

Dos and Don'ts of Preparing for a U.S. F1 Student Visa Interview

Practical tips you can use to approach your F1 visa interview with confidence!

For international students preparing to study in the United States, the thought of the required F1 visa interview can be a bit stressful. That's understandable! The in-person interview is an important step in the student visa application process, and one that should be taken seriously. Yet, with the right preparation, including anticipating potential questions and being ready to answer them accurately, students can feel prepared to face the interview with confidence.



If you're applying for a U.S. visa, we recommend you **do** the following to prepare for the interview:



DO bring all required documentation.

The **U.S. State Department** advises checking with the embassy or consulate where you will interview to verify what documentation is needed.

These items may include:

- Passport valid for travel to the United States
- Nonimmigrant Visa Application, Form DS-160 confirmation page
- Application fee payment receipt (if you are required to pay before your interview)
- Photo – You will upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. If the photo upload fails, you must bring one printed photo in the format explained in the photograph requirements.
- Form I-20 Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant (F-1) Student Status
- ESL program acceptance letter (if applicable)
- Letter of conditional admission to a US university (if applicable)



DO re-read your visa application to remember your answers.

It is easy to get nervous and forgetful during the interview, so taking some time to review your application beforehand will help you to stay on track when you answer questions.



DO practice interview questions and answers.

You can expect your interview to cover questions about your study plans, university of choice, academic capability, personal finances, and post-graduation plans. Ask a friend or relative to do a practice interview with potential questions. It will help you to be more relaxed and confident on the big day.



DO tell the truth.

This one seems obvious, but actually one of the top reasons for F1 visa rejection is presenting untrue information. Avoid temptations to gloss over details or exaggerate to make your case more appealing.



DO stay calm and take your time answering questions.

A great trick to stay calm and centered is to take a deep breath each time you are about to start speaking. Deep, conscious breaths will keep you centered and grounded throughout the process.

If you're applying for a U.S. visa, we recommend you **don't do** the following:



DON'T rely on the Internet for the most up-to-date information.

Visa requirements change frequently, so although you will find useful resources online it is important to contact your embassy or consulate by phone or email for the most up-to-date requirements.



DON'T dress too casually for your interview.

It's recommended that you dress in business attire for your interview. It will show that you are professional and take the interview seriously.



DON'T talk unless you're answering a question.

Even though you're nervous, avoid the temptation to fill any silences with chitchat or unsolicited information about yourself. When asked questions by the interviewer, answer them precisely and completely without elaborating with additional information.

When it comes the visa interview, preparation is key. Be sure to have your facts straight, practice interview questions beforehand with a friend, bring all required documents with you, dress to impress, and project confidence about your plans. And remember, Bridge advisors can support you throughout the process if you need us!

THE F1 VISA APPLICATION PROCESS

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