

HOMESTAY HOST FAMILY GUIDE



UNIVERSITY OF
OREGON

American English Institute

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Overview of the Homestay Program

Introduction

The American English Institute (AEI) sponsors the Homestay Program as a cultural experience for our students. We look for families who are interested in the experience of having an international student live in their homes and who are willing to help the student understand American culture while improving their English.

Definition of “family”

For Homestay Program purposes, a family is a household with at least one adult; age is not important. Some of our hosts are young couples in their twenties with children; others are widowed or retired people in their seventies.

Basic requirements

To host a student you need to be able to provide

- a private bedroom
- a prepared evening meal and food for the student’s breakfast as well as snacks each day
- food for lunch on the weekends
- Internet service that the student can access from their room
- conversation and friendship
- good access by bus to the UO from early morning to at least 10:00 p.m.
- bus stop within 5- to 10-minute walk from home

Program length

Some students at the AEI are enrolled in the Intensive English Program, which operates on the university’s term schedule of ten weeks to a term. Other students attend the AEI as part of a short-term program. Students may stay for one term or several years. We do not guarantee student placements.

Reimbursement for expenses

We do not recommend that people take an AEI student into their home as a means of earning income, as the homestay payment is normally just enough to reimburse you for expenses.

Home-stay payments to reimburse you for room and board are set at \$650 per month. Depending on the program, you will be paid directly by the student or

the University of Oregon.

Activities that students enjoy

Our students really cherish the opportunity to converse with you and your friends, even though they may seem shy and conversation may be a little awkward at times.

We hope that you will include your student in family activities and outings such as birthday parties, picnics, local celebrations, movies, Saturday Market, and camping. We don’t expect you to be full-time tour guides, but students do want to learn about our city and surrounding area. Even simple activities, such as visiting a farm or looking at the stars, may be special to a student who has spent his or her whole life in a big city.

How to become a host family

Once we receive the online application, we will contact you for a home interview. During the hourlong interview, we will discuss many aspects of living with an international student and answer your questions about the program. Just as important, we will also explore with you the type of student who might work out best in your home.

If you decide to join our program, we are required by the University to conduct a criminal record check before placing a student with you.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the Homestay Program, please contact the home-stay coordinator.



Introduction

Background

The Homestay Program Handbook provides host families with information that we believe will help you and your student.

This handbook contains many references to cultural differences that may cause confusion for your family or your student. We mention these differences as a way to improve communication between students and families.

Information is not presented to change you or your lifestyle, but to remind you that little things we take for granted as being “normal” can be disconcerting to someone who has grown up with different expectations of daily life and values.

Please, read this handbook!

We encourage everyone, new and veteran families alike, to read this handbook carefully. It includes new information that is based on the experiences of past hosts as well as observations of the AEI staff.

Although not everything mentioned applies to every family or every family situation, each point reflects some past experience.

As you read the handbook, if you have ideas of topics you wish were included, please let me know and don't hesitate to email me your ideas to aeihomestay@uoregon.edu



Placement Process

Introduction

Students in the year-round AEI Intensive English Program may apply to live with a host family. Students in some short-term programs are placed with families as an integral part of their language and cultural experience in the United States.

How the placement process works

- Host families notify the Homestay Program coordinator that they are available to host a student.
- Students submit home-stay applications to AEI.
- Approximately four weeks before a new term or program, the Homestay Program coordinator (1) analyzes the information provided by the students to determine their likes, dislikes, and interests; (2) searches the list of available host families to find one that seems like a good “match” based on the information AEI has about the family’s preferences and interests; (3) emails the prospective family to verify its availability and provide information about the student.
- If the family agrees to take the student, the Homestay Program coordinator mails the student’s homestay application form and other placement information to the family. The student is emailed the contact information for the host family along with other pre-arrival information.

Frequently asked questions about the placement process

How long will the student stay in our home?
We can’t predict what any student will do. The students commit to live with their host families for at least one term. Likewise, families commit to host a student on a term-to-term basis. Sometimes a student plans to live with a family for only one term but ends up staying with them for two or three years. Other times a student who initially plans to stay in a home for a year decides to rent an apartment, or the family asks the student to move because their situation has changed.

Will you call and tell me that you’re not placing a student in our home?

No; however, you are welcome to call the

Homestay Program coordinator at any time to get an update on the progress in placing the next term’s student.

Do students evaluate their host families?

Yes, each term students are asked to evaluate their home-stay experience. These evaluations are usually very positive; however, occasionally a pattern of problems with a particular host family may emerge. In this case the home-stay coordinator would discuss the problem and possible solutions with you.

What the host family agrees to when accepting a student

- The host’s primary reason for hosting a student is to offer a safe, friendly, and welcoming environment for the purpose of cross-cultural exchange, rather than monetary gain. The host has read the AEI home-stay guidelines and agrees to follow the stated standards and recommendations.
- Student placement in the home is not guaranteed, and AEI is not able to guarantee that there will be a replacement in a given home once a student moves on.
- The host agrees that no fees other than the \$650 per month stipend will be charged to the international student (see **Money**). The student pays by the month only, not for the full term, upon arrival. Special program arrangements may differ.
- The host acknowledges that the host shall make separate financial arrangements with the student concerning payment of the \$600 stipend, and neither the AEI nor the university shall be a party to said contractual agreement. The AEI and the university are not responsible and do not guarantee payment by the student. This arrangement may be different with short-term special programs.
- The hosts explicitly consent to the mandatory criminal background check on behalf of all residents in the home exceeding the age of eighteen.

Host Family Checklist - Intensive English Program

Families who host special program students will receive check lists that are program-specific.

Before the student arrives

- Write to the student to welcome her or him to your home.
- Ask for their flight arrival information and give them your cell phone number in case of a delay.
- Talk to your veterinarian about the new, effective flea-control products for your pets (see **Your Household and Your Student**).
- Get the student's room ready.
- Clear a small space in the bathroom for toiletries.
- Make an extra house key.
- Make a card for the student to carry.
Include the following:
 - Your names
 - Your address
 - Your telephone number and a second emergency back-up number
 - Your business telephone number
 - Name and address of a helpful neighbor
 - Bus route number and name of cross streets for stop
 - Telephone number for AEI
- Make a sign with the student's name on it to take with you to the airport when you meet the student. This is a great assignment for your children.

When you meet your student

- Call the airline to be sure the flight will be on time.
- Bring your sign.
- Be on time.
- Some students are comfortable with hugs; some aren't. Ask, "May I hug you?"
- Ask the student how to pronounce his or her name.
- Get the student's luggage.

The first few hours at home

- Show the student his or her room and where to put away clothing.
- Show the student the bathroom he or she will use.
 - Remind the student to keep the shower curtain inside the tub.
 - Establish a time limit on showers.

- Explain how to control the water temperature.
- Give the student some towels.
- Introduce the students to the family pets.
- Give the student the card and a house key.

Sample Card

Ed and Ida Mae Smith
1835 Yew Street, Eugene OR 97405
Home: 345-1942 Work: 346-2220
Neighbor: Ann Six, 1829 Yew St., 345-1197
Bus #34, get off at 18th and City View
AEI: 346-6112

- Feed the student if she or he is hungry.
- The student is probably exhausted. Suggest a shower and a long nap.

Orientation to your household and expectations

- Safety provisions:
 - Describe how and when to lock doors and windows.
 - Show what to do in case of fire.
 - Explain the 911 emergency number.
 - Warn the student not to carry a lot of money.
 - Suggest that the student not walk alone after dark.
- Tell the student to let you know where he or she is going and when to expect a return.
- Go over the AEI orientation schedule.
- Explain use of the family telephone including long-distance calls if you have a land line.
- Describe the family routine on weekdays.
- Say what's available for breakfast and snacks.
- Find out what the student likes to eat.
- Show the student how to use the washer and dryer or what your laundry arrangements will be.
- Describe your policy on smoking in your home.
- Explain how to use the bus. Take the bus with the student once to and from the campus if at all possible.

Communication

Introduction

Communication is probably the most important element of a successful home-stay. AEI home-stay students ask to live with an American family because they want to become more fluent in English. You are their most important English-speaking contact.

When you spend time talking with them, it not only improves their English skills, it also makes them feel welcome in your home as a member of the family.

Communication Tips

Discuss expectations and family rules

Spend time during the first few days discussing your house rules with your student. The tone of this conversation should be friendly, not officious. Explain that you are doing this to help the student feel more comfortable in your home.

Since most students can understand written English better than spoken English, you may want to make a list of the house rules to help the student understand your expectations. If you want to see a sample document, go to the section titled **Family Rules**.

Smile

Remember to smile, even to joke. Although a student may be unable to comprehend subtle humor, your friendly intent will be understood.

On occasion you may need to explain why you are laughing. Students with limited language ability may seem embarrassed because they feel that you are laughing at them.

Ask about your student's country and family

Encourage your student to tell you about his or her country, city, family, school, hobbies, home, cultural activities, food, likes, and dislikes. Students from some cultures may be uncomfortable talking about their family. Avoid making this seem like an interview. Offer balancing pieces of information about U.S. culture or your family traditions.

Generally, students want to spend time talking with you even though they may be shy and afraid of making mistakes. Many have had very limited opportunities to converse with native English speakers.

In the past, nearly all of the problems between families and students have been resolved when each party took the time to communicate mutual expectations. Your flexibility and a sense of humor are probably your best allies. That's true for your student as well!

Encourage questions

Encourage your student to ask questions about your home, our area, and U.S. customs. One way to do this is to simply point out things in your home or popular activities.

In the U.S., we tend to ask more questions than are considered polite in other countries. Students are curious about a lot of things, although they may be reluctant to ask questions. Once they know you like questions, they will ask lots of them.

Rephrase sentences

Rephrase sentences if you think you haven't been understood. Your student will love you for it.

Likewise, if you aren't sure you understand something a student has said, rephrase the statement in your own words: "Do you mean . . . ?"

Use a dictionary

Keep your family's dictionary accessible. Look up words together with your student when you're having a difficult time defining a word so that the student can understand it. Many students have translators on their cell phones that can be helpful but encourage your student not to over use this or depend on it.

Draw a picture

Draw a simple picture to illustrate the meaning of a word. Ask the student to draw when you're having difficulty understanding him or her.

Speak slowly

Speak slowly if your student has difficulty comprehending spoken English. However don't drag-out-each-syl-la-ble-so-that-you-sound-like-a-ro-bot.

Write it down

Writing something down can often help if a student can't understand your spoken English.

Allow thoughtful silence

Allow students enough time to process your questions and to think about their answers. In our culture, we often regard silence during a conversation as awkward. In many cultures (Japanese, for example), silence during a conversation is normal and acceptable.

Be careful about asking yes-or-no questions

Try to phrase important questions in a way that avoids a "yes" or "no" answer, particularly for less fluent students. Some students will answer "yes" to almost any question, because they want to seem polite or because they don't want to acknowledge they don't understand. For example: "What time will I pick you up? Where will I meet you?" is more effective than "So you'll meet me at the bookstore at 10:00?"

Avoid negative questions and tag questions

Don't use negative questions such as "Don't you feel well?" or tag questions such as "You don't have a class this morning, do you?" Both these constructions are common in English but nonexistent in other languages. These language constructions are confusing to many nonnative English speakers.

If you think the student is rude

Don't make assumptions about politeness based on a student's choice of words or intonation patterns. A phrase such as "I want to eat [food]" is actually the most polite way to phrase something in some languages and cultures. If you feel that a student's way of speaking indicates impoliteness, tactfully point out what it is that sounds rude. Whenever possible give the student a phrase that can be substituted for the impolite pattern.

For example: "I'd like to have . . ." instead of "I want . . ."; "You don't have to . . ." instead of "You must not. . ."

Talking about the student's behavior

If you are uncomfortable with a student's behavior, be careful how you discuss the subject. Our culture tends to be more straightforward about problems than most other cultures, and being too blunt can hurt a student's feelings. This doesn't mean that the behavior shouldn't be discussed and the situation resolved.

Talking to a demanding student

Occasionally, we have a student who is very demanding. For example, the student wants you to do personal laundry, order cable TV, or have dinner at 8:00 p.m. every night.

Don't feel that you need to change your home and lifestyle to fit the student as long as you are providing what you've agreed to. Perhaps you need to explain your cultural expectations and family rules again in a positive way.

On the other hand, be thoughtful about what you can do to make your home comfortable for your student. Perhaps on reflection, the student's "demand" is a reasonable request that you would like to accommodate.

Family arguments

Communication among the members of your family affects the student. For example, if you and your child are having an argument, you might raise your voices or speak in tones that connote anger. Home-stay students are typically very embarrassed and feel uncomfortable when they witness this. It may be best to excuse yourselves to another room if tempers flare. In addition, you might explain to the student that the argument concerns you and your child, not the student.

Ask for help

If there is a serious communication problem, it may be helpful to have a translator. Often a student has a friend whose English-language skills are strong enough to help. The home-stay coordinator is available to assist you and your student if you are having difficulty communicating with each other or if there are behavioral concerns.

Culture Shock

Definition of culture shock

It has been well documented that most people living in another country for more than a few weeks experience periods of frustration and depression. These periods, commonly called “culture shock,” are caused by differences encountered in daily life situations, politeness codes, expected behavior patterns, and communication difficulties. For AEI students, the communication problems arise from their English-language skill level as well as our cultural norms.

Who suffers from culture shock?

Culture shock affects some people more than others and for many different reasons. Students staying for less than a month usually don't experience culture shock at all.

Many of the students enrolled in the AEI year-round Intensive English Program do experience culture shock. After about three to six weeks in the U.S., they are physically and emotionally exhausted from their bombardment with English. They realize how difficult it may be to get their language skill to a level high enough to gain entrance to a college or university in the U.S. They miss their families and friends. So many things are different and require getting used to: table manners, driving laws, food, classroom expectations, relationships between men and women . . . the list goes on.

Symptoms

Often students with unrealistic expectations of themselves or with a limited understanding of the new culture become extremely frustrated and depressed. As with most people, feelings of depression can affect students' personalities.

If you observe a change in your student's habits or attitudes, chances are that the underlying cause is culture shock.

Some common manifestations include:

- Withdrawal from you and your family
- Anxiety or fearfulness
- Irritability

- Excessive sleeping, criticism, or complaints about classmates, teachers, and your family
- Sullenness
- Dependency

How you can help your student

Most students are familiar with the notion of culture shock, but some are surprised when they experience it. Students suffering from culture shock need a lot of understanding and support. Relationships can be strengthened during this period if family members reach out to let students know how much they care and discuss the subject openly. Relationships can also be ruined if a family member is overly harsh or judgmental at this time.

It's important to remember, and to help the student realize, that culture shock has no single cause. It is brought about by a combination of factors including homesickness, stress from homework, difficulty in forming new friendships, and communication difficulties.



What to do if symptoms persist

Culture shock usually subsides over time, but it doesn't always go away on its own. If you are especially concerned about your student's adjustment, please call the home-stay coordinator. Both AEI and the university have resources available to help students cope with culture shock.

Food

A topic of great interest!

Since all of us eat, food is an important subject. In this section you'll read some tips that may make it easier for you and your student to be happy, healthy, and well fed.

Expectations

The AEI expects that you will provide the following:

- Food for breakfast that the student can prepare
- Food for lunch on weekends only
- A variety of snack foods such as crackers, fruit, juice, yogurt, instant noodles
- A nutritious, delicious prepared evening meal; not a package of ramen noodles or a Budget fast-and-cheap microwave meal
- Try to limit the number of casseroles each week as most students consider these strange and are used to several dishes of separate veggies, fruit, meat, starch.

Some important points

- Be clear with your student regarding the family dinner hour
- Ask your student to call if they will be late or won't be coming home for dinner
- You are not required to cook dinner for your student if they arrive home late, but you do need to leave food for them to reheat

Be sure that the student is getting enough to eat

The most common food-related problem we hear about from students is that they are still hungry at the end of a meal or between meals. There are several possible reasons for this. The student

- may be used to more variety at each meal and doesn't take as much as would be expected here; one-dish meals are not an international custom
- doesn't like the food
- may be very active and burn a lot of calories, so a salad-and-sandwich dinner doesn't fill him or her up
- doesn't take seconds when they are offered; in some cultures, it's impolite to accept food the first time it's offered or to ask for more

Whatever the reasons might be, it's really very important to be extra solicitous at mealtime to

ensure that the student isn't leaving the table hungry.

Rice is an international favorite

Rice is a mainstay in many diets around the world and is eaten at every meal. Most students prefer short-grain steamed rice and think that instant rice is an abomination.

Respect dietary restrictions based on religious beliefs and practices

It's a good idea to ask your student if there are foods he or she cannot eat because of religious beliefs. For example, Muslims do not eat pork or consume any kind of alcohol, most Seventh-day Adventists don't eat beef or pork or anything with alcohol in it, and some Buddhists are vegetarians. Usually the limitations are easy to work around in planning your menus. For example, if you are serving pork chops for dinner, you can easily prepare a ground-round patty for a student who doesn't eat pork.

Find out what the student likes and doesn't like

We don't expect you to make major dietary changes because you're hosting a student, but you will want to know something about your student's food preferences. There are several ways to find out what they are:

- Ask your student to go to the grocery store with you and point out things he or she likes.
- Ask him or her, "What do you usually eat at home for breakfast?"

Just as some of us are more adventurous than others in our eating habits, so are students. Some are hesitant to try new foods.

- One home-stay student at first refused to eat spinach noodles because she thought they were made of grass.
- Two American foods that most home-stay students think are disgusting are peanut butter and root beer.
- Some students prefer leftover rice and a salad for breakfast instead of cereal or an egg and toast.

Snacks

Please have snack foods available. Show the student where snacks are kept. The customs of other countries may make it difficult for a student to adjust to getting food out of your cupboard or refrigerator, but it's important to let the student know what's available.

Except where a family member or student has dietary restrictions, whatever food is available to the family should also be available for the student.

Red meat

Many American families are reducing their intake of red meat; some have become vegetarians. Most of our students are unprepared to eliminate meat from their diet and especially enjoy beef, a very expensive commodity in many countries. On the other hand, some of our students are also vegetarians. As much as possible, please accommodate your student's preferences in this area.

Sources of international groceries

Many supermarkets carry a variety of "international" groceries. There are also several specialty grocery stores in Eugene. Some are listed below.

The Kiva

125 W 11th Ave. Eugene, OR 97401
541-600-3633

King's Asian Market

2100 West 11th Avenue
343-7333

Plaza Latina Supermarket

1333 West 7th Avenue
344-6101

Sunrise Asian Food Market

70 West 29th Avenue
343-3295

Yi-Shen Market

1915 West 11th Avenue
683-9386

Ask the student to cook for you

Perhaps your student would like to prepare a meal that would be typical in his or her country. The student would enjoy shopping with you for the ingredients and teaching you how to prepare some dishes.

Of course, the most fun comes from cooking together. Learn how your student cuts onions, for example.



Ask for recipes

Most students are delighted to have you ask for and try favorite family recipes from their country. They can translate them if necessary. Their mothers (and sometimes fathers) are pleased, too!

Transportation

Airport pickup

Most Intensive English Program home-stay students ask you to meet them at the Eugene airport when they first arrive. They send you their date and time of arrival and flight number in advance. If you cannot meet your student, please arrange for a friend to do so.

Special program students travel as a group from their country to Eugene. You may be asked to meet the student at a location and time designated by the Homestay Program coordinator other than picking up your student at the airport.



Bus transportation

Home-stay students in the AEI year-round language program expect to take the bus to campus for classes. If at all possible, please ride the bus once or twice with your student, both to and from your house. Point out a few easily recognizable landmarks.

Read the bus schedule with your student and highlight the routes that serve your area. Note how late the bus runs and the weekend hours, which are usually reduced.

If you work near the university, your student would certainly appreciate a ride. It also provides time for conversation with the student.

Transportation for special program homestay students

Most students who are here for a short program use

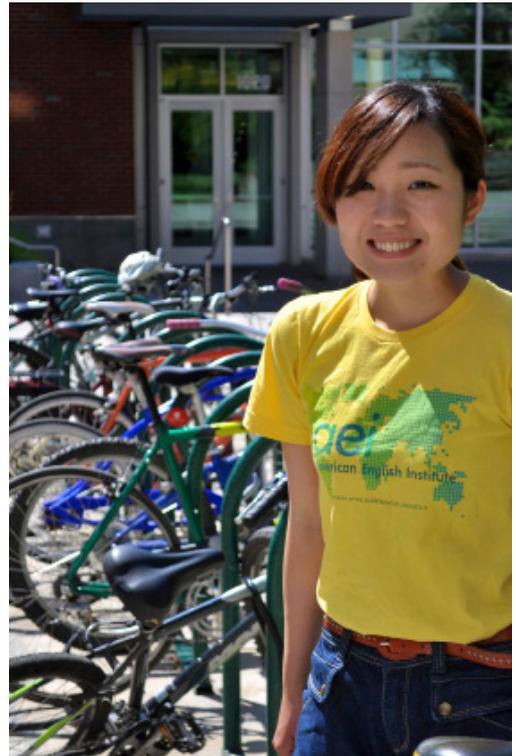
the bus to get to and from classes.

These students participate in some activities that end in the evening, and take weekend field trips. On those occasions, we expect you to drop off and pick up your student at the place and time designated by the AEI activity coordinator.

Before your student arrives, you may receive an activity schedule showing meeting times and places. We encourage you to form carpools with other hosts in your area. To help you do this, we give you a list of families hosting students in the same group.

Using the family automobile

Your student may have an international driver's license and want to drive your vehicle. To prevent any unhappy surprises, it is suggested that you do not permit your student to drive your automobile.



Your Household and Your Students

Introduction

This section of the handbook covers a number of topics that create opportunities for both happiness and annoyance for you and the student.

Telephone

If the student does not have their own cell phone, they may ask to use the family telephone for talking to friends and classmates locally. We cannot help you get reimbursed for international phone calls. As a result, we recommend the following:

- Help your student set up an account with a US cell phone service and get a new SIM card for their phone. Or have them buy a 'throw away' phone for under \$15 and purchase pre-paid minutes for use.
- Show the student where he or she can purchase a calling card to use when making long-distance calls. The cards are sold at the Duck Store, from machines in the EMU, and in many local stores.
- Encourage your student to apply for a phone credit card or a prepaid cell phone. Offer to help with this task.
- Ask the student to make long-distance calls collect so that you don't have to separate the telephone bill each month and collect from the student.

Late hours

Each family and student have varying opinions about what "late" means. However, remember that these students are young adults and enjoy staying out late with their friends.

We tell students that they should let you know if they are going to be out late, either by telling you in advance or by calling you. Please discuss this topic with your student. Explain that in the U.S. and in your family, it is considered polite to let others know if one is going to be late, especially when spur-of-the-moment activities pop up.

Pets: Fleas, fear, and fur

If you have pets, keep the fleas under control. It is common for a student to be covered with flea bites while family members are unbitten. Usually, a student suffers in silence or shows the home-stay coordinator red, swollen, itching legs. Even if you haven't noticed any unusual scratching or bites on your student, please check to make sure there isn't a problem.

Other concerns students may have about pets include

- fear of dogs, especially large ones
- not knowing what pet behavior is allowed in your home
- cats walking on counters and tables
- family members petting the animal and then preparing food or eating without washing their hands

Show your student how to interact with and discipline your pets. If a student seems bothered by your pets, encourage the student to keep his or her bedroom door closed whenever the animal is indoors. Teach your student common dog commands like 'sit, stay, down' in case they encounter an unfamiliar dog.

Religion

The University of Oregon welcomes diversity in all parts of life. Many of our students have strong religious beliefs and commitments while others have no connection to a particular religion. We recognize that our host families also cover the entire spectrum. It is important to respect your student's beliefs and not force your own personal religion on them. You can ask them if they would like to join you for a service at your church to see what it is like but please do not try to convert any student to your way of thinking. This usually ends up causing conflict between the family and the student and may be cause for moving the student.

Prevention of sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted behavior of a sexual nature. Besides violating the law, you wouldn't want your student to feel intimidated or uncomfortable in your home.

One aspect of sexual harassment is that it usually involves someone in authority harassing someone of lower status. As host to an international student, you are in a position of authority. Your status as a member of the host culture, added to your role as surrogate family member, makes you a powerful person in the eyes of the student.

Since your student is from another culture, he or she may be unsure what is appropriate here. The American ways of communicating, expressing feelings, and behaving acceptably are different

from those in other cultures. The language barrier increases students' feelings of uncertainty and vulnerability.

Because of this inequality in status between you and your student, please be careful to avoid directing any unwanted sexual attention toward him or her. Moreover, it is unethical to indulge in any romantic feelings toward a student placed in your home, even if reciprocated.

Housekeeping

We encourage students to participate in all family activities and to ask you if you need help with chores such as cleaning up after dinner and taking out the trash. Many of our students come from family situations in which they were not expected to do any housework. They may not know how to do things that we take for granted, such as chopping an onion or washing dishes. One student put about half a cup of dishwashing detergent in the sink and turned on the water full blast before the family realized some training was needed!

When asking a student to help out with a household chore, it's important to explain that this is a task typically shared by everyone in an American family. Please keep your expectations reasonable. Do not ask your student to babysit, clean your house, or mow your lawn. We have had students who complained that their families only wanted them as maids or for money.

Expectations about cleanliness vary greatly from country to country. We have had students who were concerned about what they felt was inadequate attention to cleanliness in American homes, especially in the kitchen, bathroom, and at the dining table. On the other hand, some families have been upset by their student's less-than-perfect housekeeping. Be clear in explaining to the student what you expect in the way of keeping his or her room clean, whatever that means in your home. You may need to show your student how to make a bed, use the washing machine, or clean the bathtub. Be tactful in what you say and how you teach the student about your standards.

Friends staying over

Your student may want to have a friend spend the night or join in a family activity. We tell students that they should ask your permission in advance, and that usually host families are happy to meet their friends.

Although we tell students that bringing a member of the opposite sex over to spend the night is not

acceptable in American families, occasionally it has happened. If this occurs, we suggest that you get some blankets or a sleeping bag and cheerfully show the guest to the living room couch or family room floor.

House keys

It is very important to a student's feeling of well-being to have a key to your home. Giving your student a key also frees you, and they can come and go as they like. Ask them not to put any identifying information on the key fob. Lock boxes are also available for homes. Your student punches a code, opens the box for the key, and replaces it for the next use.

Your children

Most students find time spent with their host family's children one of the most rewarding aspects of their home-stay experience.

Playing a game of cards or shooting baskets requires little language, but can be the basis for warm friendships.

Some students are hesitant to let a child know when they need to quit playing and start studying. You can help your student maintain needed privacy by reminding our children not to enter the student's room without permission, and by checking periodically with the student to make sure that he or she wants to continue playing.

Students are often surprised at differences in child-rearing practices, and they may ask you about your reasons for doing things a certain way. For instance, Japanese students are sometimes amazed that American children sleep separately from their mothers. Sharing information with your student and finding out about his or her cultural practices can be a source of insight into our own values and beliefs.

Slang

Students are always interested in learning American slang. Please take care to provide examples of appropriate and inappropriate use of slang.

Another cautionary area concerns the use of profanity, obscenities, and "colorful" language. Do more than give the definition of these words. For example, you can say, "You would never use this word when you are talking to your mother or your teacher." Some students have embarrassed themselves by using such language at the wrong time and place.

Family Rules

Background

Some families find it helpful to have a list of family rules. This helps to orient the student to the new surroundings and learn about your family's customs and rules. Present this information to the student in a manner that says, "We hope you'll be comfortable in our home, and we hope that this will help you be part of our family."

Sample family introduction and rules

The following is a model "Welcome to our home" to give you some ideas of what you might want to say. Include items that are really important to you. Tone is important; try to avoid sounding legalistic.

Welcome to our home! We hope you'll enjoy your stay. We're looking forward to doing things with you and learning more about you and your country.

Father: John Butler. Works for the telephone company as an installer.

Work phone: 686-1200. You can call him at work if you have an emergency.

Mother: Mary Butler. Teaches preschool at Northminster.

Work phone: 342-2246. You can call her any time.

Son: Michael. Fifteen years old. Sophomore at North Eugene High School.

Daughter: Belinda (her nickname is "Beanie"). Ten years old. Fourth grader at Adams Elementary School.

Pets: Barkus (black-and-white dog) and Zip (orange cat). We love our pets, but we don't want them to bother you. They aren't allowed to sit on the furniture. Please put them outside if they are being bad. If you don't want them to go into your room, you may close your door.

- We leave the house between 7:00 and 8:00 a.m. for work or school.
- We each prepare our own breakfast. There is always milk, juice, fruit, eggs, and yogurt in the refrigerator. There is also cold cereal and bread for toast. Everyone should clean up after themselves.
- We all eat lunch at school or work during the week. On weekends, we usually eat lunch here at home.
- On weekdays, either John or Mary cooks dinner. We usually eat at about 6:30 p.m. If you can't be home for dinner, just call us and we'll save you a plate of food. When you get home, you can heat it up in the microwave. The schedule sometimes changes on Saturday and Sunday, and we'll let you know what we have planned.
- We usually have these things in the house to eat for snacks: fruit, crackers, chips, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream. If you want something else, please tell Mary, and she will buy it at the store. Eat any of these snack foods anytime you're hungry. You don't have to ask first.
- Your friends are welcome in our home. If you want to invite someone to dinner or to spend the night, please let us know a day or two in advance.
- If you want to call your friends or have them call you, that's fine. If you want to make a long-distance call, please call collect or use a telephone credit card. John will help you get a phone credit card or show you how to buy a calling card.
- Everyone is quiet after 10:30 p.m. on weeknights. If you want to watch TV or listen to the radio, please use the headphones.
- We don't allow smoking in our home. If you or your friends want to smoke, please go outside.
- In our home, we all keep our own bedrooms neat and clean and do our own laundry. Mary or John will show you how to use the washer and dryer. Since you're part of our family, we want you to clean your bedroom every week—vacuum, dust, change your sheets, and put away your clothes.
- We're very pleased to have you in our family and hope that your stay with us will be a happy one. Please let us know what you want or need. We want your time in Eugene with our family to be a wonderful experience for you!

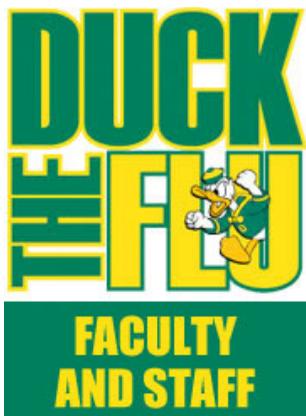
Health Care

Health insurance

All AEI students are required to have health insurance. Encourage students to carry their insurance cards in their wallets.

Use the University Health Center for most illnesses and injuries

AEI students can be seen at the University Health Center, which is located at the corner of East 13th Avenue and Agate Street, just south of Oregon Hall. Students may either walk in or call 346-2770 for an appointment.



Students will have a copay for each office visit. Prescription drugs and some over-the-counter drugs are available at reduced prices.

University Health Center hours

During fall, winter, and spring terms, the hours the health center is open are as follows:

Monday through Friday—9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Saturday walk-in clinic—10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sunday—closed

Summer session hours:

Monday through Friday—9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday—9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Weekends—closed

Center hours may change, so call ahead.

When to use a hospital emergency room, when to use urgent care

In a medical emergency, take the student to the nearest hospital. The student should be carrying his or her insurance card and UO student ID card. Nonemergency medical needs that occur when the health center is closed usually can be met at an urgent care clinic:

Urgent Care

Eugene Urgent Care

598 East 13th Avenue, Eugene, 636-3473

Oregon Medical Group (after hours)

1580 Valley River Drive, Eugene, 242-4000

Sacred Heart Medical Center—University District Emergency

1255 Hilyard Street, Eugene, 686-6931

Hospitals

McKenzie-Willamette Medical Center

1460 G Street, Springfield, 726-4400

Sacred Heart Medical Center

3377 RiverBend Drive, Springfield, 687-6279



Personal Safety

Fire safety

Review fire safety basics with your student:

Post in bedrooms & by phones: fire, police, ambulance is 911 - you are at - [list address]. In an emergency students may forget the address or the US emergency code.

Don't smoke inside the home!

- Learn ways to get out of the house in case of fire.
- Show them what the smoke detector sounds like
- Feel the bedroom door for heat before opening it.
- If there's smoke, crawl—don't walk—to the nearest exit.
- If clothing is on fire, stop, drop, and roll.
- Meet the family at a predetermined location near the house.

Help for psychological or emotional problems

Most other countries don't have formal support facilities to help students with emotional or psychological problems. In addition, students may resist talking to their host families about such problems because they aren't discussed in their own culture.



If your student is exhibiting behavior that concerns you, please contact the AEI counselor, at 346-1098. She will work with the student and make referrals to other campus resources as appropriate.

Safety in the community

Encourage students to

- carry only small amounts of cash
- walk with a friend at night, even on campus
- avoid bike paths at dusk and in the early morning hours

Safe Ride is a free shuttle service for students. It has an on-campus route and can also provide rides to nearby off-campus destinations. It is not for everyday use but for late night emergency rides.

To make a ride reservation or get service information, call 346-7433, extension 2.

Report major crime

In case of a serious crime such as assault or auto theft, call your local law enforcement agency.

Call AEI about your student's situation

After the initial emergency or serious illness, major injury, or victimization has been taken care of, call the homestay coordinator's office at 346-6112 or the American English Institute office at 346-3945.

If the emergency occurs in the evening or on a weekend, call homestay coordinator's office and get the cell number to reach her.



Money

Background

Students always say that they feel very uncomfortable discussing money with host families. It makes them feel less a part of your family, and hard feelings can develop if miscommunication occurs.

Some students complain that their families don't really care about them and are "only doing it for money." Flexibility and understanding on your part—as well as your attitude toward the student—can make a big difference.

Guidelines

In order to avoid miscommunication, we have set some guidelines for students and families so that you, the student, and representatives of the American English Institute know what is expected.

Monthly stipend

The monthly stipend is \$650 a month for a full month, and \$22 a day for a partial month. Usually students pay in cash, by personal check, or with a traveler's check.

The stipend is intended to cover the expenses of hosting a student in your home. It isn't a source of discretionary income. It's intended to cover your additional utility costs, groceries, and household expenses.

If a student is going to be away from your home, but their belongings are in their room, the student should pay the normal monthly stipend of \$650.00 just as if they were renting an apartment or a dorm room. However, while your student is paying for their room, you cannot let a personal guest or relative use that room even if the student is out of town.

Stipend adjustments

If your student moves before the end of the term, please call the home-stay coordinator. In some situations, you may be able to charge them a penalty. There are also situations when this charge is not appropriate.

Who pays you and when

In most cases the student pays you directly on the first day of the month. Don't accept payment for the entire term at the beginning of the term.

If you are hosting a student in one of the special programs, the university may pay you directly. You can expect to receive your check within the first two weeks after your student arrives.

We discourage deposits

On occasion, a family has asked a student for a deposit for a house key, telephone privileges, or cleaning. It is AEI's policy that students should not be asked to make a deposit for any purpose.

Spending money

Students are expected to pay for their own toiletries, school supplies, and entertainment. If you invite your student to go somewhere with you—movies, skiing, the Hult Center—make it clear ahead of time the amount you expect them to pay. This is important because in most countries the person who issues an invitation also treats.

Who pays in a restaurant

Dining in a restaurant can be a sticky situation that requires some judgment and tact on your part. In our opinion, sometimes it's appropriate for you to pay for the student's meal; at other times it's appropriate to ask the student to pay for his or her own.

If you and your family are eating at a moderately priced restaurant because you don't want to cook dinner or like to eat out occasionally, it makes sense for you to invite the student to go along and pay for his or her own meal.

There are times when eating in a restaurant is more entertainment than simple sustenance. For example, you might be attending a retirement party or a charity fundraiser at a high-priced restaurant. You think your student might enjoy the event, but it's too spendy for you to take the student as your guest. In that case, invite your student but explain that this is an occasion where he or she would need to pay for his or her meal. If your student does not want to attend an event with you, please make sure there is food at the house that they can eat.

Gifts

Expect a gift when your student arrives

Most students bring gifts with them from their countries to give to their new host families. Many times these are actually gifts from the student's own family as a way of thanking you for opening your home to their son or daughter. Typically, the gifts represent a special art form or product of their country.

Obviously, you want to thank the student and his or her family for remembering you in such a special way. Equally obvious, you'll want to display the gift in a way that lets the student know you really appreciate it.

Holiday observances and American culture

A nice way to teach your student about customs related to our holidays is to give them small gifts or surprises just as you would your own children if they were living at home.

Some ideas:

- A card on Valentine's Day
- A chocolate bunny at Easter
- A congratulatory card at the end of the academic term
- A disc of Irish songs for St. Patrick's Day

Sometimes students are confused about the sacred and secular celebration of such religious holidays as Christmas and Easter and can't tell one aspect from another. They might not ask you about the religious significance, but they're usually very curious and want you to bring up the subject.

Birthdays

For the most part, birthdays aren't big celebrations in other countries. But students love to have their birthdays acknowledged in ways that are traditional in the U.S.—a party at home and a birthday present. Many families tell their students they can invite some friends over for dinner and birthday cake to celebrate a birthday. It may be helpful to work with the student on writing invitations so their guests get the correct information and directions to your home.

Sending a gift to your student's family

If the student brings you a gift when he or she arrives, it's considered polite to send a gift to the student's family when he or she returns home.

Some ideas from host families:

- A calendar with pictures of Oregon
- A framed snapshot of the student
- An Oregon food product such as hazelnuts
- Jam made from berries you and the student picked

A farewell gift for your student

Students are really touched if you give them a gift as a remembrance of their time here in Eugene. Some thoughtful gifts that families have given their students:

- A journal with messages written by each member of the family, neighbors, and family friends
- A collection of post cards from all the places the student visited in Oregon—Crater Lake, Mount Hood, Portland
- A photo album with snapshots of your home, family, and pets; a map of Eugene; snapshots of the student
- A gift from the Made in Oregon store or the Duck Store—myrtlewood earrings, a UO sweatshirt, a book containing photos of Oregon



International Student Activities

We are lucky in Eugene to have lots of activities that you and your student can enjoy together. Not all students (or host families) have the same interests, but here's a list of possibilities.

- Backyard barbecues
- Play a piano duet
- Birthday parties
- Hult Center
- Family reunions
- University Theatre
- Movies
- Performances at the UO's Beall Concert Hall
- International Nights at the UO
- Lane County Historical Museum
- Shop at a thrift store
- Science Factory Children's Museum and Planetarium
- Rummage and garage sales
- UO Museum of Natural and Cultural History
- Flea markets
- UO Knight Library
- Company or church picnics
- Church services
- Weddings
- Cook a meal with the student that includes dishes from his or her country
- UO football and basketball games and track meets
- Ask the student to teach you how to do a traditional craft such as origami
- Baseball games—Little League, Eugene Emeralds, high school
- Build a campfire, make s'mores, and tell ghost stories
- Boating, rafting, and canoeing
- Hunting and target shooting
- Horseback riding
- Singing
- Camping
- Dancing (square, line, ballroom, folk)
- Watch TV together
- Listen to music
- Play board or card games
- Rent a video and watch it together
- Scandinavian Festival in Junction City
- A drive in the country
- Mount Pisgah Arboretum
- Look at the stars on a clear summer night
- Skinner Butte
- Hendricks Park
- Picnics in a park
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Golf
- Bicycling
- Bowling
- Whale-watching
- Fireworks
- Saturday Market
- County fairs
- Visit an elementary school
- Decorate a Christmas tree
- Make valentines
- Carve a jack-o-lantern
- Color Easter eggs
- Visit the Oregon coast
- Pick berries or peaches
- Drive to Sisters
- Take a walk in the neighborhood
- Bake cookies together
- Make popcorn in the fireplace
- Boating, rafting, and canoeing
- Hunting and target shooting
- Horseback riding
- Singing

Welcome to AEI Homestay Program

Living with a family gives you the chance to learn about American culture and to share your country's culture with your family. It also gives you an excellent opportunity to practice listening and speaking the English language.

Cultural differences



You will notice many cultural differences between your country and the United States. These differences will make your home-stay experience interesting, sometimes confusing, but frequently enjoyable.

Since you have chosen a home-stay placement because you want to experience the U.S. family lifestyle, you need to expect a different way of doing things. It is easy to misinterpret a situation and think that it is bad or insulting when it is merely different than what you are used to.

If you don't understand what you see or hear or feel, ask your host family or the Homestay Program coordinator.

How American host families are different

There is no typical American family. They are very diverse. They have different family traditions and customs. They are from many different racial and ethnic groups. Their religious beliefs are not all the same.

- Some students are surprised because American families are so different from each other.

- Some live in houses; some live in apartments
- Some speak two languages at home
- Some have children; some don't
- Some are married; some are single
- Some are old; some are young; some are middle-aged
- Some are two-parent families; some are one-parent families
- Sometimes a grandparent or other relative lives in the home
- Often both the mother and the father work outside the home

How American host families are alike

Everyone in your host family is very interested in you and wants to become your friend. They want to get to know you and your culture. They like you to ask them questions about the United States, their family, politics, and the English language.

Your host family might seem quite informal to you. This does not indicate a lack of respect for you. They want you to be comfortable in their home, just as you are comfortable in your own home. Generally, they will treat you like a member of the family and not a special guest.

Most U.S. families are very busy with work, school, church, and social activities. They will often invite you to join them, which you can if you like. Their being busy doesn't mean that they don't care about you.



How much and when to pay your host family

Payment for your room, breakfast, and dinner is \$650 a month. You are responsible for your own lunch during the school week and for buying personal items such as shampoo and toothpaste. Pay on the first day of the month. You may pay with a personal check, traveler's check, or cash. Do *not* pay for the whole term at the beginning of the term. For a partial month, you should pay \$22 a day. For example, if you arrive on January 3, you owe \$638 for January. You will then owe \$650 for the month of February.

When you live with a host family, it is similar to renting an apartment. You are still expected to pay when you go away for the weekend or a vacation. You have agreed to live with your host family for one term. If there are problems, the Homestay Program coordinator can help you find a solution. If you decide to move out before the end of the term, you may be required to pay a cancellation fee of \$300.

Long distance telephone calls

If you make a long distance call from your host family's home, put the charge on your telephone credit card, call collect, or use a calling card, which can be purchased at the Duck Store and other stores around town.



Some General Host Family Rules

Keep you host family informed

Always let your host family know where you are. If you are going to be late, call and tell them when you will be home.

Make a practice telephone call to your host family from a pay phone and leave a message. After you get home, play the message for them. Can they understand it? Can you?



No smoking

Do not smoke in your host family's. Most Americans do not allow people to smoke in their homes. This includes your bedroom.

Know the laws about drinking

You must be at least twenty-one years old to drink alcoholic beverages in Oregon. Please do not ask your host family to serve you alcoholic beverages or buy them for you if you are not twenty-one years of age.

Don't drive your host family's car

Do not ask to drive your host family's car. Driving rules are different here, and there are also insurance laws that restrict who can drive the family automobile.

Keep things clean

Keep your own bedroom clean. Clean up after yourself in the bathroom. For example, if you splash water, wipe it up.

In most homes you will be expected to do your own

laundry. Ask your family how to operate the washer and dryer. If your family goes to the laundromat, they will show you how to use the machines.

Who pays for entertainment?

There will be times when your family may invite you to go to a restaurant, the movies, a concert, or skiing. These activities cost money, so do not assume that your host family will pay for these.

In American culture, people usually pay for their own entertainment even when one person invites another. If your host does offer to pay, it is polite to pay for some part of the entertainment. For example, if your family pays for your meal in a restaurant, you might want to leave the tip.

If you are hot or cold. . . .

In the winter, American families sometimes keep their homes cooler than you might be used to. If you are cold, ask your host family to turn up the heat in your room, or ask for more blankets for your bed.

If you get hot during the summer, ask your host family for a fan, or how to open the window in your room.

Food

Your host family will provide food for breakfast which you can prepare, food for lunch on weekends, and a home-cooked dinner.

If you are still hungry after a meal, ask your host family for more food. If your host family offers you more food and you decline, they will probably put the food away.

It is also very common for American families to serve and eat food that was not eaten at a previous meal. This food is called "leftovers."

Hot water is limited

Water-heating tanks in most homes are small, and the water can be used up quickly. Limit the time you spend in the shower so that the next person doesn't have a cold shower!

Your friends and your host family

Most families want to meet your friends and are happy if they come to visit. Always ask two or three days in advance if you want to invite a friend to eat dinner or take part in a family activity.

Do not invite a person of the opposite sex to stay overnight with you in your host family's home.



Things your host family would appreciate

To learn more about you and your culture, your host family would like you to

- tell them about your country and customs
- show them pictures and a map of your country
- show them photographs of your family and tell them about your family if you are comfortable doing that.
- play music from your country or teach them a song in your language
- tell them what you like and don't like to eat
- discuss similarities and differences between U.S. culture and your culture
- prepare, or help them prepare, a meal that is usually served in your country
- ask questions about things you find curious, puzzling, or fascinating; Americans really like questions from international students
- ask them to repeat what they said, or help you when you don't understand something

Join in your host families activities as often as you can when they invite you to join them.

Notes

House Rent Receipt

Date: _____ Receipt No: _____

Received From: _____ the amount of \$ _____

For Payment of _____

From _____ to _____

Cash
 Check No: _____
 Money Order

Total Amount to be Received	_____
Amount Received	_____
Balance Due	_____

Received BY: _____ [Name]
Address: _____
Phone: _____

House Rent Receipt Template



American English Institute

Main Office

Telephone 541-346-3945
Office 107 Agate Hall

Homestay Program Coordinator

Telephone 541-346-6112
Office 107 Agate Hall
Hours 8-5pm M-F
Web aei.uoregon.edu
Email aeihomestay@uoregon.edu



Public Safety



Emergency

Police, fire, ambulance 911

Nonemergency

Eugene police, fire, ambulance 541-687-5111
Springfield police, fire, ambulance 541-726-3714
Lane County Sheriff's Office 541-687-4150

University of Oregon



Department of Public Safety 541-346-2919
University Health Center 541-346-2770
Health Center Hours 9-5pm M-F

Important Telephone Numbers & Office Locations

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