



ACADEMIC STUDIES ABROAD

FLIGHT BOOKING TIPS

ASA provides an AIRPORT PICK-UP for students who arrive at the designated airport on the official arrival date, by the designated time.

After you're accepted, ASA will email you arrival and departure instructions, so you can take advantage of our airport pick-up. Please wait for this email before booking your flight.

Policies & Reminders

- ▶ You can NOT move into your program housing before the official arrival date or stay after the housing move-out date.
- ▶ Due to the difference in time zones, you may need to depart the day **BEFORE** the day you want to arrive. The email you'll get from ASA with arrival and departure instructions will have these details.
- ▶ You are advised to book a **round trip ticket**. The Immigration officer at your point of entry may ask to see your return ticket.
- ▶ Do NOT plan to leave the program before the housing move-out date, as you will have exams through the day before housing move-out. Our designated program end date is both the earliest day you can leave the program, as well as the day you must move out of your program housing.
- ▶ You are free to travel before or after your program end date. Just be sure to research the visa/entry requirements for any countries you plan to visit, as well as [U.S. State Department travel advisories](#).
- ▶ ASA's pick-up window refers to *your flight's scheduled arrival time*. We understand it will take you additional time to pass through Immigration, retrieve your luggage, etc.
- ▶ We can ONLY pick students up at the specified AIRPORT. The email you'll receive with arrival and departure instructions will tell you which airport to arrive at.
- ▶ Unless a specific housing check-out time is given, plan to move out of your housing by 12pm on the final day of the program. (Students going to Florence, Italy must check out of housing by 10am on the final day.)

Watch Out!

- If you're studying in the UK, your flight going into the UK must NOT originate in the Republic of Ireland (includes Dublin and Shannon airports). It will cause problems with your visa.
- DON'T book any airport-to-airport connections, no matter how much money you might save! (Ex: Arrive to LaGuardia and depart from JFK; arrive to London Heathrow and depart from London Gatwick.)
- DON'T book an overnight layover, no matter how much money you might save! You'll need to book a hotel for the night, canceling out any savings.
- If you find a ticket that's cheaper because it arrives a day early, your savings may be canceled out by the hotel room you'll have to pay for, because you can't move into your program housing early.

- **Tickets that are significantly cheaper usually have a CATCH** – like an overnight layover or an airport-to-airport connection. Be wary of very cheap fares!
- **CAREFULLY check all airport codes, dates and times before purchasing a ticket!** Make sure you're arriving on the right day and time, per the email you received from ASA.
- Avoid websites like www.hotwire.com, www.priceline.com, or any other site where you purchase the ticket before knowing which airline(s) you're on, what time you're leaving, arriving, etc.
- **How to avoid the airline "losing" your luggage? Fly direct (when possible) and if you can't, check only ONE bag. Allow us to explain!** Delayed luggage happens much less often when you fly direct. However, if you have a connection and you check 2 bags, the chances actually increase that your luggage won't make it to your destination at the same time you do! Why? The airplanes on connecting flights are much smaller than the airplane you departed on, and they aren't built to hold 2 checked suitcases for every passenger. If a lot of passengers have checked 2 bags, some bags will be left behind, where they'll have to wait until there is space on an upcoming flight before being sent on to the destination. This can result in delays of anywhere from 1-5 days before you get your bags back! If you aren't flying direct to your destination, you can help reduce your chances of delayed luggage by checking just ONE bag. One checked bag, one carry-on, and one backpack can hold more than enough stuff for a semester-long program - we promise! Always pack your carry-on as if you won't have your bags for a full 5 days! Your carry-on should have extra clothes, toiletries, and essentials to last 5 days, plus your laptop & charger, cell phone charger, and prescription medication to last 2 weeks.

Recommended Websites

You are under no obligation to book a flight at these websites. We simply provide these for your reference.

- www.kayak.com (Searches multiple airlines' websites at once, making it easy to compare prices and itineraries offered by various airlines.)
- Go directly to the airline's website (e.g. www.aa.com, www.delta.com, www.lufthansa.com, etc.)
- www.expedia.com**, www.orbitz.com**, www.cheaptickets.com**

****Note:** Tickets purchased here are usually non-refundable and non-changeable.

FAQs!

What if my flight is delayed? Will I still be picked up?

We will make every effort to wait for you but cannot guarantee it. *It's YOUR responsibility to immediately notify the designated ASA staff member on your ASA Last Minute Checklist, and they'll let you know if you can still be picked up.* If our staff is engaged with other group activities or orientation, it may not be possible. You will receive your ASA Last Minute Checklist via EMAIL approximately 1 week before departure.

I want to travel after the program is over and don't know when I want to come home. Can I book a one-way ticket and buy my return ticket after I'm already abroad?

This may or may not be an option, depending on your program location. For example, if you are applying for a Student Visa, the Consulate may require a copy of your round-trip itinerary. You can contact ASA to find out if this will be required of you.

The Immigration officer (who will stamp your passport when you arrive in country) may ask to see your return ticket, to make sure you eventually plan to leave. For this reason, ASA does recommend that all students book a round trip ticket. A possible compromise might be to book a round trip ticket that allows you to change the return date later, for a fee plus any fare difference. However, the fees and fare rules vary with each ticket, so you should check your ticket's Terms & Conditions before purchasing to see if changes are allowed, and if so, how much will it cost.

At the end of the program, will ASA give me a ride to the airport to catch my flight home?

No. You are responsible for your own transportation back to the airport at the end of the program.

At the end of the program, does my return flight need to leave at any particular time?

Students in Florence, Italy, must check out of housing by 10am on the final day of the program. All other locations must check out by 12pm.

I'm going to arrive early. Can I move into my program housing early if I pay an additional fee?

No.

I want to stay a few days after the program is over. Can I stay in my housing if I pay an additional fee?

No.

The arrival and departure instructions say that ASA will pick up students between 9am-5pm. Will I have to wait in the airport until 5pm to be picked up?

No. We pick up students periodically throughout the designated pick-up window. Please note – the pick-up window varies by program! ASA will email you these details.

Is it ok if my flight arrives before the pick-up window on that same morning?

Yes. You'll just need to wait longer to be picked up. Try not to fall asleep while you wait though, because we won't be able to find you! ☺

I'm arriving early to travel. Can I meet the group at the airport on the day of the pick-up and get a ride to my housing?

This may be possible, but it will depend on your program location and that day's logistics. You may be asked to simply take a taxi directly to your program housing. Email hello@academicstudies.com to find out more.

I found a cheaper flight that arrives a day early. Can I stay in the airport overnight and be picked up in the morning?

We DO NOT recommend you stay in an airport overnight for safety reasons! It is easy to have your belongings stolen while you're asleep, among other personal safety concerns. Instead, we recommend you book a hotel near the airport that offers a shuttle and then take the hotel's shuttle back to the airport the next morning during our pick-up window. Keep in mind that paying for a hotel and meals would negate some or all of the money you save by arriving a day early.

I found a cheaper flight that arrives a couple hours after ASA's airport pick-up. ~OR~ I want to arrive a day or two late for personal reasons (wedding, family reunion, graduation, job/internship, etc). Is this allowed? Will I miss anything?

WE DO NOT RECOMMEND THIS. ORIENTATION IS MANDATORY AND CANNOT BE MISSED. You must discuss your plans with ASA *before* booking your ticket so we can advise you. Be aware: If your flight's scheduled arrival time is after ASA's pick-up window, you are responsible for your own transportation.

Do you recommend any particular airline?

No, we don't. We don't know of one airline out there that is significantly "better" than the rest.

I want to come home a day or two early for a wedding/family reunion/graduation/job or internship). Is this allowed?

Normally this is NOT allowed. Please call ASA to discuss your plans at 617-327-9388 as soon as possible and prior to booking a flight.

Leaving early may cause you to miss final exams and fail your classes. Most institutions do NOT allow you to reschedule exams. You won't know your exam schedule until after you arrive and start your classes, so again, be sure to discuss your plans with ASA before booking. Above all, DO NOT book a flight to come home early until you are 100% sure that it will not interfere with your classes or exams.

I will save money if I fly to Rome and take the train to Florence. Is this a good idea?

No, it is not worth the savings because of the inconvenience and the issues you could encounter along the way:

- ASA only picks up students at Florence (FLR) airport. We cannot pick up students at Florence train station. You will be responsible for your own transportation from Florence train station to your program housing.
- You cannot take a train directly from Rome airport to Florence! You first have to take a bus, taxi, or local train from Rome Fiumicino airport (which is 30 km outside of Rome) to Termini train station in Rome city center. Be aware that strikes are very common on Italian local trains. If the local train is on strike, you

would instead have to take a bus from Fiumicino airport to Termini station (very slow) or a taxi (expensive).

- If your flight into Rome is delayed, you may not get to Florence until late that day or the following day. This could result in missing ASA activities or orientation, as well as incurring additional costs for a hotel, *as we cannot guarantee you will be able to check into your program housing if you arrive in Florence after 6pm.*
- It is easy to fall asleep and miss your train stop in Florence because you'll be tired from the long flight. *European trains stop FOR ONLY A FEW MOMENTS to let people embark and disembark!*
- Once you're on the train, you will have to leave your luggage in the luggage bay, which will be located at one end of your train car. Not only will it be difficult to keep an eye on your bags from your seat, but by the time you get to Florence, your luggage may be buried under other passengers' luggage. Retrieving your luggage and moving it off the train can be tricky to pull off during the few minutes the train is stopped. The trains can be crowded, making it difficult to move around quickly. Unless have prior experience getting multiple pieces of luggage on/off European trains, this process will probably be challenging for you!
- Your savings will be canceled out by the costs of getting from Rome airport to Termini train station, the train ride from Termini to Florence, and then a taxi from the train station in Florence to your program housing. If you are delayed and end up having to get a hotel for the night, this would be yet another additional cost.
- On a final note, students who have done this in the past have said it wasn't worth it, and if they could do it all over again, they would just pay the extra money and fly straight to Florence.