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# B Visa Overview

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The B visa category applies to citizens of foreign countries who wish to visit the United States for a temporary period. There are two types of B visas: B-1 (for business) and B-2 (for pleasure or medical treatment). A B-1 visa would be issued for an individual desiring to enter the U.S. to consult with business associates; attend a scientific, educational, professional or business convention or conference; settle an estate; or negotiate a contract. A B-2 visa would be issued for an individual wishing to enter the U.S. for touring, amusement, visits with friends or relatives, rest, medical treatment, and activities of a social or service nature.

Foreign travelers who are citizens from certain eligible countries may also be able to visit the U.S. without a visa for tourism or business for 90 days or less on the Visa Waiver Program. (See Visa Waiver Program below.)

### **A. Duration of Stay**

A business visitor (B-1) will be granted a period of entry sufficient to conduct his or her business. Generally, these visits are approved for less than three months.

A non-business visitor (B-2) will automatically be granted a six-month period of entry. Only in unusual circumstances will a B-2 visa holder be granted a period of entry that is shorter or longer than six months.

It should be noted that it is possible to obtain a period of admission of one year on initial entry to the U.S. Additionally, extensions of up to six months may be granted.

### **B. Application Process**

In order to obtain a B visa, you need only apply with the U.S. consulate; an application to the Immigration Service is not required.

### **C. Items for Travel**

It is useful, in order to assure entry at the border, for the B-1 visa holder to carry a letter from his or her company, similar to the letter supporting the visa application that affirms:

? The purpose of the trip.

? The limited duration of the trip.

? The visa holder's steady employment with the company and strong ties with his or her home country.

The individual applying for the tourist visa should carry a letter of invitation, together with such other pieces of documentation as hotel reservations or evidence of other travel arrangements.

The B-1 and B-2 visa holder should also bring with him or her:

? Copies of the documentation that accompanied the visa application.

?The return portion of his or her round-trip ticket and evidence of prepaid accommodations or confirmed hotel reservations.

? Sufficient funds to cover the period of stay requested by him or her.

#### **D. Special Conditions**

It should be noted that an alien entering the U.S. with a B visa must not engage in gainful employment (labor for hire) in the U.S. Additionally, the undertaking of an academic study program is not permitted (with a few limited exceptions).

#### **E. Basic Requirements for Obtaining B-1/B-2 Status**

There are five basic requirements for issuance of a B visa, as specified by The State Department:

1. The alien is entering the U.S. for a limited duration.
2. The alien intends to depart the U.S. at the expiration of his or her stay.
3. While in the U.S., the alien maintains a foreign residence which he or she has no intention of abandoning.
4. The alien has adequate financial arrangements to travel to, sojourn in, and depart from the U.S.
5. The alien will engage solely in legitimate activities relating to business or pleasure.

#### **F. Additional Information**

No assurances regarding the issuance of visas can be given in advance. Therefore, final travel plans or the purchase of non-refundable tickets should not be made until a visa has been issued.

Unless previously canceled, a visa is valid until its expiration date. Therefore, if the traveler has a valid U.S. visa in an expired passport, do not remove the visa page from the expired passport. You may use it along with a new valid passport for travel and admission to the United States.

Visitors are not permitted to accept employment during their stay in the U.S.

## G. Family Members

There is no derivative status for B visas, which is why family members must qualify independently for a B visa.

## H. The Visa Waiver Program

The Visa Waiver Program (VWP) allows citizens of participating countries to travel to the United States without a visa for stays of 90 days or less. Travelers must be eligible to use the VWP and have a valid Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) approval prior to travel.

If you are eligible to travel on the VWP, but prefer to have a visa in your passport, you may still apply for a visitor (B) visa.

### Citizen or National of a VWP Designated Country

You must be a citizen or national of VWP-participant country. The following 38 countries are Visa Waiver Program participants:

#### A



Andorra



Australia



Austria

#### B



Belgium



Brunei

#### C



Chile



Czech Republic

#### D



Denmark

#### E



Estonia

## F



Finland

France

## G



Germany

Greece

## H



Hungary

## I



Iceland

Ireland

Italy

## J



Japan

## L



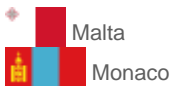
Latvia

Liechtenstein

Lithuania

Luxembourg

## M



Malta

Monaco

## N



Netherlands

New Zealand

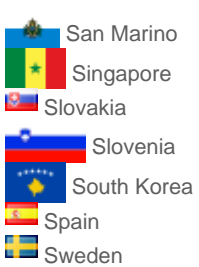
Norway

## P



Portugal

## S



San Marino

Singapore

Slovakia

Slovenia

South Korea

Spain

Sweden

 Switzerland

T

 Taiwan

U

 United Kingdom

For more information on VWP please visit this link: <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/visit/visa-waiver-program.html> [2]

Also visit [Visa Waiver Program Update 2016](#) [3] from CBP.

## **Nonimmigrant Visas:**

**B Visa** [4]

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### **Links:**

[1] <https://immigration.com/visa/b-visa/b-visa-overview>

[2] <http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/visit/visa-waiver-program.html>

[3] [https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/194/~/visa-waiver-program-update-2016](https://help.cbp.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/194/~/visa-waiver-program-update-2016)

[4] <https://immigration.com/visa/nonimmigrant-visas/b-visa>