island Rail Road (LIRR).

For more information on the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) New York City Transit services from John F. Kennedy Airport, visit web.mta.info/nyct/service/airport.htm.

LAGUARDIA AIRPORT (LGA)

GENERAL INFORMATION

(718) 533-3400

www.laguardiaairport.com

LGA, also in Queens, is about 8 miles/13 kilometers from Mid-Manhattan and primarily offers domestic flights and short-haul North American flights. **NYC Express Bus** (www.nycairporter.com) takes you via direct bus to Grand Central Terminal or the Port Authority Bus Terminal (\$16 one-way or \$30 round-trip); a **SuperShuttle** (www.supershuttle.com) van will deliver you to any location in Manhattan for about \$25 (plus tolls and tip); and a yellow taxi into Manhattan costs approximately \$25–\$37 (plus tolls and tip). See the **Taxis** section to learn more.

If you're on a tight budget, you can take the M60-SBS Bus to Broadway & West 106 St. via 125th St. (\$2.75), and along the route connect to the 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, A, B, C or D subway trains (\$2.75 MetroCard plus a \$1 new card fee). If taking the M60-SBS, you must pay at a fare collector machine *before* boarding the bus. (See web.mta.info/nyct/sbs/M60LaGuardiaAirportHarlem for more information.) You can also take the Q70 bus to Jackson Heights/Roosevelt Ave., where connections to the E, F, M, R and 7 subway trains are available. If you pay with a MetroCard, the transfer between bus and subway is free.

For more information on the MTA New York City Transit services to LaGuardia Airport, visit web.mta.info/nyct/service/airport.htm.

NEWARK LIBERTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (EWR)

GENERAL INFORMATION

(973) 961-6000

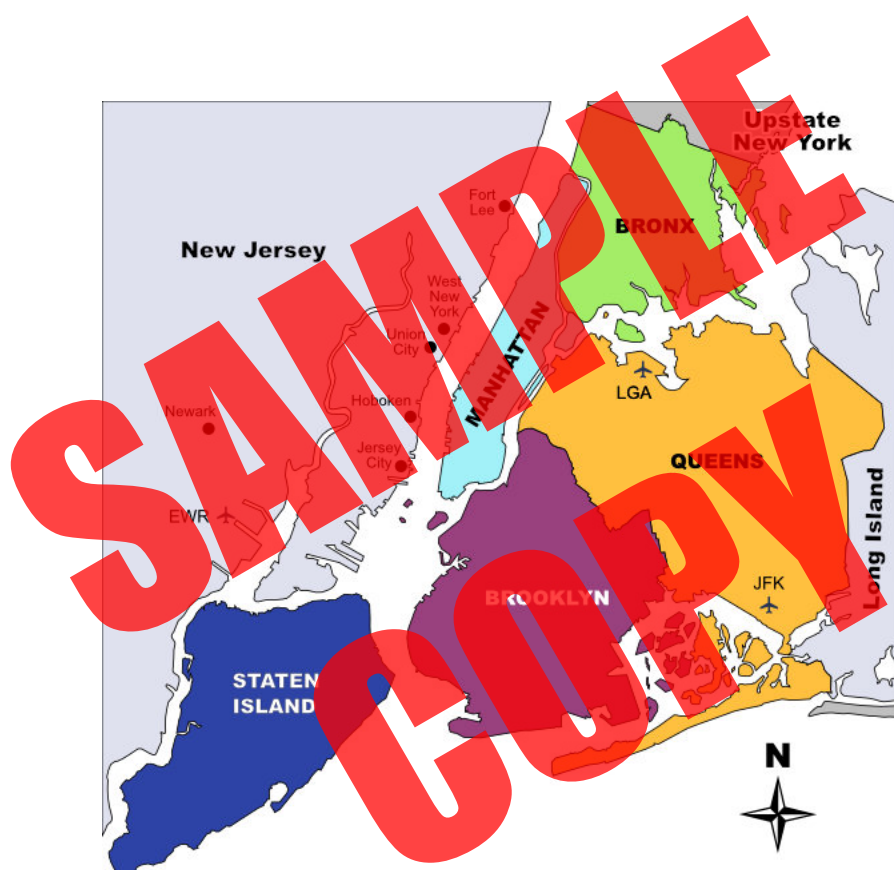
www.panynj.gov/airports/newark-liberty.html

EWR, located in Newark, New Jersey, is about 16 miles/26 kilometers outside Mid-Manhattan and serves both international and domestic routes. **The Olympia Trails Airport Express Bus** (www.newarkairportexpress.com) takes you from EWR to Grand Central Terminal, the Port Authority

Bus Terminal or Bryant Park (\$17 one-way or \$30 round-trip). SuperShuttle offers shared door-to-door van service for about \$35 (plus tolls and tip) to Manhattan, and a taxi to Manhattan costs \$50–\$75 (plus tolls and tip). See the [Taxis](#) section to learn more.

You can also take **AirTrain Newark** from your terminal to the Newark Liberty International Train Station, where a **New Jersey Transit** (www.njtransit.com) train can take you to New York's Penn Station (34th St. and Eighth Ave.) for \$13, including the cost of AirTrain. Note: The NJ Transit ticket that you purchase at the airport will be used twice—once on the AirTrain and again on the NJ Transit train to Penn Station.

NEW YORK CITY'S FIVE BOROUGHS AND NEARBY NEW JERSEY



NEW YORK CITY

New York City consists of five boroughs: Manhattan, Brooklyn, The Bronx, Staten Island and Queens.

MANHATTAN

The island of Manhattan is the smallest borough, but certainly the best known. As the heart of New York City's cultural and commercial activity, you've seen it in countless films and television shows. Only 13.4 miles/21.5 kilometers long and 2.3 miles/3.7 kilometers across at its widest point, Manhattan is home to 1.65 million residents, making it the most densely populated and expensive of the five boroughs. There are few bargains; most rents range from moderately to prohibitively expensive, forcing many people to seek housing in the other four boroughs. In general, the further uptown you go, the cheaper the price of rent. Neighborhoods such as Washington Heights, Harlem and Inwood, which are the furthest from downtown Manhattan, tend to be less expensive than those farther downtown.

Some pockets of lower Manhattan (specifically those near Chinatown and the East Village) may offer more affordable options. All subway lines except the G line run through Manhattan, and most neighborhoods are easily accessible via public transportation.

BROOKLYN

With nearly 2.64 million residents, Brooklyn has the largest population of the five boroughs. One-third of its residents are foreign-born, and it is home to a wide variety of ethnic groups. Due to the high cost of housing in Manhattan, Brooklyn has become an extremely popular place to live. While Brooklyn offers a wide variety of housing options, there are some areas—such as Park Slope, Williamsburg and Brooklyn Heights—where rent prices can be just as expensive as Manhattan. Some affordable neighborhoods to explore in Brooklyn are Bedford-Stuyvesant, Bushwick, Clinton Hill, Prospect Heights, Crown Heights, Windsor Terrace, Sunset Park, South Park Slope and Red Hook, among others. Linked by numerous subway lines, many neighborhoods in Brooklyn are only a short ride away from downtown Manhattan.

QUEENS

Queens is the largest borough, covering 108 square miles/280 square kilometers. It is the most ethnically diverse urban area in the world, with 48 percent of its 2.36 million residents born outside of the U.S. Safe, comfortable and convenient for shopping, Queens is largely composed of residential, ethnically diverse, family-oriented communities. In general, Queens is one of the more affordable boroughs in New York City; average rents are significantly lower than those in Manhattan and some parts of Brooklyn. Recently, however, neighborhoods like Astoria and Long Island City have become more expensive. Some other popular neighborhoods in Queens include Flushing, Jackson Heights, Rego Park, Elmhurst and Woodside. Served by several major subway lines, Queens is easily accessible from Manhattan. Despite its proximity to Brooklyn, however, the two boroughs are not widely connected by subway. The G line connects Brooklyn and Queens, but service is less frequent than other subway lines. Bus lines provide additional routes to make travel between the two boroughs more convenient.

THE BRONX

The Bronx has the distinction of being the only borough of New York that is not located on an island. A largely residential area with 1.47 million inhabitants, the Bronx is home to diverse communities as well. Because of its distance from central Manhattan, rent in the Bronx tends to be very affordable. The Northwest Bronx is a good area to look for housing; the Fordham University and Italian Belmont areas are also popular neighborhoods for young people and students. The borough is linked to Manhattan by 13 bridges, seven major subway lines and two Metro-North Railroad lines, in addition to its own extensive network of public and private bus lines.

STATEN ISLAND

The city's "greenest" borough with the smallest population (fewer than 500,000), Staten Island seems a world away from the bustle usually associated with New York City. Winding streets, neat lawns and a view of New York Harbor enhance the quiet, suburban atmosphere of Staten Island. The Manhattan skyline, visible in the distance, is a constant reminder that the island is New York City's fifth borough.

The rather long commute to Manhattan makes this borough a less popular place to live, but the lower rent is a definite attraction. Lower Manhattan is 30 minutes away via the Staten Island Ferry, which is free, and several express buses travel the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, which connects the island to Brooklyn. Buses and a limited subway system provide transportation around the island.

NEARBY NEW JERSEY

Across the Hudson River, a short distance from Manhattan, lie other opportunities for affordable housing in New Jersey. Although New Jersey is a different state from New York, several of its cities are very close to New York City, accessible via NJ Transit, PATH (please see the section on [PATH Trains](#)), or the NY Waterway. Students, young professionals and artists have flocked to these places to take advantage of their affordability and proximity to NYC.

FORT LEE

Known for its cultural diversity, Fort Lee is a suburban borough that boasts a large Asian population, which is most evident in its large and well-known Koreatown. You can take a NJ Transit bus over the George Washington Bridge to Midtown Manhattan, which takes about 40 minutes. Alternatively, you can hop on a shuttle to the NY Waterway ferry.

UNION CITY/WEST NEW YORK

Union City and West New York are affordable options that are very close to Manhattan via bus. In fact, you can get to Times Square quicker from Union City than you can from Brooklyn. Both Union City and West New York have large Latin American populations with nearly 80 percent of people identifying as Hispanic, according to the U.S. Census. The average commute from Union City to Manhattan's Port Authority is under 15 minutes via NJ Transit bus.

HOBOKEN

Hoboken maintains a small-town vibe without ever feeling boring. Festivals and events are held year-round and there is no shortage of excellent restaurants in this waterfront city. The best way to commute to Manhattan is via PATH, which can get you to Midtown Manhattan in 15-20 minutes. You can also reach Manhattan via NJ Transit or the NY Waterway ferry.

JERSEY CITY

Jersey City combines suburban and urban living like few other places. Its bustling downtown is lined with restaurants, coffee shops, bars and stores. Liberty State Park and Liberty Science Center alone draw millions of visitors each year. The best way to commute to Manhattan is via PATH; a ride to the World Trade Center is only about 12 minutes, and you can get to Midtown Manhattan in under 30 minutes. You can also reach Manhattan via NJ Transit or the NY Waterway ferry.

NEWARK

Newark is a diverse, urban city with an active nightlife and plenty of culture. With new cafes, restaurants and bars opening up frequently, the city is constantly evolving. Students appreciate its energetic and thriving arts scene as well. As a major travel hub, Newark is easily accessible a number of ways. The

best options for commuting to Midtown Manhattan are NJ Transit or PATH, either of which can get you there in about 30 minutes.

NAVIGATING NEW YORK CITY AND NEARBY NEW JERSEY



New York City may strike a newcomer as an intimidating place, with its crowded streets, fast-moving pedestrians and skyscrapers. Once you develop a basic understanding of the geography of the city and become familiar with the different transportation systems, you will quickly become more confident in your ability to get around.

Manhattan streets are laid out in a grid pattern, with avenues running north and south (uptown and downtown) and streets running east and west (crosstown). Fifth Avenue divides Manhattan into the east and west sides. The grid breaks south of 4th Street, in the older part of the city, where streets follow irregular paths and have names instead of numbers. The other boroughs do not have the same rigid layout and are more difficult to navigate. For example, Queens has a unique system; due to the large number of avenues, addresses consist of two sets of numbers. The address 23-05 31st Ave., Queens, NY denotes house number “5” on 31st Avenue at 23rd Street in Queens.

Google Maps (www.google.com/maps) is very useful as you acclimate to the city. The free, downloadable app for smartphones and tablets ensures you’ll never be lost. You can even download maps for offline use for times when you are without service or Wi-Fi. Another fantastic app is **Citymapper** (www.citymapper.com/nyc), which has quickly become the go-to app for mapping out routes. Its step-by-step directions include useful information like accurate subway departure times, crucial MTA alerts, and the closest station exits so you can get to your destination even faster.

To find different types of places (such as shops, restaurants and attractions) near you, many people also use the location-based app or website **Yelp** (www.yelp.com), which will list nearby establishments along with reviews and basic information like hours of operation.

A great way to sample the flavors of New York City’s neighborhoods is to sign up for one of the many walking tours offered on weekends. During the academic year, One To World runs excellent walking tours and cultural events that are designed with international students and their budgets in mind. Visit www.one-to-world.org for details about upcoming tours.

TRANSPORTATION IN NYC AND NJ

One of the best things about the metropolitan area is its wealth of transportation options. New York City and many of the most popular towns in New Jersey are home to robust public transportation offerings. Millions rely on public transit each day, and you will quickly learn that getting around these areas is both efficient and affordable.

New York City buses and subways are both run by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA). For more up-to-date traffic and transit information, call 511 to reach the NY state traffic information line. The MTA also offers a few smartphone apps, which contain maps, schedules and service changes. You can download them at [mta.info/apps](https://www.mta.info/apps). For a free subway map, ask an agent in any station booth. The standard bus and subway fare is \$2.75. To travel on the subway, you need a prepaid travel card called a MetroCard, which costs \$1. A new MetroCard will be issued at no charge if your card is expiring or damaged. If you lose your card, you will need to buy a new one. You can easily purchase and load/reload a MetroCard from vending machines in each station, as well as from MTA agents at many stations. To travel on the bus, you can use a MetroCard or exact change (coins only). You can purchase Single Ride tickets, but it is more convenient and economical to purchase “Pay-Per-Ride” or “Unlimited Ride” MetroCards.

Purchasing a Pay-Per-Ride MetroCard allows you to store money on your card. Each time you ride the subway or bus, the fare is deducted from your card. Pay-Per-Ride MetroCards can be purchased for a minimum of \$5.50 (two rides) and a maximum of \$100, and are refillable. A Pay-Per-Ride MetroCard also allows free transfers between the bus and subway within two hours of use.

If you ride the subway or bus regularly, it is probably more economical for you to purchase an Unlimited Ride MetroCard, which will allow you to take as many rides as you need within a fixed period of time for a set price. The cost is:

- \$33 for a seven-day unlimited card.
- \$127 for a 30-day unlimited card.
- \$62 for Express Bus plus seven-day (also valid on subway and local bus).

Note that if you use your Unlimited Ride MetroCard often enough, you will end up paying considerably less than \$2.75 per ride—the more you ride, the less you pay.

TIPS:

If you are using a vending machine to purchase a MetroCard or are adding additional fare to an existing card, and you are using an international credit card, input 99999 when asked for your ZIP code.

If you pay with a credit card and lose your Unlimited Ride MetroCard, you can call the MTA to report it lost and receive a refund equal to the amount of fares remaining on the card. Note that you are only allowed to replace your lost card for a refund twice per year.