



**Transcript for the May 24, 2012, Webchat
Nonimmigrant Visas**

Q: Is there a limit to how long a name can go on a passport?

A: Passport books can fit up to 38 characters (including spaces). However an amendment can be added to the back of the passport showing the full name.

Q: How much is a visa so I can go to the U.S.A. on holiday?

A: Registration under ESTA for those traveling under the Visa Waiver Program costs \$14 - <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>

All applicants for a tourist B-2 visa will be required to pay an MRV fee of \$160 however the consular officer will advise you at your appointment if an additional issuance fee will be required.

Q: I am applying for a J-1 visa for a sabbatical stay in Stanford (I'm a university professor). I have paid a SEVIS fee and have almost finished my DS-160 online application form. My family, spouse and 2 kids, are coming too on J-2's. Does each of them need to fill in a DS-160 online application form, too?

A: Each member of your family applying for a nonimmigrant visa will be required to complete the DS-160 online application form.

Q: My son travelled to the U.S. on an ESTA in November to audition for Music Major League with The Cadets. After he passed the audition his host family invited him to stay. This exceeded his ESTA so he applied for a visa which he was turned down for. Is there any way he can apply for an ESTA again?

A: If your son has previously overstayed his visit to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program, he is required to obtain a visa for travel to the United States. Please note that he is no longer eligible to travel visa free.

Q: Good morning. Can you advise if my wife and I require B-2 visas? We want to visit Florida to stay with various relatives during the period of November 2012 and March 2013. I am a UK citizen and hold a British passport. My wife resides with me in UK and has an Irish Passport.

A: If qualified to travel visa free under the Visa Waiver Program, you may remain in the United States for up to 90 days. If you wish to stay in the United States for a period that exceeds 90 days, you will need to apply for a tourist (B-2) visa. If you are issued with a tourist (B-2) visa, you can request a stay of up to six months, however the final determination will be made by the U.S. immigration officer at the point of entry.

Q: If you are a non-resident of the UK, can you get a U.S. visa in the UK?

A: If you are physically present in the United Kingdom you may apply for a visa at the Embassy in London or the Consulate General in Belfast. For more information about applying for a visa in



the UK when you are not a British citizen, see our blog on that topic at <http://www.usembassy.org.uk/visaservices/?p=772>

Q: There was an announcement earlier this year that visa services will be limited during July/August. For new H-1B visas starting Oct. 1st, that will be exactly the period to make appointments. What do you suggest to candidates looking to make appointments during July/August?

A: Nonimmigrant visa services will be open, however appointments will be limited during July and August. We do not anticipate that the reduction of appointments will affect the length of time it takes to process applications. Up-to-date appointment availability is posted every Monday morning on our Twitter account - www.twitter.com/USAinUKCGCorner

Q: Why does it take so long for Administrative Processing to be completed? Why isn't there a predicted time frame for the completion of this process? If the U.S. consulate suspects an applicant then they should refuse the visa rather than putting them on hold for years. If they do not have a good reason to refuse the applicant then just refuse him/her just because you are not sure about him/her simple as that.

A: Administrative processing often lasts up to 90 days, but in some instances, it can take several months or longer. Processing for each individual application varies so we cannot guarantee that an application will be processed by any set date.

Q: Hi, my friend has got an internship and is getting a J-1 visa to come over in September/October for a year. She would like someone to travel with her. I would like to and I'm now trying to decide which visa is most suitable. I'm guessing an H-2 visa is most likely, but do I need to have money, etc? I know I need a job before I get out there but can't find out if I need anything else. Also as I'm travelling with her; will that be included in my visa application and affect the outcome? I work in hospitality (mixology/bar work).

A: If you wish to work in the United States, you will require the appropriate work visa, either a J-1 or H-2. If you and your friend are traveling together, you can make note of that on your DS-160 application form. For more information, visit our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/nonimmigrant-visas.html>

Q: As a UK airline employee with a current C-1/D and B-1/B-2 visas in my passport, can I continue to use the visas with my new employer as I am changing airlines?

A: Provided that the visa is not annotated with your employer you may continue to use these visas if working for an airline.

Q: Hi. I'm a Chinese student currently studying in the U.S. with an F-1 visa. I will attend a summer program at Cambridge University from this July to August. But my F-1 visa will expire while I'm in UK. So I have the following questions:

1. Can I apply for my visa in UK? (I'm pretty sure I can but I just want to make sure.)
2. Can I apply during the period of July and August? Since I saw that your Embassy's services will be "limited" during that period, does it mean you will shut down or



dramatically decrease the amount of applications you take? Or will it takes a lot longer than usual for your people to process the application?

3. What kind of documents do you suggest that can show strong ties with another country?

4. What is the address requested when I make an appointment? I haven't received my housing arrangement from the Cambridge University yet. Is it OK for me to not have a UK phone number at the time I make an appointment? It is kind of hard to get a UK number before I get there.

A: Nonimmigrant visa services will be open, however appointments will be limited during July and August. We do not anticipate that the reduction of appointment will affect the length of time it takes to process applications. To contact our Operator Assisted Information Service to schedule your appointment from the United States, please visit our website at http://london.usembassy.gov/visa_contact_information.html . Up-to-date information on appointment availability is posted on our Twitter account every Monday morning - www.twitter.com/USAinUKCGCorner

While anyone physically present in the UK may apply for a nonimmigrant visa, consular officers have no way of verifying or evaluating an applicant's ties to a third country.

Q: Hi, I have a B-2 visa that is valid until 2020. This year I want to travel to U.S. for a conference. I was wondering if I can travel with my B-2 visa, or if I need to apply for a new B-1 visa?

A: A B-2 visa can only be used for traveling as a tourist or social visits. If you wish to attend a conference, you will require a B-1 visa.

Q: Hi! Do I need a flight ticket to apply for C-1 (transit) visa?

A: The Embassy recommends that travelers refrain from booking travel until they are in possession of a visa issued in their passport. However, all applicants are required to show that they have a residence abroad to which they will return at the end of their stay when they apply for their visa. This can be show by strong social and economic ties to their place of residence.

Q: Hello. I am a Tier 1 UK visa holder. Can you please tell me whether I would be eligible for a B-2 tourist visa? If yes, what are the procedures to apply?

A: Unfortunately, we are unable to pre-adjudicate the outcome of your future visa application. A determination on a person's eligibility for a visa can only be made by a consular officer at the time he or she reviews the visa application. You can visit our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/b2.html> for instructions on how to apply.

Q: Thank you. The space below the word 'Annotation' is blank, with the visa number printed in red to the right. There is a star or * symbol below the bottom left of my photo, does that signify anything?

A: The star symbol is not of any significance.

Q: I think a person I know is misusing ESTA. Can I report him to the Embassy?



A: As ESTA is maintained by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) agency, please visit their website at <https://help.cbp.gov> for assistance.

Q: Could you please advise if someone falls ill when they have a 3 month Visa to the U.S.A., what happens if the Visa expires when they are hospitalised.

A: If you are hospitalized while in the United States under the Visa Waiver Program and need to extend your stay, you will be required to contact your nearest U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) office – www.uscis.gov to apply for an extension of stay. A stay that exceeds 90 days will require you to apply for a visa for your next visit to the United States.

Q: Hi, I was thinking of travelling around the U.S.A. for 6-12 months and am not sure what visa, etc., I need or if this is possible. Also, it won't be necessary but could I work in bars or places while I'm travelling?

A: If qualified to travel visa free under the Visa Waiver Program, you may remain in the United States for up to 90 days. If you wish to stay in the United States for a period that exceeds 90 days, you will need to apply for a tourist (B-2) visa. If you are issued with a tourist (B-2) visa, you can request a stay of up to six months, however the final determination will be made by the U.S. immigration officer at the point of entry.

Travelers entering the United States on a tourist or business visa, or under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) are not permitted to work. If you wish to work in the United States, you will be required to obtain the appropriate work visa – <http://london.usembassy.gov/work.html>

Q: I have an offer as a Nurse Supervisor/ Coordinator from a private Fortune 500 company and I will be applying for H-1B visa before starting the job on 1st of October. My Visa Screen Certificate has been approved by CGFNS but I'm still waiting an approval of I-129 petition filed with USCIS by the company. In the meantime, I am securing some relevant supporting documents and I just wonder if you can help by providing visa requirements list related to my case or offer an assessment to my documents in order to avoid delays. Also, how soon can I book an appointment for the interview?

A: For a list of the documents that you will require for an H-1B visa application, please visit our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/work.html> . You should note that while H-1B visa applicants can apply for their visa 120 days before the start date listed on their approved petition, you may only enter the United States up to 10 days before your listed start date. Currently, waiting times for an H visa appointment is 8 days. Up-to-date wait times for nonimmigrant visa appointments are also posted on our Twitter feed every Monday morning – www.twitter.com/usainukcgccorner

Q: Hi, it turns out I have a visa with the sign of B-1/B-2. Does that mean I have both B-1 and B-2 visas? I want to make sure that I have valid documents to travel to the U.S. for a conference, I have previously travelled for vacation with my current visa so I am pretty sure it is valid for vacation but for attending a conference I was wondering if a B-1/B-2 visa is valid or not. I would really appreciate your response. Thanks.



A: Yes, a B-1/B-2 visa is a combined business B-1 and tourist B-2 visa.

Q: I am travelling with my daughter to the U.S.A. in June and will return before the end of June. My daughter's passport expires on 3rd July. Do we need to renew her passport before we go or can we do it on our return as it is before the expiry? Please advise. We are all valid British passport holders.

A: If your UK passport is not valid for at least 6 months beyond your date of departure from the United States, it will not affect your eligibility to travel. The U.S. has an agreement with the UK automatically extending the validity of a passport for 6 months past the passport's expiration date. Therefore, your UK passport need remain valid only for the duration of your stay in the U.S.

Q: My son has asked me about visa requirements for contract work in the U.S.A. Although I travel to the States frequently for business meetings and conferences, I don't know the answer. He is employed by the UK arm of an American company. He has been asked to travel to San Francisco to assist with the fit-out and commissioning of marine IT equipment and train the customer's engineers on site. He will be paid in the UK although the American customer will be paying his UK company for the goods and services. His visits will only be for a few weeks and his boss says he can travel under ESTA and he does not need a visa to work for only a short stay.

A: If your son will install, service or repair commercial or industrial equipment or machinery sold by a company in the United Kingdom to a buyer in the United States, and the purchase contract requires that the UK company provide such services, then the B-1 visa or visa free travel under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP) is appropriate. Further information can be found on our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/b1.html>.

Q: Sorry to sound cautious, but if my B-1/B-2 or C-1/D visas had any annotations, would it be clearly printed below the word 'Annotation'

A: Yes. The Embassy does not normally annotate C-1/D visas with the name of the employer. Therefore, if the section under Annotation is blank, you can safely assume that your visa has not been annotated.

Q: My husband (British) and I (American living in Britain for 12 years) and our children are planning on visiting my parents in Hawaii for 3 weeks in August. We are hoping to bring our nanny/housekeeper with us. She is a married Indian national living in the UK on an Indefinite Leave to Remain visa. We are paying for her holiday in its entirety. To prove sufficient funds, does she bring her bank statements or ours to the interview? The English language contract we are told to bring - is that her employment contract that she has been on with us these last two years or a specific one for our trip to the U.S.? What other supporting documents should she bring (aside from interview confirmation, MRV fee receipt, DS-160 confirmation, passport and photo)? Thank you very much.

A: If your nanny/housekeeper will be traveling with your family to the United States, she will require a Domestic Employee B-1 visa. Detailed information concerning the documents she will require for her interview can be found on our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/domestic.html>.



Q: I work offshore and recently applied for a B-1 visa to take up an offshore contract near Florida. I made an appointment for the end of the month but unfortunately I am not able to get off the ship in time so have to reschedule. I will be going to Europe where I understand I could be seen quicker than in London. Is it allowable to move my application to outside the UK? If so, do I have to make a fresh application? My parents live part-time in Florida and I visit periodically. Should the above not be possible in the time available and I was in Florida and offered work offshore whilst there, could I apply to the Embassy in Florida for a B-1 visa.

A: Nonimmigrant visa applications cannot be transferred between U.S. Embassies/Consulates. You will have to submit a new application if you wish to apply at a U.S. Embassy in another country. But you should be aware that while anyone physically present in the country may apply at the nearest U.S. Embassy/Consulate, consular officers have no way of verifying or evaluating an applicant's ties to a third country.

Q: Is there an approval rate of F-1 visas in your embassy?

A: Each case is evaluated individually; we are unable to pre-adjudicate the outcome of your future visa application. A determination on a person's eligibility for a visa can only be made by a consular officer at the time he or she reviews the visa application. You can visit our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/students.html> for more information on F visas.

Q: I have an important meeting with clients in the U.S. scheduled for the first week of June. When is the next available date for a visa interview?

A: As of May 21, appointment wait time for a B visa is 9 days. Up-to-date wait times for nonimmigrant visa appointment are also posted to our Twitter feed every Monday morning – www.twitter.com/USAinUKCGCorner

Q: I had my interview on 20-May. How long does it take to process my visa application?

A: If approved, applications generally take 5-7 working days for processing. Applications subject to administrative processing can take considerably longer. However, as processing varies for each application, we can't guarantee that it will be processed by any particular date.

To follow up on your specific application, you should carefully review the document provided to you by the consular officer on the day of your interview. Alternatively, you can contact our Operator Assisted Information Service (09042-450-100, £1.23/min plus network extras).

Q: I am applying for an I-130 visa for my husband as we would like to go back to the U.S. I am an American citizen. Can he work with an I-130 visa? Also, I want to bring both my daughters back with me. Both are American citizens but one is severely disabled and is now a young adult. Does this pose any difficulties?

A: U.S. citizens in possession of a valid U.S. passport may travel to the United States to work and reside permanently. If your husband's application for an immigrant visa is processed on entering the United States to take up permanent residence, he will be eligible to take up employment. Please note that the I-130 is the petition to apply for the immigrant visa, and not the visa itself.



Filing this petition is the first step in the process. More information can be found on our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/immigrant-visas.html>

Q: Hi. I completed the DS-160 application online and submitted it, but how can I pay the visa fee and book an appointment? Can I do that online as well?

A: You will need to call the Operator Assisted Information Service on 09042-450-100 (calls are charged at £1.23/min plus network extras) to pay the MRV fee and schedule your appointment - http://london.usembassy.gov/visa_contact_information.html

Q: Hi. Can you please advise what the timescale for processing E-2 treaty investor visas is? Thanks.

A: Average processing times for E-2 treaty investor visas are approximately 6 weeks.

Q: Is there any requirement for students to provide a Medical Certificate of injections at their interview?

A: Nonimmigrant visa applicants are not required to furnish vaccination certificates at the time of their visa application.

Q: How long does it typically take for the I-130 to be approved? And once approved, how long do you have to relocate to the U.S.? Does it have a "use-by" date?

A: It depends where the I-130 petition is filed. In some cases it can take 10 months or more. Petitions filed in the U.S. can be tracked on the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov ; petitions filed with the USCIS office at the Embassy can be tracked on our website at <http://london.usembassy.gov/dhs/uscis/i130filing.html>

Q: Hi. Can I send my passport to be renewed once I have submitted my investor application? Can I turn up at the interview with new passport or will I have to complete a new DS -160? Thanks.

A: Once your application has been reviewed and a decision made, you will be contacted by the Treaty Visa Unit and advised how to proceed.