

# Which Visa Do Students Need?

U.S. Department of State | Bureau of Consular Affairs | [travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov)



## B1/B2 VISA

You may need a B1/B2 visa if you're:

Engaged in recreational course that will not earn credit toward a degree or academic certificate. These are courses that you are taking simply to learn more about a topic that interests you.



Meeting with professionals in your field of study to learn about their daily work. You will not receive any credit towards a degree or academic certificate for attending.



Conducting independent research at U.S. libraries and facilities.



## F1/M1 VISA

You may need an F1/M1 visa if you're:

Enrolled in an SEVP-approved university or college for the primary purpose of completing a course of study or classes/consultations which earn credit toward a U.S. or foreign degree or academic certificate.



Enrolled in a private elementary school or public or private high school for the primary purpose of completing a course of study.



Enrolled in an English language training program.

Enrolled in a university, college, or high school for the primary purpose of completing a full course of study in a vocational or other non-academic curriculum.



## J1 VISA

You may need a J1 visa if you're:

Enrolled in an approved cultural exchange program to attend a university or high school for a semester or academic year.



Participating in an internship program sponsored by a designated university or accredited program that will provide experience in your post-secondary field of study. The program cannot last more than 12 months.



The above are merely examples of some common student scenarios. You must meet all legal requirements of the visa for which you are applying. The consular officer at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate where you apply will determine your visa eligibility based on U.S. immigration law. For more information on nonimmigrant visa categories, see 9 FAM 402, available at [fam.state.gov](https://fam.state.gov).