

Middlebury College

International Student Pre-Arrival Guide

Information for New International Students
(including Exchange Students and U.S. Students Living Abroad)
entering Middlebury College during
Academic Year 2023-2024





This Pre-Arrival Guide provides information about:

*Pre-orientation for International Students,
the I-20 Application Process (for students who need visa support),
ISO Welcome, the Friends of International Students (FIS) Host Program,
FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions, Travel to Middlebury College and Action Items.*

This guide is current as of March 2023. The global pandemic and various geopolitical conditions can create uncertainty as we look to the future. As we confirm details about the opening of school during 2023-2024, ISSS will update our Pre-orientation website with information about our programs and offerings.



Upon Arrival – Opening of School Programs

International students, including exchange students and U.S. students living abroad, begin their Middlebury experience with a series of programs run by various offices at the College. Some of the programs are optional, and some are required. International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) highly recommends that international students attend all the available opening of school programs. For students arriving in F/J status, your participation is expected. In the past, students have shared with us that while they were hesitant to attend all programs at first, they were thankful to have done so because it allowed for a more gradual and thorough introduction to life in the U.S. and at the College. This section of the guide outlines the programs that we offer. (February entrants, see next page for information about your Pre-orientation dates.)

ISSS Pre-orientation

Coordinated by International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

September 1-4, 2023 (anticipated) (usually several days before MiddView orientation begins)

ISSS Pre-orientation is a pre-orientation program that allows new international students extra time to recover from their travels around the world while meeting new people, completing visa-related processes (if applicable), and learning about Middlebury College. During ISSS Pre-orientation, you will build connections with students, staff and faculty who will assist with your initial entry into the College and beyond. Participating in ISSS Pre-orientation provides you with time to acclimate to your new home in Middlebury, Vermont with peers experiencing a similar transition. Our hope is that these few days will help successfully launch you into the next phase of student life at Middlebury.

ISSS Pre-orientation sessions cover specific topics such as your U.S. visa status and responsibilities, student employment, cultural adjustment, U.S. taxes, and more. We also share information about academic and campus resources to help you make the most of your experience at Midd. Students engage with Program Arrival Leaders (PALs), student volunteers, who will guide small group discussions. Participants also enjoy organized and informal social activities.

We expect all international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa to participate and we welcome all other international students to join us as well, regardless of citizenship. Once we confirm our plans for next year, ISSS will send students intending to enroll in the upcoming academic year an email about the program details and the steps you need to take to confirm your participation.

More information about our ISSS Pre-orientation program can be found on our website at

<https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/iss-pre-orientation-middlebury-college>.

MiddView

Coordinated by Student Life Division

Usually the week before the start of classes, which begin on Monday, September 4, 2023. (anticipated)

MiddView is our new student orientation program for new first-year, transfer, and exchange students. **All new students are required to participate in this program.** This program covers a range of topics in an effort to introduce students to college resources and processes, and lead them into the school year. Typically, on the initial day of orientation, we invite family members to participate in a few sessions designed to address their specific questions, concerns, and interests. By late May, we will post more information about the program and specific events on the orientation website at <https://www.middlebury.edu/college/student-life/new-student-guide/orientation/middview>.

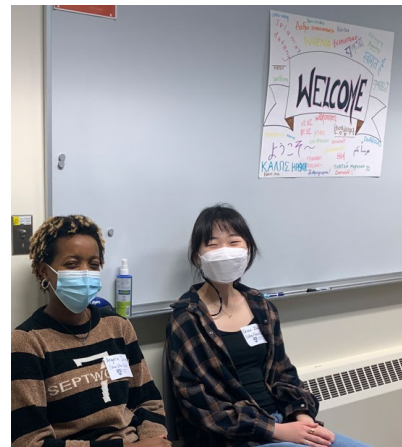
Students arriving in February

February International Pre-orientation

Coordinated by International Student and Scholar Services

Anticipated program dates and more information about the Spring 2024 Feb Pre-orientation will be posted closer to the time of the event on our website at <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/iss-pre-orientation-middlebury-college> . Usually, a day before Feb Orientation begins.

International students enrolling in February (also known as “Febs”) arrive on campus before the start of spring semester for Feb ISSS Pre-orientation. Our Feb Program Arrival Leaders (PALs) will host an informal dinner in the dining hall. During the Feb ISSS Pre-orientation time blocks, ISSS offers important pre-orientation sessions aimed at addressing key topics that affect international students, such as maintaining status as a student visa holder, academic and campus resources, and student employment. Students also join Feb Orientation (the new student orientation for new Febs) that occurs during the week before the start of classes.



February Orientation

Coordinated by Student Life

February 7-11, 2024 (anticipated; may involve virtual sessions prior to that)

Spring semester classes will begin on Monday, February 12, 2024. (anticipated)

For information about Feb Orientation visit <https://www.middlebury.edu/college/student-life/new-student-guide/orientation/feb-orientation-0>.

Applying for an I-20

To enter the United States in a status that allows for study, non-U.S. citizens and non-Legal Permanent Residents of the U.S. must obtain a Form I-20 (Certificate of Eligibility for Non-immigrant (F-1) Student Status) issued from the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS). For Middlebury College to issue your Form I-20, you must complete the Academic Year I-20 Application webform available on the ISSS website. More information is available at our ISSS "Student Visa Information" website: <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/student-visa-information>. In addition, ISSS will notify deposited international students in late Spring when the I-20 application period opens; application instructions will also be provided at that time.

Please note: Citizens of Canada and Bermuda need an I-20 and a valid passport; they do NOT need to apply for a visa at a U.S. Consulate. Instead, these citizens only need to present their valid I-20 and passport at the U.S. port of entry to enter the country in F-1 status.

If you are a non-U.S. citizen or non-U.S. Legal Permanent Resident and do not need an I-20 or F-1 visa, please notify ISSS. If possible, and if you have not done so already, please provide us with a copy of any pertinent visa status or immigration documents so that we can update your records.

If you are currently (or just finished) studying in the U.S. in F-1 status, please contact ISSS before submitting your I-20 application, as special procedures will apply for your circumstances (SEVIS transfer process).

September Entrants: As soon as ISSS opens the I-20 application period, we encourage you to submit your I-20 application ideally **no later than June 1**. We will notify deposited international students of the application period in late Spring. It is our goal to begin issuing I-20s for new students who have submitted their enrollment deposit within 3 weeks of their completed I-20 application submission.

February Entrants: As soon as ISSS opens the I-20 application period, we encourage you to submit your I-20 application ideally **no later than November 1**. By mid-November, if not sooner, we will begin issuing I-20s for new students who have submitted their enrollment deposit.

Note: We know students are eager to obtain their SEVIS ID number to schedule a visa appointment. If you believe you have extenuating circumstances impacting the applicable timeline, please email ISSS (iss@middlebury.edu).

When ISSS provides the Middlebury College I-20 to you, we will also provide specific instructions about the next steps. This email will also include guidance about how to pay your I-901 SEVIS Fee (at least 3 days before your visa interview) and schedule a visa appointment at a U.S. embassy or consulate (ideally in your home country). *(Please be aware that the U.S. embassy or consulate will not issue an F-1 visa more than 120 days prior to your I-20 program start date, found on page 1 of your I-20.)*

In the meantime, we recommend that you check the website of the U.S. Consulate nearest you to learn more about the visa application process, including the process for making an appointment. For visa application guidance and wait times for obtaining a nonimmigrant student visa in your country, please see: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>.

Please note: While you may receive your F-1 visa up to 120 days prior to your program start date, **you may enter the U.S. in that visa status no more than 30 days before your program start date. Plan your travel accordingly.**

Upon receiving your Form I-20 from Middlebury College, plan to apply for a visa as soon as possible. Applying for a visa can take one month or more, depending on the country. If the consular officer subjects you to administrative processing, expect to experience a long delay (usually ≥ 30 days or more). **If you are unable to obtain a visa in time to arrive in Middlebury by your intended start date, alert ISSS as soon as possible because you may need to request a deferral to a future academic term.**

to MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE from the ISO

Dear Newly Admitted International Students,

On behalf of the International Students' Organization (ISO), we are thrilled to welcome you to our vibrant international community at Middlebury! Although Middlebury is a small liberal arts college residing in a tiny, picturesque town in Vermont, our school possesses an outstanding global outlook. As international students and students with international backgrounds, you play a critical role, bringing unique perspectives, cultural backgrounds and personal experiences from every corner across the globe.

As Middlebury's International Students' Organization, our goal is to empower members of the community in order to cultivate a strong, open-minded and multicultural environment. Whether this is through cultural events and performances that highlight diverse traditions, or monthly tea gatherings where we discuss key global issues, the ISO invites students to engage with the global perspectives and experiences that brighten our college community. We are also dedicated to making Middlebury your "home away from home" through outings to must-see Vermont destinations and international menus in the dining halls. In this way, Middlebury truly is a small town with a global community. The ISO is here to make your transition to Middlebury as smooth as possible, and to support you throughout your next four years.

We are sure you will have many great options as you receive acceptance letters from the United States and around the world. In terms of academic rigor and prestige, Middlebury is comparable to any other highly selective institution in the United States, and its study abroad programs across the globe are second to none. There are many opportunities for academic, personal and professional development here. Most importantly, we are a welcoming campus full of smiling faces, where intimate relationships among students, faculty and staff members make you feel comfortable. It is now your turn to embark on this important journey. The ISO wishes you the best as you choose where to spend your undergraduate years. Please feel free to reach out should you have any questions, or if you would like to introduce yourself. Also, be sure to check out our instagram @midd.iso!

We hope to hear from you soon and to see you on campus next year!

Warmly,

Middlebury College
International Students' Organization

small town, global community

iso@middlebury.edu • go.middlebury.edu/iso • midd.iso



Friends of International Students (FIS) Host Program

Friends of International Students (FIS) Host Program, established in 2001, matches Middlebury College international, exchange, and U.S./multinational students with a host from the local area. Hosts may be individuals, couples or extended families. Often our hosts have some ties to the College as alumni, faculty, or staff. Our hope is that you will form a friendship with your host that will last beyond your first year here at Midd.

The FIS host program experience begins with host and student information sessions so that ISSS can share detailed information about the program. Then, each student and host submits an informal questionnaire and tells us more about themselves and their expectations of the program. Some students meet up weekly with their host for activities or meals, while others meet periodically throughout each term. ISSS considers the information on the questionnaires and then matches students with hosts that have similar interests and expectations of the program. Ultimately, the program is what students and hosts make of it together. While we encourage all international, exchange, and U.S./multinational students to participate, the program is optional and students are able to participate at any point during their time at the College.

To learn more about the FIS program, please visit: <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/friends-international-students-program> . If you have questions, contact [ISSS](#).



FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

How can I find out important dates and vacations in the College calendar?

You may consult the College calendar at <https://www.middlebury.edu/college/academics/academic-calendars#section-2023%E2%80%932024-academic-calendar-tentative>. This is a proposed calendar and is subject to change, based on any adjustments that need to be made.

When will I get my I-20?

As soon as ISSS opens the I-20 application period, we will strive to issue visa-related documents within 3 weeks of receiving a complete I-20 Application. We understand students are eager to receive their documents. ISSS will issue I-20s as quickly as we can. Students who deferred or studied remotely and will enroll in the upcoming academic year also need to apply for an updated or new I-20. We will issue your I-20s as soon as possible.

How do I apply for an F-1 (student) visa?

First, you must obtain an I-20 from Middlebury College (The I-20 Application Instructions will become available as soon as we open the I-20 Application period). Then, you must schedule an interview with a U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for the visa. To find the nearest location, visit <https://www.usembassy.gov/>.

A U.S. embassy or consulate can only issue an F-1 visa up to 120 days before a program start date. We recommend that you check the consulate website, in advance, to learn more about the visa application process, including the process for making an appointment. F-1 visa holders may only enter the U.S. up to 30 days before their program start date.

More information regarding the visa application process and preparing for entry into the U.S. is available from the U.S. Department of State at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/study.html> and on the Study in the States website at <https://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students>.

How long will it take to get my F-1 (student) visa?

In 2023, students may have a difficult time obtaining a visa appointment because some U.S. consulates have not resumed their full operations. In some cases, they may accept “emergency appointments” or “expedited appointments,” and in some places, a student visa may be considered under either category, so it is worth exploring. Visa wait times vary by country. For an estimate of current visa wait times at the embassy or consulate nearest you, please refer to the U.S. Department of State’s website at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/wait-times.html>. For more information on visas to the U.S., visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en.html>.

What fees do I pay with my visa application?

You are responsible for paying the visa application and reciprocity fees, which vary by country. To learn more; fees: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/visa-information-resources/fees/fees-visa-services.html>
Reciprocity fees: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/us-visas/Visa-Reciprocity-and-Civil-Documents-by-Country.html>

Prior to the visa appointment, you must show evidence that the SEVIS I-901 Fee was paid. With your I-20, ISSS will send instructions for paying the SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) fee. For more information regarding the SEVIS fee, please see <https://www.ice.gov/sevis/i901/>.

When can I enter the United States using my new F-1 (student) visa?

You may enter the U.S. up to 30 days prior to the program start date noted on your I-20 (see page 1).

Students wishing to enter the U.S. prior to the 30-day grace period must enter in another visa status, usually in “visitor” status as a tourist. Yet, individuals in tourist status may not enroll in courses full time. Therefore, you would need to change from tourist to F-1 student visa status before the start of the term, which would likely require departing the U.S. and re-entering. [We discourage this option.](#)

Changing from tourist to student visa status within the U.S. is not always possible, and can be time-consuming, expensive, and risky. We strongly advise you to enter the U.S. in F-1 student status within the 30-day pre-arrival period allowed by your I-20 to avoid this situation. If you have questions, contact ISSS in advance of your travels.

Does Middlebury provide transportation from the airport?

The College only offers transportation service from Burlington International Airport and Middlebury Amtrak station to Middlebury on your designated arrival day. You may move into your Middlebury College room on your arrival Day—**no earlier**. *If you wish to arrive to the U.S. prior to that day, you are responsible for your own transportation and lodging.*

Can I arrive early to Middlebury College?

If you have confirmed your participation for ISSS Pre-orientation, you will have access to your Middlebury College room on arrival day. **Students cannot access their rooms prior to this date.** If you wish to arrive to the U.S. early, you are responsible for your own travel arrangements, food, and lodging. If family members accompany you, they will need to find off-campus accommodation. (View local off-campus accommodations at <https://www.middlebury.edu/college/admissions/visit-us/in-person-visits#lodging-and-restaurants>).

Do I need to stay in my room on my first night?

We expect students to participate fully in the ISSS Pre-orientation program. Students must stay in their on-campus rooms beginning on Arrival Day when we offer ISSS Pre-orientation in person. Participants who fail to arrive on campus on Arrival Day (without prior permission from ISSS) may be unable to join the program in progress and will need to plan to arrive on the next available approved Arrival Day (likely MidView).

Do I need to bring the full amount of my family contribution with me?

We highly encourage you, if you can, to have funds available via a bank or in hand. When Student Financial Services (SFS) calculates your financial need and determines if you will receive assistance, they consider the estimated total costs of your first year at Middlebury. This includes costs that the College applies to your student account bill as well as anticipated personal expenses. The comprehensive fee (tuition, room and board) and the student activities fee will appear on your college bill. Other expenses (such as books, supplies, personal items, clothing, and travel) are items that you will need money for throughout the year. You will need to have funds available to pay for those expenses when you make those purchases. While the College bill will be due before each semester begins, the other expenses will arise upon arrival and throughout the academic year. Additional expenses may also include health insurance, taxes and tax liability and food/lodging/travel during college breaks.

Can I pay my enrollment deposit online?

Yes. To learn more about paying your deposit online, please visit the Admissions website for newly admitted students: http://www.middlebury.edu/admissions/admitted_students (click on “Next Steps”).

Can I pay charges on my college bill (i.e., tuition) through an electronic transfer of funds?

Yes. Please contact Student Financial Services (SFS) by email at sfs@middlebury.edu for instructions.

Does my enrollment deposit count towards my family contribution and my College bill?

Yes. The deposit you submit to reserve your place at Middlebury will be applied to your college bill. It is part of your family contribution. (When completing the I-20 Application, if needed, you may provide evidence that the deposit was paid as financial documentation of that portion of your family contribution.)

How can I buy the Middlebury College Student Health Insurance plan?

We expect students to have a U.S.-based health insurance policy. For information on purchasing the Student Health Insurance from Gallagher Student Health and Special Risk, see the Student Health Insurance website at http://www.middlebury.edu/offices/administration/vpfin/finance-office/bsnsvcs/student_insurance. Insurance through Gallagher Student Health costs an estimated \$2,500 per year, which includes medical evacuation and repatriation. You can find detailed information on the policy and how to register on the website noted above. **** Note: Health insurance fees are not included in the estimated total costs for Middlebury College. ****

Where can I open a bank account?

You will be able to open an account within the first several days you are on campus. For more information about banking in the U.S., visit our website at <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/living-us>.

Do I need to purchase a computer?

Many students choose to have their own computer for convenience. Yet, it is not necessary to have one when you begin your studies at Middlebury. There are many computers available for student use on campus. If you would like to purchase a computer, detailed information regarding computer needs and costs is available at http://mediawiki.middlebury.edu/wiki/LIS/Computer_purchase_guidelines.

Under Middlebury College's software licenses, students may install and use certain software products on their personally owned computers. To learn more, visit <http://www.middlebury.edu/offices/technology/help/technology> or the technology resource page for students at: <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/information-technology-services/requests/technology-helpdesk/what-students-need-know>.

How can I buy a cell phone?

We provide a basic overview about cellular phone service and mobile telephones at <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/living-us>.

When can I start working on campus?

The Human Resources Office (HR) will share information about obtaining on-campus employment. Postings for academic year job openings may be found online beginning the first day of classes, with additional opportunities listed, as they become available. New students may begin work after they secure a position and once they complete the on-boarding processes. This can be as early as the first week of classes. Visit the HR Student Employment website - <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/human-resources/student-employment>.

Students will need to obtain a U.S. Social Security Number (SSN) if they intend to work. For more information about the SSN application process visit <http://www.middlebury.edu/international/iss/taxes-social-security>.

ISSS recommends that new students plan to work only 5–10 hours per week (or less, depending on course load). The pay rate for student positions is about \$12-\$13/hour, depending on the position and your experience.

Students may also pursue on-campus summer employment and housing during the summer break. Summer contracts are usually due in mid-April. You can familiarize yourself with the Student Employment Office by visiting: <http://www.middlebury.edu/offices/business/seo>.

International students with visas (F-1 and J-1) are **not allowed** to engage in **off-campus** employment without prior authorization. Doing so could result in the loss of your good standing in the U.S. and disrupt your ability to continue studying at Middlebury. During ISSS Pre-orientation, ISSS will discuss employment regulations and maintaining your visa status, as well as some of the off-campus employment authorizations available to you.

If you are ever unsure about a situation, please ask! Contact us at iss@middlebury.edu.

Can you explain more about taxes and tax liability?

All international students in a non-resident alien tax status are required to file tax forms with the U.S. federal government by mid-April each year, regardless of whether they earned source income during the prior tax year (January 1-December 31). Filing taxes means submitting documents, via mail or electronically, to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), to report income, calculate tax liability, remit payments and/or request refunds. The IRS, a bureau of the U.S. Department of Treasury and federal tax collection agency, helps individuals understand their tax responsibilities while also enforcing the law (i.e. pay your taxes or face penalties).

You can expect to pay taxes on income earned in the U.S., including wages from employment and a portion of your grants/scholarships from Middlebury College if you receive financial aid above the direct educational costs (tuition). The amount of tax you owe will depend on the amount of funds you earn/receive and the tax treaty (if any) between your home country and the U.S. Taxes may represent an additional expense of \$500, on average, per year. It is your responsibility to file your income tax forms annually and pay your taxes (if applicable) on time.

The Middlebury College Tax Office communicates relevant tax information to our international students. The Tax Office (and in a very limited capacity, the ISSS team) offer tax filing support before taxes are due each year. We contract with Sprintax, a tax preparation company, to provide a software program and resources to assist international students and scholars with filing their tax returns. For questions about taxes, contact the Tax Manager at middleburytaxoffice@middlebury.edu.

Can I talk to someone at Middlebury College from my country?

There are students from over 75 countries at Middlebury College, so even if there is not a student from your country, there will certainly be someone from your region of the world! If you would like to connect with a current Middlebury student from your area of the world, contact the International Students' Organization (ISO) at iso@middlebury.edu.

Does Middlebury College have a host family program?

Yes. The Friends of International Students (FIS) host program is a hospitality program where international students have an opportunity to become friends with a local family through our matching process. Information about the FIS program is included in this pre-arrival guide. ISSS staff as well as student participants in the FIS program encourage you to participate. (To learn more, go to <http://www.middlebury.edu/international/iss/fis>).

What ISSS sponsored events are offered?

Dates are determined by semester. After the term begins, ISSS hosts a variety of gatherings and workshops on topics that may be of interest to you. Many international students find these events help them continue making a successful transition to life at the College. These are also great opportunities to reunite with your international classmates and ISSS. Watch for these opportunities on our ISSS Announcements website at <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/announcements>.

Still have questions?

For more information and answers to other questions you may have, please visit our website at: <http://www.middlebury.edu/international/iss>. You may also email ISSS at iss@middlebury.edu.

Travel to Middlebury College

We will offer transportation on “arrival day” via a bus service from Burlington International Airport in Burlington, Vermont, and Middlebury Amtrak station to Middlebury College.

The transportation service will only be available at set times on the designated arrival day for students participating in the ISSS Pre-orientation program and who pre-registered for the shuttle service.

- The Burlington International Airport code is BTV.
- The Middlebury Amtrak station code is MBY. See location - <https://www.amtrak.com/stations/mby.html>
- If you are unsure about scheduling your arrival for ISSS Pre-orientation Arrival Day, please contact us at iss@middlebury.edu **before** you book a flight (or book a changeable flight with little to no fee).

You will receive more information about requesting transportation to campus and confirming your travel itineraries via email from ISSS by early August for September entrants (and in January for February entrants).

International students studying at Middlebury on an F-1 (student) or J-1 (exchange student) visa are eligible to enter the country up to 30 days before their program start date. If you choose to arrive in the U.S. earlier than on your designated arrival day, you will be responsible for your own food and lodging during that time.

Contact us at iss@middlebury.edu, if you have any questions about your travel logistics.



Action Items:

Learn more at:

<https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/iss-pre-orientation-middlebury-college>

<https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services/students/student-visa-information>

September Entrants:

- ✓ I-20 Application – Opening of I-20 Application period, ideally by June 1
 - ✓ Travel Plans – submit by mid-August (highly recommended)
- ✓ ISSS Pre-orientation Participation Confirmation (will be requested in June)
- ✓ Submit FIS host program questionnaire (optional/watch for invitation)

February Entrants:

- ✓ I-20 Application – Opening of I-20 Application period, ideally by November 1
 - ✓ Travel Plans – submit by early January (highly recommended)
- ✓ FEB International Pre-orientation Participation Confirmation (will be requested by December)
 - ✓ Submit FIS host program questionnaire (optional/watch for invitation)

International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)

Middlebury College-ISSS
14 Old Chapel Rd (Service Building, 2nd floor)
Middlebury, Vermont 05753 U.S.A.

Phone: 802.443.5858 | Email: iss@middlebury.edu
Web: <https://www.middlebury.edu/office/international-student-and-scholar-services>
Instagram: middiss













Congratulations on your acceptance to Middlebury College!







We look forward to you joining us...



and to your participation in ISSS Pre-orientation 2023-2024!