

How to Successfully Get a (Tourist) US visa for a Chinese Citizen

Although this question has been asked numerous times, I feel that there has not been an extremely detailed response on the matter. Thus, I will do my best to be as descriptive as possible to explain the process.

How much is this going to cost? About ±1,008 RMB

For those who are money conscious, I will begin by giving a slight overview of the money involved in successfully obtaining the visa.

Application Fee:

For complete list of fees for all types of visas, please see:

<http://www.ustraveldocs.com/cn/cn-niv-visafeeinfo.asp>

Tourist Visa

Application fee 1008RMB (Depending on consulate exchange rate of 160USD)

In the past, you were required to pay a fee to make a phone call by obtaining a calling card from your local CITIC bank. However, now you are able to schedule your appointment online or by calling their call center without requiring any additional payments.

STEPS TO GETTING A VISA and ENTERING USA

STEP 1: Complete application form online by visiting:

* [Form DS-160](#)

You are not allowed to submit a hardcopy of the form. It must be completed online. To complete the application, you will need to upload a photo (based on their specifications), answer questions in English, provide telegraph codes of your name (You can use this tool to quickly find the telegraph codes of your name: <http://www.njstar.com/tools/telecode/>), and a printer (you can print later by saving the confirmation page as a PDF). TIP: As soon as you are given an application ID number, write it down. If your computer crashes halfway through the application, you can retrieve what you have already entered. In addition, constantly save your application as you proceed completing the application. When completing the form, it is best to have a US friend's name, home address, and phone number to sponsor your visit.

When you have completed the application and printed out the confirmation page, you can proceed to the next step.

STEP 2: Pay

The next step is to pay the application fee. You can pay the fee at a CITIC bank, ATM, or online with a credit card/debit card. You must pay in local currency. To pay (whether online, at the bank, or ATM): Log-in to their application system here:

<https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/> and create a profile. Click "Schedule My

Appointment” (even though you are just determining which payment to make) located on the left-hand side of your screen, and then “Complete Steps for Visa Type, Post, Visa Category, and Visa Class”. (For a tourist, remember, you are applying for a nonimmigrant visa and visa type B (Business/Tourist). Next, on the “Payment screen”, click “Payment Options”. Select your desired method (CITIC bank, ATM, online) and follow the relevant steps. More detailed information can be provided here: <http://www.ustraveldocs.com/cn/cn-niv-paymentinfo.asp> (This is the official website so don’t let the “.com” scare you.)

Once you make the ±RMB\$1008 payment, you can schedule your interview with the receipt number from the payment.

STEP 3: Schedule Interview

Schedule your interview by either going online: <https://cgifederal.secure.force.com/>

Or calling the call center:

* Callers in **China**: Call 400 616 1121.

* Callers in the **United States**: Call 703 665 1986.

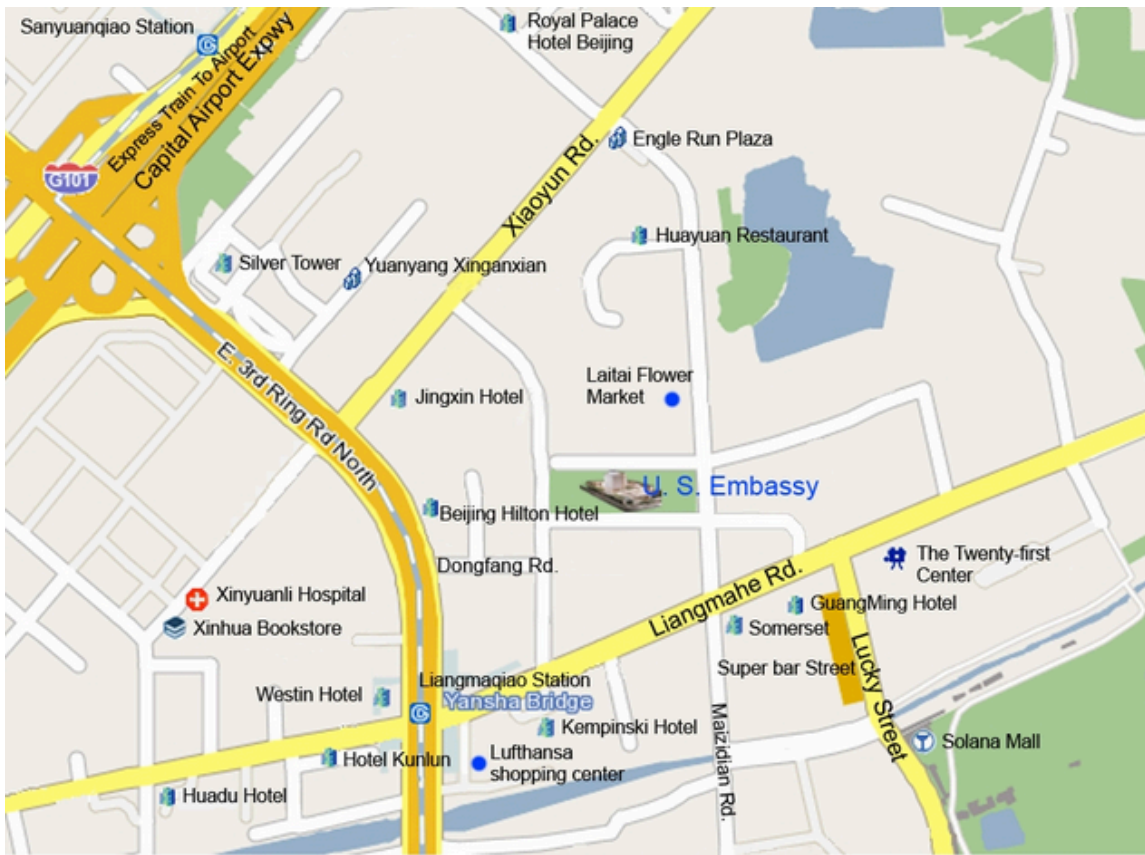
You will need the receipt number printed on your payment receipt to schedule the appointment.

Locations of Interview (Maps taken from Consulate/Embassy Websites):



Beijing ([Embassy of the United States Beijing, China](#))

Map:



Address: No. 55 An Jia Lou Road, Chaoyang District (北京市朝阳区安家楼路 55 号) . American Citizens should enter the Consular Section at the Embassy's east gate. The east gate is located at the Tian Ze Road Intersection of An Jia Lou Road (天泽路和安家楼路交汇处) , close to Ladies' Street (Nüren Jie 女人街) and Laitai Flower Market , opposite the Kempinski Hotel and Lufthansa Shopping Center. The nearest subway location is the Liangmaqiao stop (亮马桥站) on subway line #10 (地铁十号线) .

Chengdu ([Consulate General of the United States Chengdu, China](#))

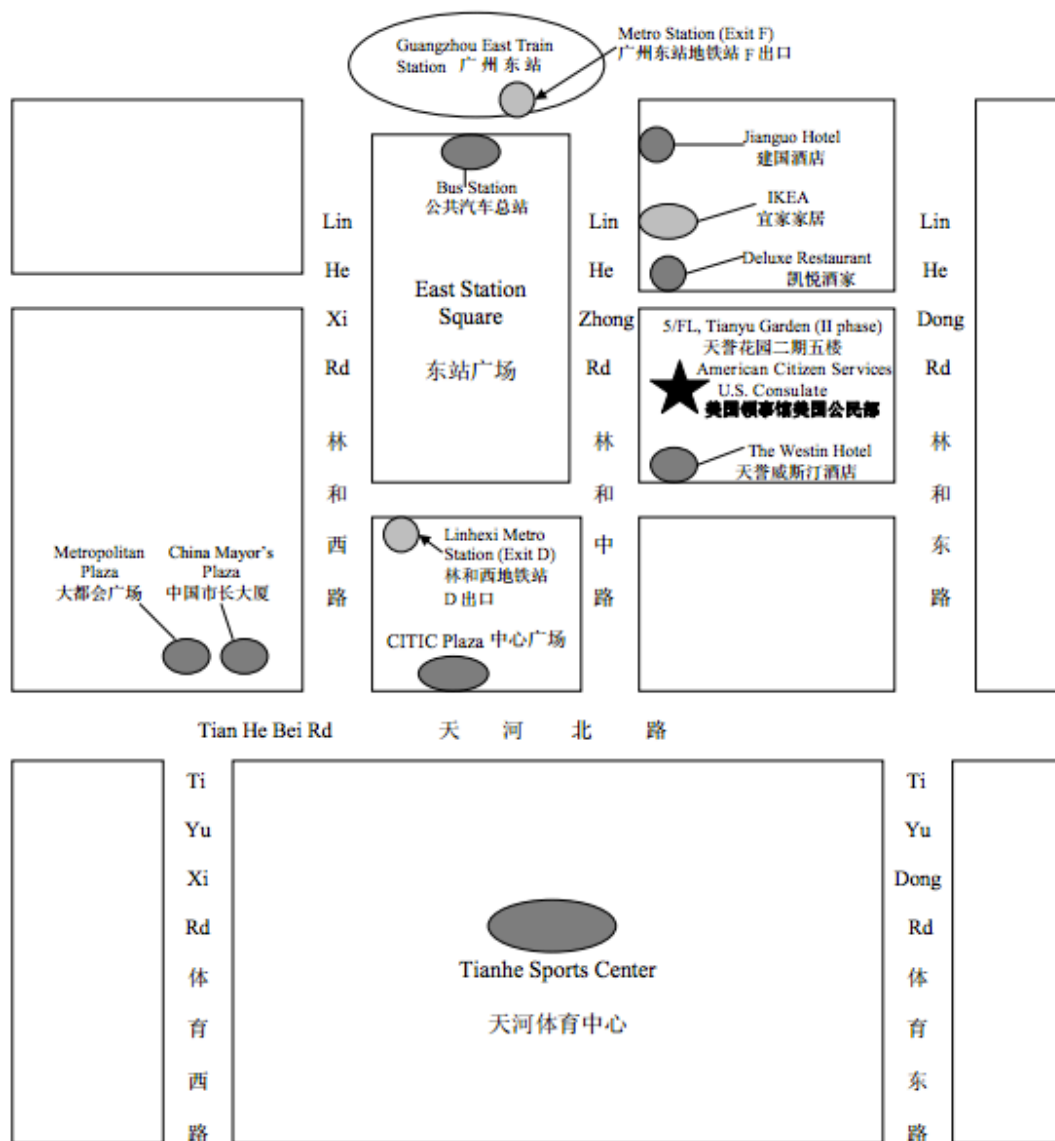
Map:



Address: No.4 Lingshiguan Lu, Chengdu, Sichuan, China 610041; 四川省成都市领事馆路四号, 邮编: 610041

Guangzhou ([Embassy of the United States](#))

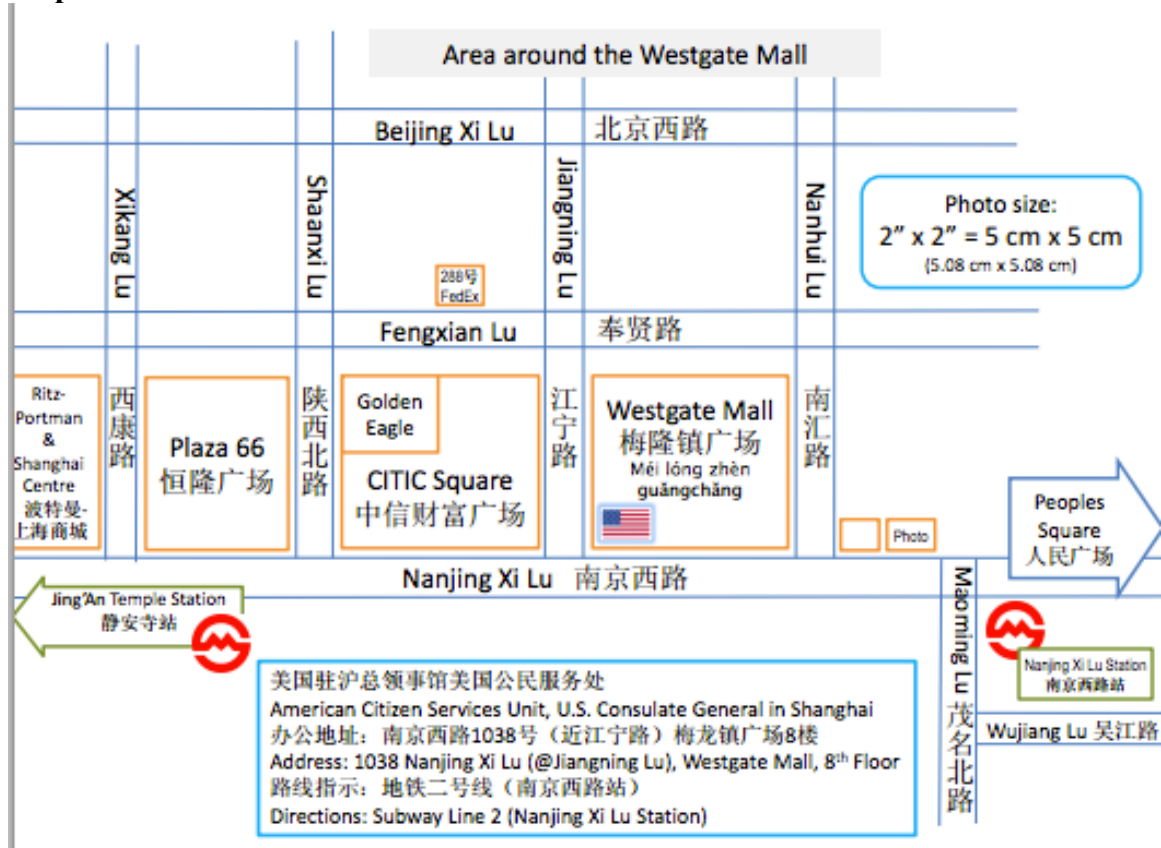
Map:



Address: 5/F Tian Yu Garden, Phase II, 136-142 Lin He Zhong Lu, Tianhe District, Guangzhou; 广州市天河林和中路 136-142 号天誉花园二期五楼

Shanghai ([Consulate General of the United States Shanghai, China](#))

Map:



Address: 8th floor of Westgate Mall, 1038 West Nanjing Road, Shanghai, China; 美国公民服务处位于南京西路 1038 号梅龙镇广场 8 楼.

Shenyang ([Consulate General of the United States Shenyang, China](#))

Map:



Address: No. 52, Shisi Wei Road, Heping District, Shenyang, China; 沈阳市和平区十四纬路

STEP 4: Interview Day

Please come to your interview at the scheduled time. Some interview locations require you to obtain a number to hold while waiting on the long, crowded line. Interview times are allotted in groups, so there are probably like 10-15 people with the same interview time as you. When you are interviewed, the process is similar to talking to the bank cashier behind a window. You aren't placed in an interrogation room. The process is quite informal. Be prepared to answer questions like "What is your purpose for going to the USA", "Where did you learn your English", etc. If you are unable to speak English, most interviewers speak Mandarin. However, as the USA is a predominately English speaking country, being able to speak English works in your favor. Depending on the mood of the interviewer and your appearance (whether you seem extremely nervous or calm), you may **not** have to present any of your supporting evidence (such as bank statements as proof you can support yourself, invitation letters, itinerary, etc.). If you are

successful, the interviewer will collect your passport and give you a receipt stating that your visa and your passport will be delivered to you within a week or so.

STEP 5: Passport Delivery

To check the current status of your passport, you can visit this website:

<http://www.ustraveldocs.com/cn/cn-niv-passporttrack.asp#ChecktheStatusofYourVisa>

By entering your passport number, you can see where your passport is currently located.

STEP 6: Entering the USA

If you are like most visitors to USA from China, you will arrive by plane to the “Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave” (USA). Once you land, and before you are allowed to grab your suitcases from the baggage claim area, you must first go through immigration. There, you will wait in the non-immigrant/non-US citizen line (which is extremely long) for an available immigration officer to check your passport, plane ticket, entrance/exit card (received on the airplane), and completed customs form (received on the airplane). If you are on a business visa, you might need to present additional documentation. If you have waited to cross the mainland border into Hong Kong, then you will be familiar with this process. The immigration officers are in their little post with a computer and scanner and the people behind you must patiently wait for their turn. If the immigration officers are in a talkative mood, they will ask you, where did you go? What countries have you visited? Why did you go there? Why are you coming to the US? Why are you able to speak English? Some may not ask you anything. Just be prepared to politely answer their questions as honestly as you can and they will stamp your passport (plus staple your entrance/exit card from the airplane into the passport) to let you pass. In addition to returning your passport, they will also give you the customs form back, which you must hold on to until after you collect your luggage. After they stamp your passport, you will collect your baggage from the rotating conveyor belt. After you collect your baggage, you will proceed to exit, and hand your customs form to the agent waiting near the exit. He/she may or may not ask if you have any items worth more than the limit allows, livestock, fruits and vegetables, etc. to verify that you answered the form correctly. After you hand him the form, you are free to exit the airport and enjoy the rest of your vacation anywhere in the USA. Usually, the visa will grant you a year to enter the USA for 6 month stays.

Re-issuing a Visa

Once you have received your visa and have gone through the interview process, getting a new visa is a piece of (moon) cake. All you need is a new photograph (No, you sadly cannot use the same photo you used last time. We’ve tried!), a completed application, a receipt of payment for the application from the bank, an envelope, a stamp, and patience. As long as you are applying for the same type of visa as you did last time, you can avoid having another interview. Simply, drop off your passport, application confirmation page (from submitting application online), and application receipt number at your local CITIC Bank and enclose your documents in a mailing envelope. There is no additional charge for this service. For more information, visit: <http://www.ustraveldocs.com/cn/cn-niv-visarenew.asp>

Notice:

If you become a lawful permanent resident, U.S. citizen, Dutch citizen, South Korean citizen, Mexican national, or Canadian citizen/resident (that is enrolled in the NEXUS program), you can avoid waiting on the long immigration line and use a “E-channel” type service called Global Entry. For more information, see <http://www.globalentry.gov/> .