



You are welcome here.

PRE-ARRIVAL GUIDE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

December 2024



snəwəyət leləm.
THE COLLEGE OF HIGHER LEARNING.

Langara.
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Land Acknowledgment

snəwəyət leləm Langara College welcomes students from more than 100 countries. We share a journey that brings community together as we live and learn on a path to a bright future.

Langara acknowledges its location on the unceded ancestral territory of the Musqueam on what was once a Musqueam village. We are honoured by the Musqueam to be given the name snəwəyət leləm, which means *house of teachings*, a fitting name for a college that has long encouraged a culture of exploring new frontiers, investigating ground-breaking ideas, and transforming thoughts into action.



Introduction



Brad Van Dam
Director, Langara Global

You are embarking on an incredible and life-changing journey that will broaden your knowledge, allow you to acquire new skills, and help forge new pathways to future education or new careers. snəweyət leləm Langara College and the Langara Global Team are dedicated to supporting you every step of the way. Resources for academic success and personal well-being are available to you, and it is our commitment to assist you as you transition to living and learning in a new country and culture and throughout your studies.

This guide is a tool to help you become familiar with Langara College and your future new home in Vancouver. And, as you prepare to travel to Canada and begin your studies here, I encourage you to reach out to the Langara Global Team if you have questions or need support.

I am delighted you have chosen Langara College for your Canadian international studies. I am excited to meet you and learn how we can help you achieve your goals. You are on a journey of becoming a global citizen, and we are honoured to be a part of that. I wish you all the best, with much success, and I look forward to seeing you on campus soon.



Teresa Brooks 黃德蘭, MEd
Associate Director,
International Student Services,
Langara Global

Greetings! Thank you for choosing snəweyət leləm Langara College to be your place of learning and for sharing your academic journey with us. As a new student getting ready to begin your studies in Canada, I am sure you have many questions. Well, this guide and the Langara Global International Student Services (ISS) Team will provide the answers you need.

The ISS Team is a group of dedicated, caring, and multilingual professionals whose priority is to serve and support you in your success. We are your first point of contact for any questions you have regarding your personal, academic, and immigration-related matters. We welcome you to connect with me or any of my ISS colleagues. We will happily provide you with the information you need, virtually and in person.

Happy planning and safe travels, and I look forward to meeting you on campus.

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1. Before You Travel

Congratulations and welcome to snə́weyət lelə́m Langara College!

We created this guide to help you prepare for your journey to Vancouver, Canada.

Now that you received your Letter of Acceptance (LOA), it is time to plan your travel to Canada. We strongly advise gathering the essential documents as soon as possible to have a safe and successful trip.

This phase of your planning requires maximum attention. So, take some time to read each of the following topics carefully.

Are you ready?

1.1 Valid Passport

Your first step is to check if your passport is valid. International students should have a valid passport for at least six months before the expiry date¹.

The Government of Canada will issue a work permit, study permit, or visitor record up until the date of expiry of the passport².

For example, if the program for which you are applying has a duration of two years and your passport is only valid for one year, you will be issued a permit for one year. Alternatively, you can renew your passport after you arrive in Canada to extend your stay.

Therefore, you must make sure that the expiry date of your passport includes the period of your studies in Canada.

Be mindful that the length of the study permit or work permit is at the discretion of the immigration officer.

Learn more about passports and other travel documents required to come to Canada [here](#).

1.2 Canadian Study Permit

Students who are not Canadian Citizens or Permanent Residents of Canada need a study permit for programs longer than six months. Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) issues study permits³.

Below you will find a checklist we created with the minimum documents required to apply for your study permit⁴:

¹ [Pre-Arrival Checklist](#)

² [Valid passports and other travel documents needed to come to Canada](#)

³ [Study permits: Who needs a study permit](#)

⁴ [Pre-arrival Checklist](#)

- Valid passport – at least six months before the expiry date
- Two passport-size photos with your name and date of birth written on the back
- Letter of Acceptance (LOA) from a Designated Learning Institution (DLI)*
- Proof of Financial Support
- Provincial Attestation Letter (PAL), if applicable

* Langara College's DLI number is: O19319074622 (first character is the letter "O")

Find out how to [get the right documents](#).

Note: *International LEAP (Langara English for Academic Purposes) Students can come to Canada with a valid travel document (electronic travel authorization or visitor visa) and won't require a study permit if the program lasts 6 months or less. However, you must get a study permit if you want to study for longer than 6 months.*

Once you have all the documents in hand, it is time to submit your study permit application!

You may do it through a local [Visa Application Center \(VAC\)](#) or apply [online](#).

To better understand how to apply for, or extend your study permit, please check the [IRCC website](#).

Refund

Unfortunately, the Government of Canada can refuse study permit applications. If that does occur, you may request a refund of your payment from Langara College.

Be mindful that refund policies differ depending on the program you are enrolled in.

1.3 Canadian Visa

Depending on your country of origin, you may need to apply for a temporary resident visa or an Electronic Travel Authorization (eTA) to travel to Canada.

International students may also be expected to submit biometrics, police clearance, and medical exams upon applying for a Canadian Visa.

Students should have the appropriate documents to travel to Canada upon receiving the study permit approval letter and the visa.

It is important to note that the study permit is issued upon entry into Canada and that eligibility for entry is up to the discretion of the immigration officer.

Note: The information provided in subsections 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 is current as of December 2022 and it is subject to change without notice.

1.4 Medical Insurance

No travel can be safe without appropriate medical coverage. If tourists must have medical insurance while travelling abroad, the same applies to those who will spend even more time studying away from their home country.

In British Columbia (BC), international students with a study permit valid for six months or more are required by law to have comprehensive health and accident coverage while staying in the province⁵. Students studying for less than six months should also arrange for insurance coverage during their stay in Canada.

The Medical Services Plan of BC (MSP) is the basic coverage for all residents of British Columbia, including international students⁶. Therefore, you must apply for MSP upon arrival in BC, and coverage will commence after a waiting period of three months (approximately 90 days).

Learn more about MSP [here](#).

Temporary Medical Insurance

International students – regardless of their duration – are not advised to stay in BC without appropriate medical coverage. In general, students should obtain temporary medical insurance for either the three-month mandatory wait period for MSP (Regular Studies students) or the duration of their studies if less than six months (short-term students).

The rules differ depending on the type of program you are enrolled in:

- New students in **Regular Studies** programs will be automatically enrolled in guard.me, a temporary medical insurance plan, from the first day of their first semester of classes. For example, Spring Term (January 1), Summer Term (May 1) and Fall Term (September 1).
- **Returning Regular Studies** students will not be automatically enrolled. They will need to purchase it directly at the [guard.me portal](#) by selecting the 'Returning Regular Studies Students' option.
- **Continuing Studies** and **LEAP** students also need to purchase it directly at the [guard.me portal](#) by selecting the 'Continuing Studies and LEAP students' option.

Students who wish to purchase their temporary medical insurance may do so, however, they must ensure it covers at least 2 million CAD for emergency and non-emergency expenses.

Learn more about Temporary Medical Insurance [here](#).

Important Reminders

Early Arrival – If you prefer to arrive a few days before the start of your program or your guard.me coverage, you are strongly advised to apply for additional medical coverage for those days. Extra

⁵ [Medical Insurance](#)

⁶ [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\) for British Columbia \(B.C.\) Residents](#)

insurance coverage can be purchased through guard.me. Learn more on how to apply for additional medical coverage.

Dependents – If you are travelling with dependents, you may also want to apply for your family members. Learn how to apply for coverage for dependents [here](#).

Note: guard.me coverage is not the same as MSP coverage. Coverage provided by guard.me includes many additional benefits that MSP does not cover. Pre-existing conditions are not covered by guard.me. If you already have some sort of pre-existing condition, you may need to bring this medication with you. For more information, please refer to the [guard.me portal](#).

Extended Health and Dental Plans

The Langara Students' Union (LSU) offers extended health and dental coverage for some expenses not covered by basic insurance, like costs associated with vision care, dental care, prescription drugs, travel insurance, and other healthcare needs.

Find out who is eligible and how to apply for [LSU Health & Dental Plan](#).

Students may also enrol their spouse and dependents during the Change-of-Coverage period only (i.e., at the beginning of the semester). Please visit the [Studentcare website](#) for more information.

Accessing health services can be very expensive for non-Canadian residents. Make sure you are always covered by a health insurance plan to avoid additional expenses.

1.5 Flights and Accommodation

Booking flights and accommodations is a critical phase of your planning process. Find below some recommendations that will make your flight and accommodation search much easier.

Flights

If you are searching for a flight to Canada, choose Vancouver International Airport (YVR) as your destination. YVR is Vancouver's main airport and the gateway to other major cities like Burnaby, Coquitlam, Delta, New Westminister, North Vancouver, Richmond, and Surrey. Collectively, this region is the Lower Mainland.

When entering Canada, airline passengers must go through customs and immigration check-ins at the airport of entry – in other words, the first airport where you land in the country. For example, if you are taking a flight from your home country to Toronto and then a connection to Vancouver, you will do customs and immigration in Toronto.

For details on customs and immigration procedures upon your arrival, as well as transportation options available at YVR Airport, please refer to [subsection 1.9](#) in this guide.

Accommodation

International students may find moving to a new country extremely overwhelming. Not surprisingly, living conditions are always one of their top concerns.

Ideally, your choice of accommodation should consider two important factors: how much you are willing to spend on housing and how close you are to Langara College or amenities (like grocery stores, malls, gyms, sports or medical facilities, etc.).

Before deciding where to live, ask yourself a few questions:

- Do I want to live in a private place?
- Do I prefer to save money by staying with a roommate or housemate?
- How much time am I willing to spend commuting to the College regularly?
- How much natural light do I need? Will I be willing to live in a basement?
- Do I care about outside noise, or do I prefer a quieter, more residential area? What level of noise can I tolerate?
- What amenities or facilities do I need to make myself comfortable (e.g., nearby grocery stores, access to transit, gym facilities, a school for kids, etc.)?

Having answers to these questions will surely help you understand your needs and find the best accommodation solution, at least for the beginning.

Please note the importance of securing a place to live before travelling, whether on a short-term or a long-term contract. And remember that you do not have to stay in the same place for the whole period of your studies. In fact, it is quite common for students to make their first choice of accommodation and then move out a few months later when finding a better place to live. This strategy will always depend on the contract to which you are linked. For this reason, make sure you know the tenancy lease before you sign.

Find below some options you may consider when deciding where to live.

Homestay

Langara College does not offer on-campus accommodation for students. However, the College has a Homestay program through which students can stay with local families. If you are interested in this accommodation type, apply as early as possible since the Homestay program is in high demand.

Learn more about [homestay accommodations](#).

Off-campus Housing – GEC Living

GEC is Vancouver's largest off-campus student residence, providing students with a superior living experience to enhance their academic journey. Langara College has a partnership with GEC Living to provide student housing close to campus at discounted rates.

Visit [GEC Living](#) to learn more about the options available for Langara College students.

Online Platforms

Another option is using online platforms to find housing in Vancouver. But be mindful that homeowners and brokers may take a fair amount of time to respond. So, the sooner you begin your accommodation

search, the better! Also, by starting sooner, you will have more time to explore your options, understand your needs, and become more knowledgeable in your search.

Here are some popular websites you can search:

- [Craigslist](#)
- [Facebook Marketplace](#)
- [Liv.rent](#)
- [Kijiji](#)
- [Rentals.ca](#)
- [Renting it Right](#)
- [Padmapper](#)
- [Zumper](#)
- [BC Housing](#)

Take basic precautions when using online platforms for your search and selecting your accommodations. See Rental Tips below for more information.

Where to Live

As a newcomer to Vancouver, remember there is no one “best area” to live in. The best area is specific to your needs and affordability.

Vancouver is one of the most expensive cities to live in North America. The average monthly rent for a studio or a 3-bedroom apartment may range from \$1,812 to \$3,875. In 2022, the average rent in Vancouver is 112% higher than in the rest of Canada⁷.

To help you make the decision, we have selected some extremely popular regions among international students. So, let’s go through each one of them in more detail.

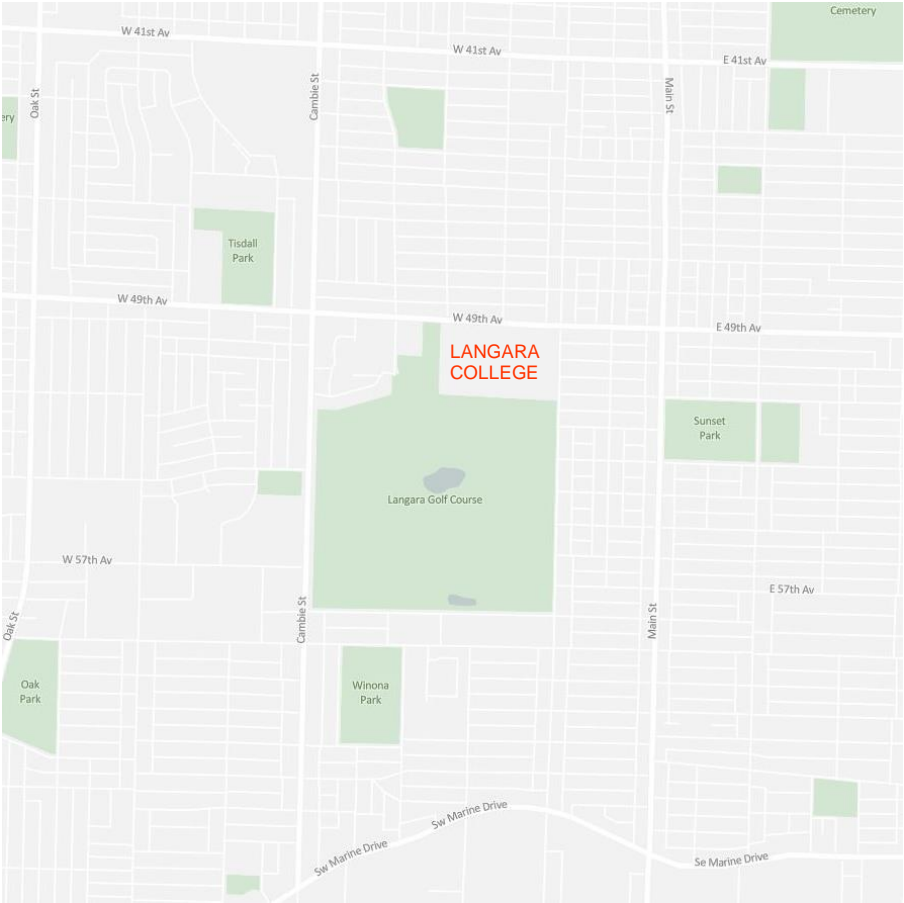
NEARBY LANGARA COLLEGE

If you are looking for accommodation around Langara College, concentrate your search on the following areas:

- W 49th Avenue (between Oak Street and Fraser Street)
- Main Street (between E 41st Avenue and SE Marine Drive)
- Fraser Street (between E 49th Avenue and E 57th Avenue)
- SE Marine Drive (between Cambie Street and Main Street)
- Oakridge neighbourhood (between W 57th Street and W 41st Avenue)

⁷ [Rentals.ca](https://rentals.ca)

Besides being close to the College, this region is well served by public transportation with three SkyTrain Canada Line stations – Oakridge-41st Avenue, Langara-49th Avenue, and Marine Drive – and major bus lines.



DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER

It is a bustling area popular among students because of its proximity to bars, restaurants, and some of Vancouver's main attractions – like world-famous Stanley Park, English Bay, Coal Harbour, and Granville Island, to name a few. However, living downtown can be quite expensive due to its central location.

AROUND VANCOUVER

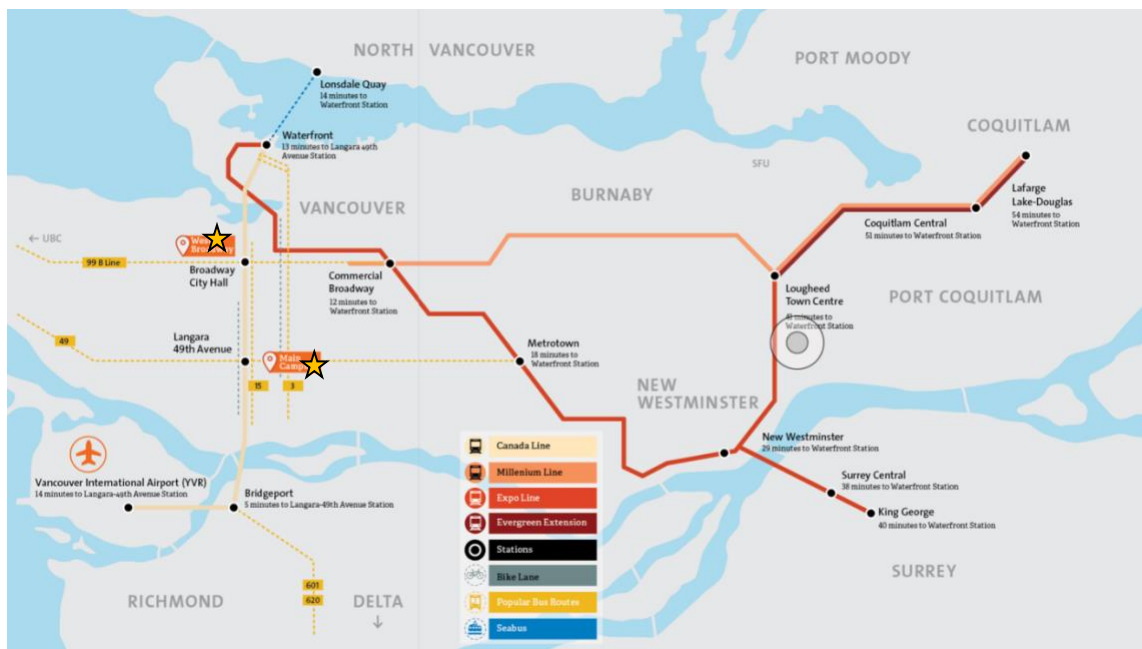
Students may also find suitable housing options in other cities in the Greater Vancouver area. Be mindful that some regions may require long commuting times every day. Find below a few options to consider:

- North Vancouver
- Burnaby
- Port Moody
- Coquitlam
- Port Coquitlam
- Richmond
- Delta
- Surrey

Learn more about all cities that make up [Greater Vancouver](#).

ALONG SKYTRAIN LINE

Another option is to find housing along SkyTrain's Line, especially Expo Line or Canada Line.



Rental Tips

Whatever region you decide to live in, it is important to familiarize yourself with the requirements renters usually ask for, residential tenancy agreements, and how to set up basic services like telephone and internet, among others.

Here is a [complete guide](#) to help you find a place to live.

TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME RENTERS

- Before you decide where to live, check out the place via a video call or have someone you trust visit on your behalf. Do not sign a 1-year lease without seeing the place first.
- Decide on a budget and stick to it. It is advised that your rent should not exceed 25-30% of your monthly income.
- Know what you are signing up for – are you sharing the apartment with someone? Are you getting a private room or sharing it with people? Is there a room or are you expected to sleep in the living room?
- Ask questions before you sign anything. Prepare a list of questions before meeting with the landlord.
- Tenant/renter insurance is recommended and is available from most financial institutions. Not only does this insurance cover damage to the policyholder's personal belongings, but it usually covers unintentional damage to the property caused by renters as well, such as a fire in the kitchen or water damage (called Liability Coverage)⁸.
- For temporary stays, Airbnb and hostels are good choices. You may want to rent these for the first two weeks when you arrive to assess your accommodation options before signing a lease. However, keep in mind that you may need additional funds if you do not find longer-term accommodation in time. Generally, accommodation is rented on the 1st or 15th day of the month.
- If you have pets or wish to get one, it is best to check the need for additional deposits or housing rules before signing the lease.

Learn about [tenancy agreements and other paperwork](#) you may need for renting.

TIPS TO BE SAFE FROM HOUSING SCAMS

- Be aware of common rental scams like fake advertisements (apartments that are already rented or housing places with missing amenities, for example).
- If the price is too good to be true, be careful! The same caution goes if the person insists on payment before or at the viewing.
- It is recommended to do all payment transactions electronically to avoid being defrauded. Make sure you have receipts of all payments made. Even if the landlord insists on cash payments, ask for receipts. Always make sure you have some form of written proof of the payment – email/text acknowledgements or physical receipts.
- It always helps to have a written lease agreement. It is easy to give in to high-pressure tactics and skip this document. You should not sign any agreement unless it is for the

⁸ [Does Renters Insurance Cover Damage to Property?](#)

accommodation you plan on renting. Plus, the rental agreement acts as your Proof of Address, which you would need for many official documents – setting up a bank account.

- You should not reveal SIN information, passport or immigration details, or any other personal documentation to confirm housing. It is illegal to ask for personal information such as gender, sex, marital status, religion, political views, etc. If in doubt, call the police non-emergency number for clarification or learn more about your rights as a tenant from the Province of British Columbia's [Starting a Tenancy](#).
- When signing the lease, the property owner/manager can only legally ask for the first month's rent and a refundable deposit (usually no more than half of the monthly rent). A pet deposit (if applicable) might be extra. No other fees are legal: application fees, holding fees, or cleaning fees (unless discussed before), etc. Strata or building move-in and move-out fees may apply in some cases.

Read more about [finding a place to live](#).

1.6 Essential Documents

Gathering and organizing the paperwork for your day of departure demands time, patience and a lot of attention. After all, you do not want to realize at the airport that you left an important document at home.

Below is a list we created with all the documents you will need for travelling.

| | |
|--|--|
| Passport | With an expiry date longer than six months |
| Tickets | Digital and physical copies |
| Visa | Temporary Resident Visa (TRV) stamped onto your passport or, depending on your country of citizenship, the Electronic Travel Authorization number (eTA) |
| Study Permit Approval Letter (Letter of Introduction) | Issued by the Canadian Visa Office for new students |
| Proof of your tuition payment | Screenshot of the student information system proving you have made a payment in your account and registration. This could also be the receipt of fee payment when you transferred the funds. |
| Proof of funds for a year | Bank statements or GIC (Guaranteed Investment Certificate), the latter is required for SDS program applicants. |
| Letter of Acceptance | The letter provided by Langara College on being accepted |
| Proof of enrollment | Screenshot of your schedule proving you are registered for courses |
| Accommodation information | Full address of the location you will be residing at. This could also be your rental agreement or temporary hotel information printed. |
| Copy of your IELTS/TOEFL scores | Carry a copy of your English language scores |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Receipt of currency exchanged | If you are carrying any foreign currency including Canadian dollars (apart from your home country's currency) |
|--------------------------------------|---|

1.7 Supplementary Documents

Since there is no way to determine the nature of the inquiry by immigration officials at the airport, we also strongly recommend that you carry the following documents as physical copies.

| | |
|--|--|
| Langara's DLI number | O19319074622 (the first character is the letter "O") |
| A list of all items you are bringing into the country | Make sure to include their approximate value, which can be helpful in case of luggage loss |
| Prescriptions for all medicines and purchase receipts | Include original packaging, the quantities for each one of them, and a copy of medical records in case of chronic conditions with a supporting physician's note (preferably in English). Check to see whether your medicine is on the restricted list. |
| Proof of medical coverage | A printed copy of your guard.me policy |
| Official documents or transcripts from your past institutions | While not deemed essential, it is best to have these with you (and a copy) in case you are questioned. |
| Proof of vaccination and other medical exams | This may be essential depending on the country from which you are travelling. If you have lived for six months or longer in one of the designated countries, it is crucial to have proof of vaccinations and medical exam with you. |
| Any national government-issued ID | Bring your official national ID |
| Emergency contacts | A printed copy of emergency contacts – both from your country of origin and in Vancouver/Canada |
| Marriage certification | With a notarized copy of the same (if applicable) and any documents of children that are available (if applicable). |
| Bank documents | If you handle your bank account in another country, you may want to keep the essentials of those documents with you. |
| Travel insurance | This helps mitigate any additional unforeseen expenses during your trip (read terms and policy details carefully before buying travel insurance) |
| Insurance on your luggage | While not essential, most travel insurance plans cover loss or damage to baggage |

1.8 What to Pack

When packing your bags, there are some factors you need to consider.

First, decide what to take in your carry-on baggage, then determine what can be packed in your check-in baggage.

Your **carry-on baggage** should include all the essential paperwork needed for your trip (passport, airline tickets, Letter of Acceptance, Study Permit Approval letter, etc.), as well as items of personal value or great necessity (money, credit cards, medications, notebook, cellphone, and charger).

While, your **check-in baggage** should contain all the items you will not need during the flight, like clothes, shoes, and towels.

Please, refer to [section 6](#) of this guide to go through a checklist of what you need to pack for travel.

1.9 Arriving at Vancouver International Airport (YVR)

Upon entry to Canada, airline passengers must go through customs and immigration at the port of entry. You will be questioned by an immigration officer at the first airport you land in the country.

If your port of entry is Vancouver, we strongly advise you to go through the following procedures:

- Have the customs declaration form completed
- Make sure all essential documents for travelling are with you
- Keep your carry-on luggage close to you so that you will not leave anything behind on the airplane

Picking up Your Luggage

When stepping out of the airplane, an airline employee will inform you of the carousel number where you should pick up your luggage.

To ensure you are at the right place, check if the carousel screen displays the number of your flight. When collecting your luggage, confirm you are picking up the correct bag from the carousel (so many bags look the same!) and that your bags are intact and with no damage. In case you notice something is missing, inform the airline immediately.

Customs Declaration

As of this writing of this guide, you can fill in your customs declaration through the [ArriveCAN](#) mobile app or website up to 72 hours prior to your arrival in Vancouver.

When you arrive at YVR, you will be directed to the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA). Here an officer will verify your documents and ask you questions about the purpose of your visit. We strongly recommend you be calm and concentrate on the questions being asked so that you can answer them accurately⁹.

⁹ [Clearing Customs Upon Arrival](#)

If you provided all the correct information, you will be directed to the Canada Immigration Office after the screening to receive your study permit.

Learn more about [what you must have with you to enter Canada](#).

Note that if you are travelling to Canada with pets, [special procedures](#) will be applicable.

Exiting the Airport

Before leaving YVR, make sure you know which type of transportation you are taking and where to find it.

At YVR, you have many transportation options to choose from:

- SkyTrain
- Long-distance buses
- Car rentals
- Taxis
- Ride-sharing (Uber or Lyft)
- Courtesy shuttles

Explore all [transportation options at YVR](#).

For more information about how to move around Vancouver, please refer to [section 4](#) in this guide.

2. Living in Vancouver

Your success while studying at Langara College is strongly linked to your ability to adapt to the lifestyle of Vancouver. The weather, transportation, job market, food and nightlife all contribute to your experience as an international student.

Knowing what to expect is the best way to minimize frustrations and unwanted surprises, which could ultimately harm your academic success. We gathered a few tips to help you build a better and clearer idea of what it is like to live in Vancouver.

2.1 About Vancouver

For years, Vancouver has been considered one of the most livable cities in the world¹⁰. Much of the credit goes to the perfect balance between the city and the surrounding nature. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Coast Mountains, its impressive geography makes it possible to go from the beach to the top of a mountain in less than two hours.

The fresh air and the proximity to nature make Vancouver the perfect spot for outdoor activities all year long. Not surprisingly, the city embraces all kinds of sports – skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, climbing, hiking, kayaking, you name it! So, if your thing is being in the wild, then Vancouver is the perfect place for you.

Learn more about [Vancouver's main attractions](#).

Metro Vancouver comprises 21 municipalities¹¹. Together, the region has a population of 2,800,000¹². While the City of Vancouver is the largest in British Columbia (population 662,248¹³), it is not the province's capital. Since 1866 that title has been held by Victoria, located on Vancouver Island.

Vancouver has a diverse population, with people from all corners of the world choosing to live here, mostly due to its quality of life and mild weather. Besides English and French (the two official languages of Canada), the most spoken languages in Vancouver are Cantonese, Mandarin, Tagalog, Spanish, and Punjabi¹⁴.

Learn more about the 21 municipalities that make up [Metro Vancouver](#).

2.2 Living as a Vancouverite

A Vancouverite is a person who resides in Vancouver. Find below a special selection of tips to explore the city as one of them.

¹⁰ [Vancouver ranked the 5th most livable city in the world](#)

¹¹ [Municipalities of the Greater Vancouver](#)

¹² [Metro Vancouver's population now projected to reach 3.8 million people by 2050](#)

¹³ [2021 Census of Population](#)

¹⁴ [Focus on Geography Series, 2021 Census of Population](#)

Food and Nightlife

Vancouver is a cosmopolitan city. People from all over the world come to Vancouver to visit or live. As a result, the city's bustling dining scene reflects that cultural diversity.

The city is known worldwide for being one of North America's best places to eat Asian food¹⁵. Regardless, you will have no problem finding speciality dishes from all corners of the globe around the city.

The nightlife is equally diverse. No matter what you like doing the most for fun, you will find a favourite spot in town. Granville Street, Yaletown, Gastown, and Kitsilano are some of the most famous places Vancouverites enjoy hanging out.

Explore [Vancouver's culinary scene](#).

Find the best of [Vancouver's nightlife neighbourhoods](#).

Parks

Vancouver is green. The city has approximately 250 parks for residents and visitors to explore all year long¹⁶. Whether it is for jogging, biking, or hanging out with friends, parks are part of life for many Vancouverites.

Discover which of [Vancouver's parks](#) is your favourite.

Taxes, Services, and Tips

In Canada, the price for a product or service usually does not include taxes until you make the actual purchase. The two most common taxes applied are the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the Provincial Sales Tax (PST).

Tips are common and expected at cafes, bars, restaurants, hair salons, and for delivery services, among others. The percentage can vary from 10-30% of the bill depending on the service quality you received. Generally, tips are not expected for takeout.

Transportation

Metro Vancouver is well served by a network of public transportation, including SkyTrain (rapid rail system), buses, shuttles, SeaBus (passenger ferry), and the West Coast Express (suburban train). Be mindful that schedules vary on weekends and holidays.

Students may also use taxis or ride-sharing apps, such as Uber or Lyft, and those with a valid driver's license can apply for car-sharing services, like Evo and Modo.

¹⁵ [The Best Asian Food in North America? Try British Columbia](#)

¹⁶ [Vancouver parks, gardens, and beaches](#)

For further details, please refer to subsection 4.1 in this guide.

2.3 Job Market

British Columbia is one of the fastest-growing provinces in Canada¹⁷. The inflow of newcomers has had a positive impact on the local economy.

As the largest city in the province, Vancouver benefits directly from local economic growth. Construction, technology, digital entertainment, and the green economy are some of the sectors that have made Vancouver one of North America's fastest-growing, low-carbon economies¹⁸.

Such positive economic activity contributes to a lower unemployment rate¹⁹. As a result, businesses are increasingly looking for highly educated and well-trained professionals to join their teams.

Important Note: *While international students can work legally, it is strongly recommended not to rely on part-time jobs to cover your living expenses in Vancouver. Instead, plan your budget accordingly and have backup plans to sustain yourself financially.*

There are part-time job opportunities for students who wish to gain work experience and earn money while taking classes. Some of the common places where students tend to find employment are food services, retail, virtual secretary, and working with a moving company, among ²⁰:

Popular sites to find off-campus opportunities:

- [C3 Job Board](#)
- [Job Bank](#)
- [WorkBC](#)
- [BC Jobs](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Indeed](#)

Note: Langara College is not responsible for the jobs posted on these platforms. To protect yourself from fraud and job scams, please read section 3.3.

Learn more about [British Columbia's Labour Market Potential \(PDF\)](#).

Learn more about the [off-campus work requirements](#).

Important Note: *IRCC temporarily lifted the 20-hour-per-week cap on the number of hours eligible post-secondary students are allowed to work off-campus while class is in session (October 2022).*

¹⁷ [B.C. among fastest growing provinces](#)

¹⁸ [Vancouver Economic Commission: Economic Snapshot](#)

¹⁹ [Labour market snapshots](#)

²⁰ [These are some of the best part-time jobs for university students in Canada](#)

2.4 Weather

You probably have heard the term “Raincouver.” It is not an exaggeration. With a yearly average of 169 rainy days²¹, it rains a lot in Vancouver. Therefore, waterproof shoes, umbrellas, and outwear are “must-have items” if you want to enjoy the city throughout the year.

Temperatures range from an average of 20° Celsius (68° Fahrenheit) in summer to 0° to 5° Celsius (around 32° to 41° Fahrenheit) in winter, which makes Vancouver one of the mildest climates in Canada. Although temperatures outside this range are rare, it is advisable to check weather warnings daily.

Vancouver has four seasons: winter, spring, summer, and fall.

Winter (December to February)

Vancouver enjoys milder winters as compared to the rest of Canada. It rarely snows, except for a few days in peak season for the Lower Mainland. However, the mountains in North Vancouver see the most snow making them ideal for winter sports. In addition, parts of Burnaby, Coquitlam, and Surrey see more snow than other parts of Metro Vancouver. As you travel into the interior of the province, the occurrence of snow increases substantially.

Snowy days are announced early on and sometimes could disrupt services around the city. So, it is good practice to check weather reports during these days. The temperatures average between 0° to 5° Celsius during the day (around 40° to 50° Fahrenheit), and it gets colder after sunset. Another essential factor is the wind speed which drops the temperature down further (called windchill). Occasionally, there can be further drops in temperature during the season. Still, these are typically forecasted so you can prepare for them.

WHAT TO WEAR

Gloves, earmuffs, thermal wear, thick waterproof jacket, hoodies and sweatshirts and thick socks. Make sure you have waterproof shoes; if you plan to travel outside the Lower Mainland, you are recommended to have winter boots. As the weather can get dry in the winter, use adequate moisturizers.

***Pro tip:** Always carry an umbrella with you, no matter if the weather forecast says there is a low chance of rain.*

Spring (March to May)

As winter fades, Vancouver enjoys the arrival of warmer weather in mid-March. The longer and milder days see Vancouver in full bloom with plenty of blossoms and new growth coming to life on the variety of trees and plants around the city. The downside is that it may impact those who are allergic to pollen. April marks the end of the cherry blossom season and the start of the parks and beach season. Early May is

²¹ [Raincouver: A legacy of BC's Temperate Rainforest?](#)

also the beginning of the harvest season of spot prawns, an exclusive delicacy from BC's coastline. You might see occasional sunny days during this time.

The temperature is still relatively cool, ranging between 10° to 15° Celsius (about 50° to 60° Fahrenheit).

WHAT TO WEAR

During this time of the year, consider your clothing options based on your comfort levels and tolerance to chilly weather, especially in the mornings and at night. Therefore, long pants, rain gear, and jackets should be enough. However, it would be best if you always carry your umbrella along.

***Pro tip:** Laying your clothes is your best bet to ensure you are warm enough in the cooler outdoor air while being able to cool off when the sun comes out or when you head indoors or board transit.*

Summer (June to August)

Summer is when Vancouver and the surrounding area truly shine! The snow recedes from the mountain tops, and the lush greenery of the forests and park spaces gleams. Beaches and lakes become the spots to hang out, numerous festivals come to life across the city, and restaurant and café patios are abuzz with the influx of locals and tourists alike.

The temperatures range between 15° to 22° Celsius (around 60° to 74° Fahrenheit), with some occasional heat waves that can take the temperature above 30° Celsius (86° Fahrenheit).

During summer, rainy days are often a distant memory. But the dry season comes with a setback: the smoke of forest fires from around the province can produce a thick haze over the city resulting in poor air quality advisories.

WHAT TO WEAR

The type of activity you are doing will guide what you wear – from kayaking on the water to hiking under the shade of trees, picnics in the park to strolling the seawall. Be sure to dress for the occasion – comfortable shoes, breathable cotton clothes or active wear, a hat or sports cap, etc. And, if you're out for the day, pack some additional layers for after the sun sets.

***Pro tip:** The bright days of summer are best handled with staples like sunscreen, sunglasses, a hat, and a water bottle. Don't leave home without them!*

Fall (September to November)

In the fall, the changing colours of the city and the cooler temperatures are a treat. Parks and sidewalks are covered with yellow, orange, and red leaves and residents trade in their t-shirts and flip-flops for cozy sweaters and rain boots. November also brings many shopping deals to stores and seasonal treats to restaurants and cafes, while December envelops the city with holiday cheer.

With fall comes shorter days as well – by early December, the sun sets as early as 4 pm and drives down the daytime temperature to just 8° to 11° Celsius (around 46° - 51° Fahrenheit). Overnight temperatures drop even further and, when combined with the rain, can feel colder than average 5° Celsius (41° Fahrenheit). As winter looms, clothes become thicker based on an individual's tolerance to the weather.

WHAT TO WEAR

Your clothing preferences should be based on your comfort levels and tolerance to cooler weather. Therefore, long pants, rain gear, and jackets should get you covered throughout the season. It's also time to dig out your favourite umbrella from the closet.

***Pro tip:** Wear bright clothing and reflective tags or accessories – especially at night – so drivers, cyclists, and other pedestrians can easily see you in the dark and wet weather.*

3. Preparing for Langara College

As an international student at Langara College, you are advised to enroll in courses as soon as they become available for registration. The process is entirely online, which requires special attention to registration and waitlisting rules.

You are also encouraged to read carefully the College's policies, rules, and procedures, most notably the ones concerning academic integrity and expected penalties for cases of plagiarism. Additionally, it is important to familiarize yourself with all the facilities and resources that are available to you.

While you wait for registration to begin, you can browse the recordings of course planning sessions and different [workshops](#) led by Langara Global.

Leading up to the registration period, international students will receive a series of emails from their International Student Coordinator (ISC). These emails provide detailed information about Langara College, the registration process, and additional resources and supports to help you in your academic journey.

While you await these communications, take some time to read carefully through the subsections below so you can get the most out of your college experience.

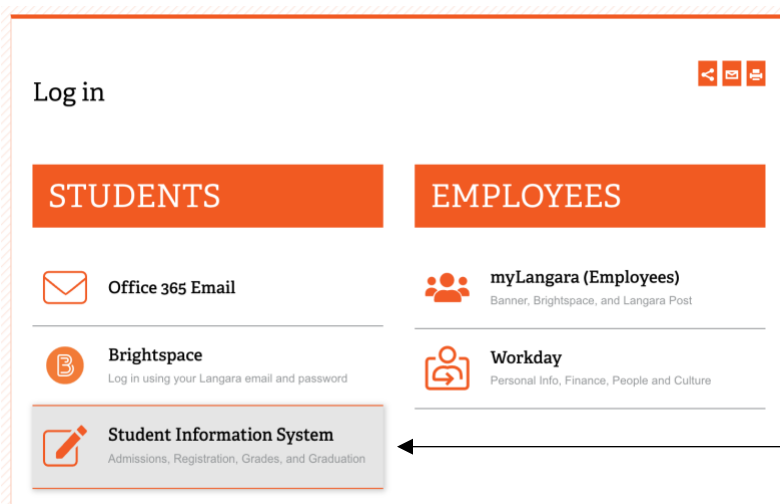
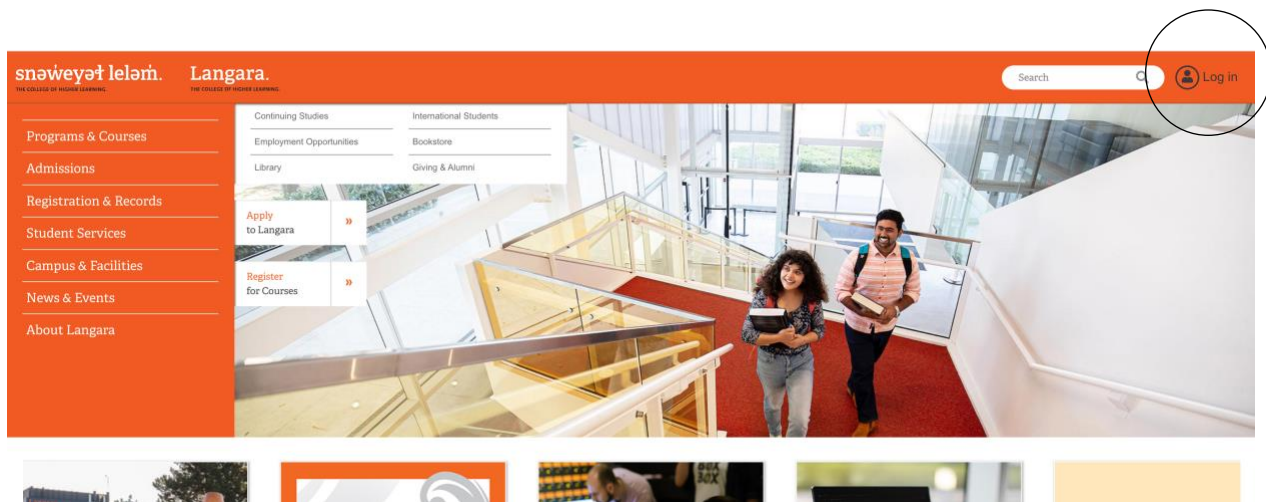
3.1 Registration

3.1.1 Regular Studies

STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM (SIS)

The first step you need to take before registering for courses is to log in to your Student Information System (SIS).

You can access SIS by clicking on the 'Log in' button located in the top right corner of langara.ca.



By logging in to the SIS you can access your student records, including registered courses, schedules, receipts, and grades. You must also log in to the SIS to set your Computer User ID and password.

REGISTRATION SYSTEM

Students must enter their nine-digit Langara Identification Number and their Personal Identification Number (PIN) to access the registration system.

Learn how to [access registration](#) and enter your PIN.

ACTIVATE YOUR REGISTRATION

Registration activation takes place a few weeks before the start of the registration period. By activating your registration, you will receive a unique registration date and time.

Remember to insert this date and time into your calendar, as you will need to make sure you are available at this time to register for your classes.

Follow this step-by-step process on [how to activate your registration time](#).

As you access the system, we recommend you familiarize yourself with some of its most valuable resources, like creating a timetable, searching for courses, and identifying prerequisites, among others.

Find out [what you need to know before you register](#) for courses.

REGISTER FOR COURSES

On your assigned registration date and time, log in to your Student Information System (SIS) to register for your courses.

We also strongly recommend you take time to watch the [Online Registration Tutorial](#).

Learn [how to register for classes](#).

WAITLIST PROCEDURES

Registrations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. When a student attempts to register in a course section that is full, there may be the option to 'waitlist'. Once a seat becomes available that has been allocated to your student group, the student next on the waitlist is offered the seat and has 24 hours to register themselves.

We know this could sound a bit frustrating, but keep in mind that this is quite a common situation, and most students may need to waitlist for a few classes.

For this reason, it is **imperative that you register early, add yourself to a waitlist as soon as possible, and check back often**. Doing so will increase your chances of getting the classes that you want.

Learn more on [how to waitlist for courses](#).

3.1.2 Continuing Studies and LEAP

If you are a new Continuing Studies student, registration will be automatically processed by the program coordinator approximately six weeks prior to the start of the term. No further action is required.

If you are a LEAP student, before the first day of the program, students will take a placement test to determine their level and will be assigned to the appropriate classes. **In case you do not receive the contact of your program coordinator or information about registration a month before the beginning of your classes, please confirm your program status with the Continuing Studies Registration Office (CRSO) [by phone, email, or in-person](#).**

Learn more about [registration for Continuing Studies and LEAP programs](#).

3.2 Preparing for Classes

Before classes begin, we encourage students to be aware of Langara College's policies, rules and procedures. In the following paragraphs, we will guide you on what you should know to be successful in your academic life.

Policies and Procedures

All members of the College community – including students, instructors and staff – must conduct themselves in a manner that promotes a healthy and respectful learning and working environment.

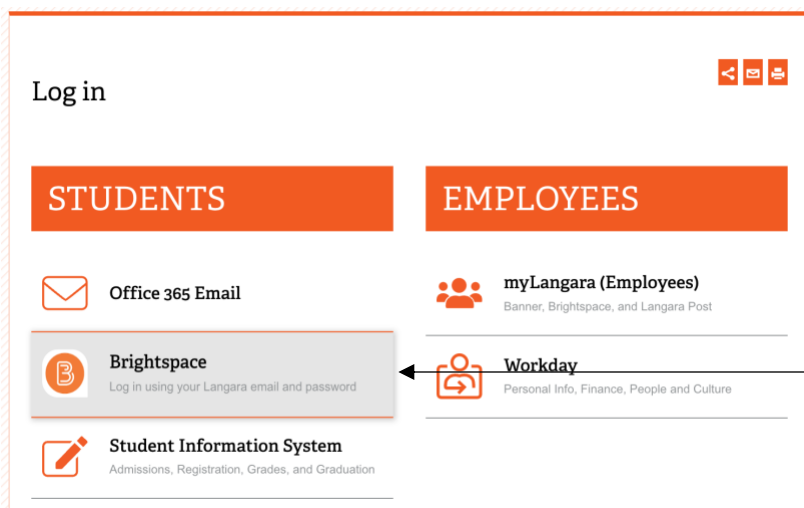
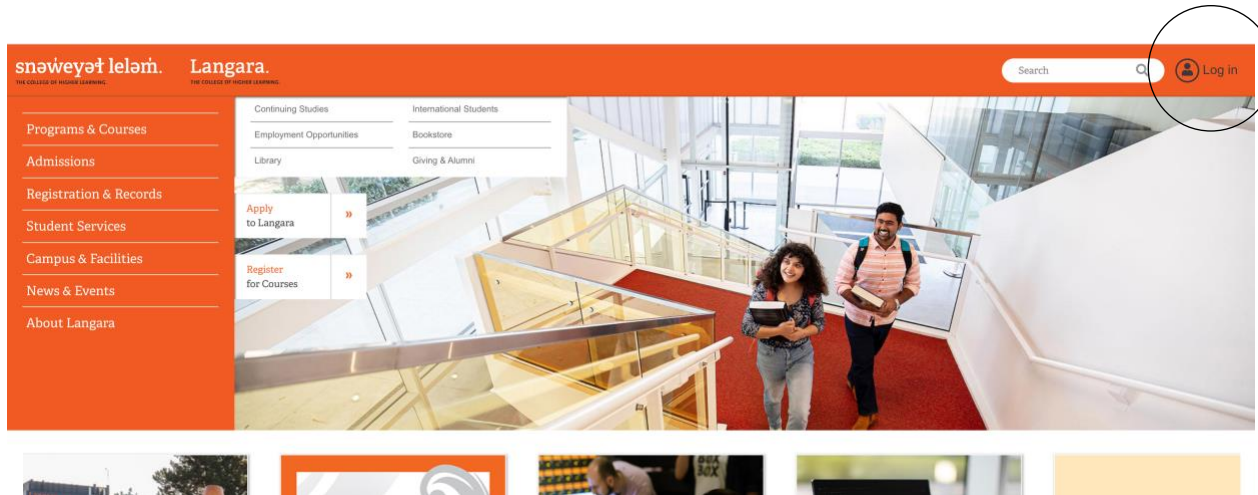
As a new student, we strongly advise you to read Langara College's policies concerning final exams, plagiarism, and student privacy.

Learn more about [Langara's policies and procedures](#).

Brightspace

Brightspace is your go-to place while studying at Langara College. This online course management system provides students access to course materials posted by instructors such as course outlines, assignments, quizzes, exams, and discussion boards.

Be mindful that the material for all your registered courses will be available on Brightspace on the first day of class. You can access Brightspace by clicking on the 'Log in' button on the top right corner of langara.ca, and then log in using your College e-mail address and password.



Learn more on [how to use Brightspace](#).

Langara Student Success Course (LSSC)

The Langara Student Success Course (LSSC) is an important starting point for beginning your classes at the College. The LSSC is a quick course, accessible 24/7 on Brightspace, and it's free!

By taking LSSC, you will be able to:

- Understand what to expect from classes.
- Familiarize yourself with new tools that will help you in your studies.
- Learn strategies to study effectively.
- Find new ways to improve your organizational and time management skills.

Follow these steps [to access the Langara Student Success Course \(LSSC\)](#).

Student Services

Langara College offers students some useful resources so they can be successful in their academic life:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Accessibility Services](#)
- [Co-op and Career Development Centre](#)
- [Counselling](#) (Academic, Career, Course Planning and Mental Health Support, among others)
- [Learning Commons and Tutoring](#)
- [Library](#)
- [Sexual Violence Support & Education](#)
- [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#)
- [Virtual Learning Support](#)

Learn more about all [Student Services](#) available at Langara College.

Orientation Sessions

New international students are encouraged to join an orientation session before beginning their academic journey. Sessions can be held in-person or remotely, depending on the program you are enrolled in and take place a few days before the start of classes.

Based on your program, you may be eligible for multiple orientation sessions, each with a different focus:

- International Student Orientation (for international students only)
- New Student Orientation (for all new students)
- Program orientations (specific to your program)

Orientation sessions are a great way to learn information related to classes, policies, and campus resources, along with being a unique opportunity to meet with the College staff and to mingle with other new students.

Watch previously [recorded sessions](#) to get an idea of what to expect.

Facilities and Resources

Langara College offers students a variety of resources for them to thrive while pursuing their studies. We encourage you to take advantage of all campus facilities and supports available to you.

Here is a glimpse of what you can access while taking classes at Langara College:

- [Bookstore](#)
- [Food Services](#)
- [Gymnasium and Lockers](#)
- [Child Development Centre \(Daycare\)](#)
- [Print Services](#)
- [Parking and Transportation](#)

Check out [campus maps and student facilities](#).

Finding Community

Studying away from home may pose many challenges to international students. It is normal to feel a little out of place, especially in the first few weeks of classes.

Langara offers a vast array of activities for students to connect with the College community, whether joining clubs, playing on sports teams, or volunteering on campus, among many others.

Explore the activities and services that can help you go beyond your academic life:

- [Athletics and Intramurals](#)
- [Clubs](#)
- [Langara Global Volunteer Program](#)
- [The Hub – Office for Student Engagement \(OSE\)](#)
- [Langara Students' Union \(LSU\)](#)
- [VOLT Volunteer Program](#)
- [i-Guide Mentorship Program](#)

Volunteering

The culture of volunteering is widespread in Canada. Local communities, schools, businesses, associations, and non-profit organizations are always looking for volunteers to help them support their activities.

Volunteering helps you get immersed in the community a bit easier. Along with being a great way to make friends, it also helps build your professional network. Depending on the volunteering opportunity, you could get reference letters from the organization, which is something requested by most jobs.

As an international student, you are encouraged to look for volunteering opportunities on- or off-campus to develop and practice your organizational, leadership, and team-building skills that will undoubtedly impact you personally and professionally. Plus, research has concluded that volunteering makes you happier and helps with your mental health and well-being.

3.3 Working on Campus

Conditions for students to work on campus may vary depending on whether you are a full-time or a part-time student.

Take some time to go through the links below to verify what type of work you are eligible for while studying in Canada.

Learn more about the [on-campus work requirements](#).

Important Note: IRCC temporarily lifted the 20-hour-per-week cap on the number of hours eligible post-secondary students are allowed to work off-campus while class is in session (October 2022).

Student Work Programs

Langara College offers special services designed to help students find work opportunities on campus through the Student Work Assistance Program (SWAP) and Work on Campus (WOC) program. The C3 Job Board is another important resource that can help students look for job positions on- and off-campus.

FIND ON-CAMPUS OPPORTUNITIES

- [C3 Job Board](#)
- [Student Work Assistance Program \(SWAP\)](#)
- [Work on Campus \(WOC\) Program](#)

Important Note: While it is possible for international students to work legally, it is strongly recommended not to rely on part-time jobs to cover your living expenses in Vancouver. Instead, plan your budget accordingly and have backup plans to sustain yourself financially.

BE AWARE OF FRAUD AND SCAMS

Unfortunately, fraud and scams have become increasingly common in recent years. These are perpetrated by individuals seeking access to a user's personal and financial information to steal funds and identities. These con artists generally target international students as they are new to the country and may be less familiar with protocols and processes around sharing information for banking or employment. While it is traumatic enough to lose hard-earned money, these scams' victims are also detrimentally impacted emotionally and mentally.

Scammers present themselves in many different forms - from pretending to be government agents, talent hunters, or employers to landlords, the Canada Border Service Agency or FedEx representatives. **Do not share your information with any unknown person.**

Phone calls, emails, text messages or social media are their most common tools to get your attention and convince you to respond or to click on a malicious link. **If it's too good to be true, it probably is.**

Learn [how to protect yourself from fraud and scams](#).

Watch the [Fraud Prevention workshop](#).

4. Getting Settled

You just arrived in Vancouver! With a few days left before the beginning of classes, we suggest you use this time to apply for some services that will be helpful for you to have a positive experience while studying at Langara.

4.1 Transportation

Langara College has two campuses:

- Langara College Main Campus – 100 West 49th Avenue, Vancouver
- West Broadway Centre – 601 West Broadway, Vancouver

Take the time to familiarize yourself with the transportation options available for each one of them, whether you plan to drive to campus or use public transportation.

Learn more about [transit routes and parking](#) at Langara's campuses.

U-Pass BC

Langara Students' Union offers students the U-Pass BC, a student transit program in partnership with TransLink and the Ministry of Transportation. U-Pass BC gives students a three-zone pass valid for unlimited use on TransLink buses, SkyTrain, and SeaBus services. Some restrictions apply.

In case you are not eligible, you still can use a Compass Card to move around the transportation system by loading monthly and day passes. You can buy it online, at Compass vending machines located inside SkyTrain stations, by phone or in stores.

Find out [who is eligible and how to apply for U-Pass BC](#)

Learn more on [how to apply for a Compass Card](#).

Car Share

Metro Vancouver has two programs for registered users to share cars – a convenient alternative to owning one.

- [Evo Car Share](#)
- [Modo Carshare](#)

Ride Share

Popular in many cities around the world, ridesharing is another option available in Metro Vancouver to get you around town.

- [Uber](#)
- [Lyft](#)

Taxis

Tried, tested, and true – taxi services are always available to get you from point A to point B.

- [Yellow Cab](#)
- [Vancouver Taxi](#)
- [Black Top & Checker Cabs](#)

4.2 Social Insurance Number (SIN)

Your Social Insurance Number (SIN) is one of the most important documents you will use while living in Canada. You will need to provide your SIN to Langara College for tax purposes.

The SIN allows you to:

- Work*
- Fill out your income tax information
- Open a bank account
- Access government programs and benefits

** A SIN will not be issued if your permit does not allow you to work.*

You must take extra care to protect your SIN. It carries critical information about you that, if in the wrong hands, could lead to invasion of privacy, identity theft, or the loss of government benefits, tax refunds, and bank credits.

For this reason, we strongly recommend you never carry a physical copy of your SIN. Instead, leave it in a safe place. Additionally, do not reply to calls or emails that ask for your SIN, nor write it down on a random piece of paper. You are only required to share your SIN when opening a bank account, with your employer after you are hired, and with your educational institution (Langara College) for tax purposes.

Be aware that you do not need to inform your SIN in the following situations:

- To the property owner/manager of the place you live or planning to live in
- To get a phone number in Canada
- Your friend who wants to apply for a job

Learn [how to apply for and protect your SIN](#).

4.3 Driver's License

If you are a full-time international student, you can drive with a valid foreign driver's license during the period of your studies²². You must also carry your student ID while driving as proof of your status.

However, international students who are not enrolled in a full-time program can use their driver's license for only 90 days after arrival. After this period, your driver's license is not valid in the province²³.

If you consider driving while studying, find out [how to get a driver's license](#).

4.4 BCID card

If you are new to Canada, we recommend applying for an identification card in the first few weeks after your arrival. In British Columbia, the provincial government issues the BCID card, and it can serve as your main identification card, especially if you do not have a local driver's license yet.

Learn [how to apply for a BCID card](#).

4.5 Bank Account

Opening a bank account is an important step you should consider taking as soon as you settle in. Doing so will save you time and money since you will not have to rely anymore on withdrawing cash from your foreign bank account and paying taxes for every transaction.

There are two types of bank accounts:

- **Chequing** – appropriate for daily transactions through online banking or debit cards.
- **Savings** – very useful if you want to save money that you do not expect to use in the near future.

It would be best to choose a bank you feel best suits your needs. For your reference, here is a list, in alphabetical order, of some of the major Canadian banks:

- [Bank of Montreal](#)
- [CIBC](#)
- [Royal Bank of Canada \(RBC\)](#)
- [Scotiabank](#)
- [TD Canada Trust](#)

Learn [how to open a bank account in Canada](#).

²² [Moving from outside Canada](#)

²³ [Drivers licensed outside of B.C.](#)

4.6 Cell Phone Plan

In the first few days of your arrival, purchasing a local cell phone plan is important. After all, you want to avoid paying expensive roaming fees forever.

Usually, cell phone providers offer three types of plans:

- Prepaid (or pay-as-you-go)
- Contract-based
- Monthly plans (or postpaid)

The conditions and offerings may vary within those plans. Make sure you purchase the one that best suits your needs.

Here is a list in alphabetical order of the major cell phone operators in Vancouver:

- [Bell](#)
- [Fido](#)
- [Freedom](#)
- [Rogers](#)
- [TELUS](#)

4.7 Planning Your Budget

Vancouver is incredibly beautiful and is often top-ranked as one of the most livable cities in the world²⁴. But such fame comes at a high price: the city is also considered one of the most expensive in North America²⁵. Therefore, making the most of your college experience without putting your budget at risk can be challenging.

Basic Living Expenses

We have selected some basic monthly expenses for living in Metro Vancouver to help you understand your living costs while studying at Langara College. **Note this is for your reference only and may differ from actual expenses.**

²⁴ [Vancouver ranked the 5th most liveable city in the world](#)

²⁵ [Vancouver ranks 3rd most expensive city in North America](#)

| Expenses | Value range (per month) * | Observations |
|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Accommodation | \$700 to \$3,000 | Prices would vary depending on if the space is shared or private, number of rooms, and location. |
| Utilities (hydro, gas, electricity, water) | \$30 to \$100 | Value depends on usage, location, and number of consumers. |
| Internet | \$50 to \$100 | Value may differ depending on the operator and plan. |
| Phone-related expenses | \$50 to \$100 | Value may differ depending on the operator and plan. |
| Tenancy insurance | \$15 to \$30 | Optional |
| Medical Insurance (MSP) | \$75 | Fixed |
| Food & Grocery | \$300 to \$600 | Tentative |
| Public Transportation | \$102 to \$185 | Subject to change based on zones and frequency |
| Private Transportation | N/A | The cost of private transportation would vary based on the car, insurance, gas and maintenance fees. |
| Clothes, entertainment, college supplies, etc. | N/A | Values may vary depending on needs. |
| Emergency Fund | \$100 | Try to save some funds for your emergency |

* These are the estimated values of current market prices which are subject to change.

International Student Commitment Fee

International students must pay the \$1,500 commitment fee to activate their registration for the upcoming semester²⁶. This deposit will be put towards their tuition fees for that semester. Therefore, make sure to consider this when setting your budget.

4.8 Financial Aid

Students needing financial assistance can apply for financial aid, bursaries, scholarships, and awards to help them pay for school and day-to-day expenses. Conditions vary depending on the requested financial assistance and the type of program in which the student is enrolled.

²⁶ [International Students – Application Information](#)

Here are some of the financial aid options currently available:

- StudentAid BC
- Langara Bursary
- Student Work Assistance Program (SWAP)
- Work on Campus (WOC) Program
- Provincial Tuition Waiver Program for BC Youth in Care

Learn more about all the [financial aid programs](#) available and their eligibility criteria.

International students can also apply for financial awards through the Langara Global Office, Langara Students' Union (LSU) and the VOLT program.

Find out the applicable conditions for each one of them:

- [Langara Scholarships by Department](#)
- [Langara Global](#)
- [VOLT](#)
- [Langara Students' Union \(LSU\)](#)

Here are a few tips for saving money while studying in Vancouver:

- When choosing a bank, check out all their student service packages. Money transfers incur costs, so you will want to know the costs before you transfer money.
- If you can, go for used books, online books, or other library resources. Check with your instructor first to confirm you can buy an older version of the book.
- Keep your credit card saved for emergency usage only. While you want to spend and build a credit score, you will want to do this *only* if you can pay it back by the due date. There is a significant fee for credit card bill defaults and spending over your limit. Late payments negatively impact your credit score.
- When you go grocery shopping, stick to a list. Many chain stores have a points system where you can redeem points for further purchases.
- Many places offer student discounts. Look for them when making purchases.
- Cook your meals instead of buying them. Make your coffee/tea and take it with you. Langara has designated areas with microwaves for students to warm up their food.
- Consider dividing your expenses between needs and wants. What are the items/expenses you need to spend money on compared to those items/expenses you want but can mostly survive without for the time being?
- Try to look for sustainable transport options like cycling, carpooling, public transport, or walking whenever possible.
- If possible, try to cut down expenses by saving energy with laundry, electricity, lighting, and when using the kitchen and bathroom. Take the first steps with this [energy-saving guide](#).
- In case of food insecurity, Langara has several supports available for students experiencing financial hardship, including grocery cards for emergency food insecurity. The City of Vancouver also offers a host of [community food cupboards](#).

Get started planning your finances with this [monthly budget template](#).

5. Glossary of Terms

Acronyms

| | |
|--------------|---|
| BC | British Columbia |
| BCID | British Columbia Identification Card |
| CBSA | Canada Border Service Agency |
| DLI | Designated Learning Institution |
| eTA | Electronic Travel Authorization |
| GIC | Guaranteed Investment Certificate |
| GST | Goods and Services Tax |
| IELTS | International English Language Testing System |
| IRCC | Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada |
| LEAP | Langara English for Academic Purposes |
| LOA | Letter of Acceptance |
| LSSC | Langara Student Success Course |
| LSU | Langara Students' Union |
| MSP | Medical Services Plan of BC |
| NGO | Non-governmental organizations |
| PIN | Personal Identification Number |
| PST | Provincial Sales Tax |
| SDS | Student Direct Stream |
| SIN | Social Insurance Number |
| SIS | Student Information System |
| SWAP | Student Work Assistance Program |
| TOEFL | Test of English as a Foreign Language |
| TRV | Temporary Resident Visa |
| VAC | Visa Application Center |
| WOC | Work on Campus Program |
| YVR | Vancouver International Airport |

Definitions

A

Academic Integrity – A demonstration of personal integrity in an academic environment. Making a commitment to not engage in acts of dishonesty, falsification, misrepresentation, or deception is the first step in preserving academic integrity.

Academic Probation – The status assigned to a student who has failed to achieve the Minimum Academic Standard in a semester. To return to Good Standing, students on Academic Probation must achieve the Minimum Academic Standard in the subsequent semester.

Academic Suspension – The status assigned to students who have failed to achieve the Minimum Academic Standard in two consecutive semesters.

ArriveCAN – Mobile app or website designed by the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to give travellers a more modern and faster experience when travelling to Canada.

Athletics & Intramurals – The Athletics & Intramurals Department comprises basketball (men's and women's), soccer (men's and women's), and golf, as well as intramurals activities such as gym, badminton, basketball, volleyball, and equipment rentals for frisbee, volleyball, and soccer, among others.

B

Bursary – A non-repayable cash payment that is made to students who demonstrate financial need.

C

C3 Job Board – An online career-management system for students looking for jobs and for employers posting positions for their organizations.

Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) – Agency responsible for facilitating the flow of legitimate travellers and trade to Canada.

Commitment Fee – A non-refundable, non-transferable sum that confirms international students' commitment to attend the College each semester.

Computer User ID – An account assigned to students when they register for courses. It takes two business days after registration to generate computer accounts. Students can find their Computer User ID through [myLangara](#) (the web portal).

Continuing Studies – Courses offered for those who are currently employed and looking for professional development, whether to upgrade skills for their current role or a career change.

Co-operative Education (Co-op) – This program allows students to alternate study semesters with paid work terms for the development of skills needed to be successful in their future careers.

Course Outline (also called syllabus) – A description of the main content, organization and expected outcomes of a course, normally including the number of credits awarded, hours of class time, assignments, evaluation criteria, and required texts.

D

Designated Learning Institution (DLI) – A school approved by a provincial or territorial government to host international students.

F

Financial Aid – Financial assistance made available to students while they pursue their undergraduate studies.

First Nations – In the context of current College policies, First Nations' people include status or non-status Indians, Metis, and Inuit people.

Full-time study – Langara College considers a student who is taking nine credits or more in a term to be full-time.

G

GEC Living – An off-campus student housing service.

Greater Vancouver – Also known as Metro Vancouver, this metropolitan area comprises Vancouver and 20 municipalities with a total population of 2,971,064.²⁷

guard.me – A temporary student medical insurance plan which typically covers international students in Regular Studies programs who arrive in BC for their first semester of study at Langara College for the duration of the three-month waiting period for MSP.

Guaranteed Investment Certificate (GIC) – A type of secure investment used by incoming international students to prove they have sufficient funds for a year.

H

Homestay – The Langara Homestay Program helps students find accommodation with host families in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland.

²⁷ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/canada/britishcolumbia/admin/5915_greater_vancouver/

I

i-Guide Mentorship Program – This program matches current students (i-Guides) with new international students (mentees) during their first semester at Langara College. i-Guide mentors have studied at Langara for at least one semester and provide guidance, advice, support, and friendship to new or less experienced students.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) – Department of the Government of Canada responsible for facilitating the arrival of immigrants, offering protection to refugees, and services to help newcomers settle in Canada.

International Student – A student who is neither a Canadian citizen nor a permanent resident of Canada.

L

Langara Global Volunteer Program (LGVP) – This program supports special events and ongoing activities for students at Langara College, like cultural events, social gatherings, and recreational activities. Volunteers receive training and orientation to gain valuable skills while supporting the Langara Global office.

Letter of Acceptance (LOA) – A document sent by Langara College to students confirming their acceptance into the College.

Lower Mainland – Also known as Greater Vancouver or Metro Vancouver, it is the region located on the southwestern corner of British Columbia, and Vancouver is its most important city.

M

Medical Services Plan of BC (MSP) – It is the public health insurance in British Columbia.

Metro Vancouver – Sometimes referred to as Greater Vancouver or the Lower Mainland, this region comprises 21 municipalities, one electoral area, and one treaty First Nation that collaboratively plans for and delivers regional-scale services.

Municipalities – Can be classified as either a town, village, district or city depending on the size of their population and geographic area. They are responsible for providing local services and governance to a vast majority of the province's population.

myLangara – An [online portal](#) that provides web access to Langara College students for their personal, financial, and academic activities. It also provides access to Office 365, Brightspace, and the Student Information System.

O

Open Registration – The period after the scheduled registration period when registration is open to all eligible students.

P

Part-time study – Langara College considers a student who is taking fewer than nine credits in a term to be part-time.

Permanent Resident (PR) – A person who has a permanent residence status in Canada.

Personal Identification Number (PIN) – PINs and Langara Registration Numbers are required to access student information on the Web.

Plagiarism – The presentation of another person's or source's words and/or images and/or ideas as if they were one's own. It is a form of academic misconduct that will not be tolerated at Langara College.

Program – A group of courses that when successfully completed leads to a citation, certificate, diploma, associate degree, or bachelor's degree.

R

Registration – The process of enrolling in and paying for courses once you have been accepted to the College. At Langara College, students register by logging into [myLangara](#).

Regular Studies – Regular Studies include first- and second-year Arts and Science programs and courses and more than 30 career programs. Completion of these programs may lead to a bachelor's degree, associate degree, diploma, certificate, or citation.

S

Scholarship – A non-repayable cash payment or prize award made to a student in recognition of outstanding academic achievement. This achievement may be awarded for overall accomplishment, specific requirements for a course grade, or exemplary completion of a project or piece of work.

SeaBus – A passenger ferry operated by TransLink that connects Downtown Vancouver to North Vancouver.

Semester/Term – At Langara College, the academic year is divided into three semesters: Fall, Spring, and Summer. Terms refer to the program level.

SkyTrain – Automated rapid rail system operated by TransLink with three lines: Expo Line, Millenium Line, and Canada Line.

Social Insurance Number (SIN) – A document issued by the Government of Canada that allows you to work in the country and access government programs and benefits. It is comprised of a 9-digit number.

Student Direct Stream (SDS) – A program designed to speed up the process of applying for a study permit.

Student Number/Langara ID Number – This nine-digit number is given to students upon application to the College. This number remains with students for their lifetime and, along with a personal identification number (PIN), it is used to access all the students' functions through [myLangara](#) (the online portal).

Student Work Assistance Program (SWAP) – The on-campus student employment program at Langara. Students apply to the Financial Aid Department to participate.

Study Permit – A document issued by the Government of Canada that allows foreign nationals to study at designated learning institutions (DLI) in Canada²⁸.

T

The Hub – Also known as the Office for Student Engagement (OSE), this department is responsible for coordinating events to help students build leadership skills, create lasting friendships, and make sustainable changes in the community.

U

U-Pass BC – A student transit program delivered in partnership with the Langara Student's Union, TransLink, and the Ministry of Transportation. It is issued to students each semester and it provides unlimited access to TransLink Bus, SkyTrain, and SeaBus services throughout Metro Vancouver, as well as discounts on the West Coast Express.

Utility – A company that provides a service to the population such as drinking water, electricity, or gas.

V

Vancouverite – A person who lives in Vancouver.

Visa – An official document that authorizes a person to enter a foreign country.

Visa Application Center (VAC) – Located around the world, they are private companies with formal contracts with the Government of Canada responsible for doing biometrics (fingerprints and photos) and sending passports to the visa office of travellers wishing to enter the country.

VOLT – The VOLT Volunteer Program empowers students to connect with rewarding volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community. Interested students can visit The Hub for more information.

²⁸ [What is a study permit?](#)

W

Waitlist – A procedure for students to access seats in full course sections as they become available during the registration period. When a seat becomes available, the first student on the waitlist is given an offer of the seat.

West Coast Express (WCE) – Rail service operated by TransLink that connects Downtown Vancouver and Mission City with stops along the way.

Work on Campus (WOC) Program – A program that allows students to be employed as peer tutors or perform basic research at Langara College.

Work Permit – An authorization issued by the Government of Canada to allow foreign nationals to work in the country.

6. Appendix

A. Checklist – What to pack for travel (detailed)

To help you start packing your bags, we selected some basic items that are recommended for your trip. However, we strongly encourage you to do your research and create a customized checklist for yourself.

Be mindful that the weather in Vancouver can change dramatically throughout the year. To learn more about what to expect from each season, please read subsection 2.4 in this guide.

For School

It is best to carry enough items to have you ready for the first month of classes.

- A backpack (this could be your laptop bag that doubles as cabin luggage)
- A notebook and basic stationery (you can buy the rest on arrival)
- Toiletries and cosmetics
- Contact lenses or glasses: since they can be expensive in Canada, you may want to carry an extra set of glasses and a few packets of lenses*.

** Students who are members of the Langara Student's Union (LSU) have access to vision care coverage.*

Clothing

Bring only what is essential for you to walk around in the first few weeks. After all, you do not want to pay extra for the weight of your luggage. Besides, retailers in Canada tend to offer special sales for items of the following season.

Here is what you should consider bringing:

- Summer and winter wear
- Formal clothes – shirts, pants, skirts, dresses, ties, socks, etc.
- A set of your traditional clothes
- Socks and undergarments
- Workout clothes
- Thermal wear
- T-shirts
- Jeans and long pants
- Sweaters, sweatshirts, and hoodies
- Winter jacket/summer jacket
- Shoes – boots, running shoes, dress shoes, and indoor sandals
- Sleepwear or pyjamas
- Swimsuit
- Rain essentials – waterproof jacket(s) and umbrella

Electronics

In Canada, all electronic systems and appliances operate at 60Hz and 110 volts. They use a three-pin plug or two-pin North American standard plug.

- Travel adaptor or power electronic converter
- Laptop and charger
- Mobile phone with an international roaming plan
- Travel adapters/converters
- Power bank
- Camera with charger
- Other electronics, as needed

Medications

Consider bringing only the medications that you need the most. Be mindful that some products are not allowed to enter Canada. Talk with your doctor about an alternative for medications that are prohibited in the country.

- Have your doctor write a letter (preferably in English or have an additional English-translated document) describing your condition and the treatment plan.
- Keep medicines in their original, labelled containers. You would want to ensure that your prescriptions are clearly labelled with your full passport name, doctor's name, generic and brand name, and exact dosage.
- Bring copies of all prescriptions, including the generic names for medicines.
- Leave a copy of your prescriptions at home with a friend or relative in case you lose your copy or need an emergency refill.
- Pack a note on an official letterhead document from the prescribing doctor (preferably in English) for controlled substances, such as marijuana, and injectable medicines, such as EpiPens and insulin.

Extra tips to build your checklist for packing

- Depending on your accommodation on arrival, you may not need to carry many kitchen essentials. One set of spoon, knife, fork, plate, glass/cup, and microwaveable lunch box is enough for surviving the first few days. Alternatively, you can buy everything after you arrive in Canada.
- Non-perishable snacks and other easy-to-make food items will help you in the first week of arrival but be mindful that many food items are not allowed to enter the country.
- All food items and plant and animal-based products need to be declared. There are restrictions on alcohol and tobacco and a prohibition/restriction on goods that are explosives, weapons, firearms, vehicles, and other consumer products. While there are country-specific rules, these may vary depending on the airlines.
- Check with your airline about packing limits. If you travel domestically and then onto an international flight, these limits may vary depending on the method used to book the tickets.
- If you think you may need an extra luggage limit, you can purchase the pass beforehand on the airline website or on the day of departure itself. It is safest to pack 2-4 kgs below this limit. It is common for bags to weigh differently at the airport, and this may lead to extra charges at the last minute. It is best to weigh your bags during your packing and once you are done with them.
- Ensure your packing list abides by the lists of items you are allowed to carry onto the airplane, into Canada and any transiting airports/countries.
- There are restrictions on the amount of cash, credit/debit value, gold, and other physical forms of currency/value you can carry during your first touchdown.
- When packing, make sure your most valuable items are always with you such as any form of currency, gold, documents, laptops, or camera.

- ❑ You may want to lock your bags and have a specific set of markers on your bag to identify them from a distance.
- ❑ If your first accommodation is only short-term until you figure out longer-term accommodation, it is best to buy your requirements on arrival as it will save you storage space and you can gauge based on your new accommodation needs.
- ❑ Plan to buy in Canada only heavier items like pillows, mattresses, heaters or air-conditioners, routers, furniture, bedsheets, comforters, cleaning supplies, winter wear, etc.

B. Checklist – What to pack for travel (condensed)

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passport with visa stamped• Airline Tickets• Travel Insurance• Debit/Credit Cards• Letter of Acceptance• Letter of Introduction• Proof of finances• Canadian accommodation address• Cash in CAD• Receipt of currency exchange <p>2. Clothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thermal wear• Business formal outfit• Shirts• T-Shirts/Tops• Sweaters/Sweatshirt/Hoodie• Shorts• Skirts/Pants• Workout clothes• Pajamas/Sleepwear• Undergarments (2 weeks' worth)• Socks (2 weeks' worth)• Coat/Jacket• Party Wear/Nice Outfit• Flip flops/Sandals• Belts• Traditional Wear• Swimsuit• Formal Shoes/Dress Shoes• Casual Shoes/Sneakers• Scarf <p>3. Electronics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Laptop and charger• Mobile phone and charger• Travel Adapters/Converters• External portable Hard disk• Power Bank | <p>4. Kitchen Stuff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Non-perishable snacks• Spices <p>5. Cosmetics/Toiletries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comb/Brush• Cotton buds/Q-tips• Dental floss• Deodorant/Perfume• Fingernail clippers• Hair products• Lip balm• Make-up• Shaving supplies• Shampoo and conditioner• Toothbrush, toothpaste• Soap/Shower gel• Moisturizer (face and body) <p>6. Medication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prescription• Medication in the original container• Contact lenses or glasses <p>7. Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notebook• Stationary• Backpack• Purse/wallet• Watch• Sunglasses• 1 Bedsheet• Bath towels• Travel pillow• Sewing kit• Swiss army knife• Photos• Water Bottle• Umbrella |
|---|---|

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