Useful Information

We didn’t know much either when we got here, so we decided to share our experiences and pieces of advice with you.

Hope you find it helpful!

Transportation in Greater Lafayette

Bus Service

Lafayette/ West Lafayette have a bus service which is free for all Purdue students and staff. Here is the [City Bus website](#). For your information: one needs to get on a bus by the front of the bus, and show his/her PUID for every ride except campus buses and trolley.

Biking

Biking is also an easy way to go around in campus. You may find new and used bikes at:
- Bike Lady in Lafayette (used models, could also fix your own bike): 765-429-5452
- Hodson Bay Co. on Levee Plaza (new models, could also fix your used one): 765-743-3506.
- Churches' special sales in August/ September.
- Walmart (new exclusively): cheap quality, cheap price.

Taxi

There are two Taxis companies in the Greater Lafayette. Quite useful though expensive:
- Fast Cab & Courier: 765-474-4450
- 4 Star Taxi: 765-742-8400

Parking

For Parking on campus go to [http://www.purdue.edu/parking/index.htm](http://www.purdue.edu/parking/index.htm)

Transportation out of Greater Lafayette

Bus

Greyhound bus provides 3 daily connections to Indianapolis and 3 daily connections to Chicago. The connection point and ticket office are located at the Big Four Depot, Second Street, Lafayette. For more information regarding schedules and times, call 765-742-8836 or visit [Greyhound's website](#).
The bus passes through Gary to go to Chicago, which is a dangerous town so you better not get off the bus there.

**Train**

Amtrak provides service to Indianapolis and Chicago. The train departs and arrives at the Big Four Depot in Lafayette. For more information, call 800-872-7245 or visit [Amtrak's website](#). The train is usually not on-time!

**Shuttles**

Shuttle to Intl' Indianapolis Airport (IND): 765-497-3828 [Lafayette Limo](#)
Fares: $ 27 one way - $ 50 round trip
Official reservations are not necessary, but the shuttles are very full around vacation times and you won't be guaranteed a seat if you don't reserve!

Shuttle to O'Hare Chicago Airport (ORD): 765-743-3120 [Express Coach](#)
Fares: $65 one way
Reservations MUST be made 48 hours in advance.

**Driving in Indiana**

Don't assume your international driving license is valid in Indiana. The best thing for you to do is to inquire at Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV). If it is valid, it is probably temporary.

For the writing test, you may refer to [Driver Manual](#) available online. Visit the [BMV website](#) to know more about the driving license.

The BMV staff is picky about procedures: be sure to consult the website or call them before showing up. There are two BMV centers in the Greater Lafayette:

- West Lafayette License Branch, 720 West Navajo, West Lafayette 765-464-1525.
- Lafayette License Branch, 220 Elmwood Avenue, Lafayette 765-448-3738.

**Renting a car**

Couple of car rental places in town:

- [Ace Rent-A-Car](#), [Avis Rent a Car](#), [Enterprise Rent-A-Car](#), [Hertz Car Rental](#), [National Car Rental](#)

For moving purposes you need to rent a truck:

- [U-haul](#), [Budget Car Rental](#)
ID Cards

We really discourage you from using your passport (and visa) to get into places where you need an ID. Many people happen to lose their documents and get into trouble of obtaining another passport and doing their immigration papers all over again.

Instead of losing all that time and that money, we suggest you to get an Indiana ID.

It's quite cheap: around $5. You get it done in BMV (go back to "Driving in Indiana" to get more information).

Visa Validity

If you have obtained a US visa by an Iranian passport, your visa is one entry and you can not reenter US unless you obtain a new visa.

The ISS website is helpful resource for immigration issues.

Banks

- PEFCU is more friendly and available almost everywhere on campus. Their services are often cheaper than any other banks. However, if you leave the area, or need to do international wire transfers, it gets complicated.
- CHASE is more expensive, less flexible, but their debit and credit cards are working everywhere in the US (often) for free.

There are other banks as well:
- Lafayette Savings Bank: website
- Citibank: website
- Fifth Third Bank: website
- Charter One: website

Cellphone Companies

- AT&T Wireless: website
- Verizon Wireless: website
- T-mobile: website
- Sprint: website

Other websites where you can order a cell phone:
- Inphonic
- Amazon
- 1800 mobiles
• A1 Wireless
• Free Phone Plan
• Let's talk

**Landline Phone Company and Phone Cards**

Landline Phone company: [Verizon](#)

Phone Cards:
- Nobel
- Union Telecard
- Be Calling Card
- DG Telecard

**Other Utilities**

Cable TV and Internet: [Comcast](#), [Verizon](#)
Satellite TV Providers: [Dish](#), [DIRECTV](#)
VOIP Providers: [Packet8](#), [Vonage](#), [Sunrocket](#), [Voip](#), [Lingo](#), [Guide](#)

Electricity: [Duke Energy](#)
Natural Gas Supplier: [Vectren Energy](#)
Water Company: [Indiana American Water](#)

**Restaurants**

**On Campus**

You may try the fast-food restaurants around campus, in the ground floor of PMU or HTM Cafe in Stone Hall.

You also can check [Purdue dining locations](#) under dining.

**Off Campus**

Here is an exhaustive list of restaurants in the Greater Lafayette

By the way, here is the rule concerning tips for the waiter/waitress (who serves you at your table):

- 10% of the total price if you are not content with his/her job (unpleasant behavior, you've been forgotten or you've received your dish after a really long time, s/he mixed up your orders).
- 15% for a normal service (s/he came up regularly to check everything was in order, s/he responded in an appropriate time to your requests, etc).
- 20% and more if s/he's done a very good job with your dinner.

Just DO NOT LEAVE without leaving her/him money. The tips contribute toward most of his/her wage! Even if s/he's done a poor job, s/he did it and deserves to be paid for it.

How to pay tips? By adding extra cash (your meal costs $8.50, you round it up to $10 and tell him/her to keep the extra money back), or by adding the tip on your credit card receipt/check. Usually for a big group of customers, the waiter/waitress will pre-calculate the tip. Also, waiters / waitress don't mind to divide up the check if you are a group and you all pay separately.

One more thing: portions are bigger in the U.S. Don't feel like you should finish up your plate before leaving! You can ask for a "box" that you can take home!

**Food in Groceries Stores**

Basically here is the overview:
- Walmart: cheap but low quality.
- Meijer, Target, Marsh: higher standards, higher prices.
- Payless: stands in between.

Some more choices:
- LA Village Food Mart, 208 South Street, West Lafayette (close to Cafe Vienna).
- Global Grocers, 109 North Chauncey Avenue, West Lafayette.
- Asian Oriental Market, 2400 Yeager Road, West Lafayette.
- La Carniceria Abaztos, 160 West 3rd Street, Lafayette.

**Fresh Food**

The best deal to buy fresh vegetables, fruits during summer is to go to:
- Purdue Village Gardens in the late afternoon: people who have gardens will sell their fresh and organic products for really cheap (you can even bargain with them).
- The Farmers' Market in Lafayette (May to October) on Tuesday morning (7:30 am to 1 pm), Thursday afternoon (4 to 7 pm), and Saturday morning (7:30 am to 1 pm). Find more on the [website](#). As for West Lafayette, there is also a farmers' market behind Payless (just past 52 off the left side of Salisbury) on Wednesday from 3:30 to 6 pm.

**Social Interaction**

You may experience some body language and behavior's misunderstanding. It's hard to generalize but here are some rules to respect in the U.S.:
- Don't stand too close (no kissing on the cheek, no hugs, no touchy-feely behavior if you're not invited to it)! Apply the "one-feet away" rule!
• Often professor-students relationships are more casual in the U.S. than in Europe. You may be invited for dinner at your advisor's place, or s/he might allow you to call him/her by his/her first name. That's pretty usual; however, wait for them to grant you that permissiveness!
• Note that students don’t stand up when a professor enters the class!
• Body hygiene and clothes cleanliness are two topics on which the average American has a strict understanding! Be sure to adapt your personal hygiene to the local standards (at least daily shower, daily shaving, and deodorant).

**Hairdresser**

For ladies:
• Eclectic Hair Salon and Massage Studio: 115 N Chauncey Ave, West Lafayette, IN, 765-743-2595
• Christina & Company Inc., Next to the West Lafayette Walmart, 765-449-4341
• …

For gentlemen:
• Great Clips: 336 East State Street, West Lafayette, IN, 765-743-7534
• Dave's Cutting Edge, 218 South Street, West Lafayette, IN, 765-743-4885
• …

You’d better ask your friends for advice before going to any hairdresser.

**Entertainment**

• Movie Theater: it costs around $9 on Wabash Landing. However you get a student discount if you go to Eastside 10 (which has incidentally better seats).
• Bowling and Billiards in PMU.

**Sports**

Sport in the U.S. is not limited to watching soccer on TV. Here people watch but also practice! We should learn from them.

You'll see that the sport center is probably more developed, better maintained and equipped than the one you probably had in your home university. Plus, it's free with your PUID, and often open from 5:30 am to 1 am! The schedule varies. You'd better check their schedule.

**Student Organizations**

There is large number of student organizations at Purdue which you can join. The organizations cover ethnicity, sport, hobby, music, dance, art, similar interest, etc. I persuade you to join these clubs to have fun and make new friends.
Hospitals and Doctors

For medical issues, you can go to PUSH. Urgent Care: 765-494-1724, General Information 765-494-1700. First, because it is on campus and second because it is usually free of charge. However PUSH is not open 24/7. You must show your ID and insurance information there as soon as you check in.

In an unpleasant case where you need to see a doctor out of the urgent care hours, we would recommend you to go to Home Hospital 2400 South Street, Lafayette, IN, (765) 447-6811.

In an emergency case, call 911.

Safety on Campus

We encourage you to explore the various safety resources available to you. These are listed in the Your Campus Your Safety document found on the Office of the Dean of Students webpage.

Fee Deferment

You may be a TA, or RA on Campus, and every year, you may struggle with money because you have to pay your fee before receiving your first pay check! You can defer your fee in fall semester or pay it in four monthly payments in fall and spring semesters.

Housing in Greater Lafayette

Of course, there is Hawkins. Although the location is great, it's very expensive and offers no privacy.

If you want to get your own place, you'd better read this:

- West Lafayette is often more expensive than Lafayette because it is close to campus, but you probably can't get a parking permit if you live too close (less than 1.5 mile to campus).
- West Lafayette is most likely inhabited by fraternities, and undergraduate students (Purdue staff living more in the suburb), while Lafayette offers a more diverse and less campus-oriented population.
- Lafayette has a downtown with more local stores, coffee shops and restaurants than West Lafayette!
- The Bus service similarly serves Lafayette and West Lafayette however there are campus loops close to campus which are more frequent.

Here are some good resources to search for a place:
http://tippecanoe.craigslist.org/
http://www.apartments.com/
http://www.boilerapartments.com/

You can subscribe to Purdue newsgroup, which is news.purdue.edu and you need to look under purdueforsale for housing. You can join a newsgroup by using a Thunderbird or Outlook. There are lot of subleases and roommate posts.
Used Furniture

In the US furniture is very expensive. You can find used furniture on Purdue newsgroup by looking under purdueforsale for furniture or go to Goodwill Stores. There are also some classifieds in Journal and Courier which is a local news paper.

Some Abbreviations

RSVP: Repondez S'il Vous Plait (meaning you need to let know whether you accept the invitation)
PUID: Purdue University Identification Document
PUSH: Purdue University Student Health Center
PMU: Purdue Memorial Union
COREC: Recreational sport center
FYI: For Your Information
24/7: 24h a day, 7 days a week