

10 Helpful Financial Tips for International Students

1. Make sure you are budgeting for all the essentials before treating yourself to luxuries – living in the Bay Area can be expensive.
2. Always try to carry at least \$10-20 in cash. There are many places in Berkeley (particularly restaurants) that won't take card payments or will charge a card fee. There are often different prices for cash vs. card (and cash is always cheaper!).
3. Compare foreign exchange rates to ensure you get the best deal.
4. Ask your banker about the best ways to transfer money from abroad.
5. Avoid using a foreign card where possible – they charge transaction fees often on top of foreign currency fees.
6. Join a US bank to avoid paying transaction and ATM fees.
7. Find a bank with plenty of ATM machines around the campus area.
8. Make sure you use ATM machines from your own bank. Unlike in other countries, you might be charged a fee for using other banks' ATMs.
9. Set up recurring or automatic payments for any monthly expenses (such as rent!) to make sure you do not forget these payments. Always know what margin you have in your budget to spend on other things.
10. Download a money transfer app such as Venmo or Square Cash for your phone – this makes paying back friends very easy as you don't have to settle-up in cash and small change.

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