France—Visa Requirement

SOURCE: Embassy of France

A valid passport is required for all U.S. citizens and foreign national entering France. Visitors must have ready for presentation at the border documentary evidence of the purpose of the visit, means of support for the duration of the stay and accommodation arrangements.

A visa may be required. **It must be requested from a French Consulate**, and not from the Embassy, before departure. Whether you need a visa depends on your nationality and duration of stay in France and possibly on the reason for your visit to France.

To find out if you need a visa and, if so, how to apply for one, first choose the closest French Consulate

For Minnesota residents the closest French Consulate location is in Chicago, Illinois, follow this link for a map and directions. [http://www.consulfrance-chicago.org/spip.php?article660](http://www.consulfrance-chicago.org/spip.php?article660)

No visa is required for visits shorter than 90 days.

*Studies in France for more than 90 days*

- Since June 2009, **long stay visa holders are allowed to reside in France for up to 12 months** according to the validity of their visa and purpose of stay. They are no longer required to obtain a residence permit ("carte de séjour") from the French local authorities ("Préfecture") as long as their visa is valid.

- However, long stay visa holders who intend on staying in France for **more than six months** have to register to the **French Office of Immigration and Integration (OFII)** during the first three months of their stay in France.

- You must obtain your Student Visa while in the USA. The visa cannot be issued once the applicant is in France.

The student long stay visa, if granted, is a multiple entries visa and is valid from 4 to 12 months, depending on the length of your studies. With such a visa, you will not have to apply for a resident card (« carte de séjour »), as your visa will be valid as resident card during your whole stay.

**Please read the following information carefully and follow as instructed!**

**Personal appearance**
For security reasons, all applicants, except children under the age of 6, have to appear personally at the Consulate General of France in Chicago.

How to make an appointment?

The visa section is open to the public on an appointment basis, with no walk-ins allowed.

To schedule an appointment, click here and then choose "booking an appointment".

No appointment can be made by phone or by e-mailing us.

Make sure you bring all the required documents when coming to the Consulate General.

As slots are limited, it is strongly recommended to book as early as possible.

What you will need completed prior to attending your appointment:

Please provide us with the original + ONE COPY of EACH document.

1. Original passport or travel document (+ copy of the identity pages). Your passport must have been issued less than 10 years ago, be valid for at least three months after your return to the US and have at least 2 blank visas pages left.

2. If you are not a U.S. citizen: A valid U.S. permanent residence card ("green card") or a valid U.S. visa with valid I-94 or valid I-20 (original + 1 photocopy).

3. Positive proof of residence in the geographic area [1] for which the consulate is responsible:
   - lease or rental agreement in the applicant’s name or a notarized statement from the owner or leaseholder plus a recent (utility) bill in the applicant’s name;
   - or the applicant’s driver’s license issued by a state falling within the consulate’s jurisdiction [2];
or a valid student ID card (or a statement issued within the past 2 months from the registrar of your university), which must be located in the consulate’s jurisdiction.

4. **Processing fee** in the U.S. dollar equivalent of €50. Exceptions: Recipients of scholarships from the French government or European Union (Chateaubriand, Eiffel, Franco-American Fulbright Commission, Erasmus Mundus, Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie) are not required to pay the application and processing fee.

5. **One application form** (click here for the English version) filled out completely and signed by the applicant.

6. **One ID picture** glued/stapled onto the application form (white background, full face, no glasses nor hat, closed mouth).

7. "**Attestation**" from **CAMPUSFRANCE**: An e-mail message from CampusFrance (entitled “confirmation e-mail”) informing the student that he or she may begin preparations to apply to the consulate for the visa (make appointment, collect documents). Attention! **This message should not be confused with the earlier message from CampusFrance notifying the student of the creation of his or her CampusFrance account, or with the message indicating that a receipt for payment was available for download.**

8. **Receipt for payment** issued by CampusFrance (does not apply to exempted students).

9. **Proof of registration**: A copy of the student’s official acceptance letter or acknowledgment of enrollment, addressed to the student and mentioning his or her full name, printed on institutional letterhead and specifying the exact dates (day, month, year) of the academic program and including full contact information for the individual issuing the offer or acknowledgment, as well as the full address of the educational institution. Said address may serve as the student’s temporary address in France. Three cases are possible:

   - **Students taking part in an exchange program between an American and a French institution.** In this case, the acceptance or enrollment letter may be issued from either institution provided the formal exchange agreement is identified and the information specified above is provided.

   - **Students enrolling directly in a French institution as an independent student.** In this case, the acceptance or enrollment letter must be from the admitting institution and include all of the information specified above.

   - **Students enrolling in an American program in France** (operated by an American institution with a branch in France). In this case, the acceptance or enrollment letter must come from the American institution and include all of the information specified above.

10. **Financial guarantee**: Nonscholarship students must prove that they have access to at least $820 per month. Proof may be provided in the form of:

   - a **bank statement** showing a balance of $820 multiplied by the number of months to be spent in France,
o or a **notarized statement** from a guarantor declaring that the guarantor will provide the student applicant with at least $820 per month, accompanied by the guarantor’s most recent bank statement,

or for students receiving **scholarship and financial aid**: Letter of scholarship award specifying amount and duration of award, issued by the financial aid office of the student applicant’s home institution.

11. **The French immigration (OFII) form** (upper part) should be filled out by the following students:

- ALL students who will be staying in France for **more than six months (180 days)**;
- Students who will be staying in France for a period of time between four and six months (for a total duration of 91-180 days) who **wish to be allowed to work in France while studying**;
- Students who will be staying in France for a period of time between four and six months (for a total duration of 91-180 days) who **wish to be able to extend their visa once they are in France**.

Applicants are requested to print their e-mail address very carefully to avoid any risk of confusion or error. Applicants will be notified of their OFII appointment by e-mail.

12. **An airline reservation** showing date of departure or a handwritten and legible statement from the applicant indicating the intended date of departure, as well as a formal commitment not to depart before that date. It is not possible to modify the start date of a visa once the application is made.

13. A **self-addressed prepaid EXPRESS MAIL envelope** from the US POST OFFICE ONLY - NO FEDEX / UPS / AIRBORNE EXPRESS accepted.

Please do NOT stick the mailing label on the envelope and fill out as follows:

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FROM:
CONSULATE GENERAL OF FRANCE
205N. Michigan Ave, Suite 3760
CHICAGO, IL 60601

TO:
Your full name
Your address
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The French government strongly advises you to apply at least 5 to 6 weeks prior to your scheduled departure. Failing to do so will more than likely require you to postpone your trip.

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