Social Life

1. A great way to meet people and make friends is to talk to new people you meet in class and go to parties.

2. You may be asked by other students if you would like to study with them. This can be very beneficial for both of you so don’t be shy! Study groups can really help your grade. You can even start a study group yourself!

3. Keep your door open when you are in your room sitting, studying or watching TV. It’s a great way of getting to know the other people on your floor and those in your residence hall!

4. Don’t feel bad if you have an accent or your English isn’t the best. Most people will be very polite if they do not understand you and try to help you.

5. The legal drinking age is 21. Never drink under age or drive while under the influence and keep your eye on your drink if you are of age at bars or parties.

6. If you ever find yourself in a situation in which you feel offended or uncomfortable, say something!

7. Don’t be afraid to ask what a word means if you are in an informal conversation. If it’s a slang word, you probably did not learn it at school!

8. To avoid getting depressed or under the influence, plan on exercising and doing something new or different every weekend. You can go to the movies, go shopping, go out for dinner with friends, go snowboarding, go to Chicago... it may seem at first that there isn’t much to do in East Lansing, but you can actually do a lot besides studying. Be patient and go out exploring every now and then!
9 Learn the purpose of football... it is very big in the MSU community.

10 Pedestrians share the sidewalks with bikers. If there is one coming your way, don't move all around; let them move because they are the ones on wheels!

11 Learn how to use Skype if you don't already know (or some other internet-based communication system). This will help you stay in touch with your family and friends from back home.

12 Take COM 100, it helps most students with their public speaking fears.

13 MSU students are very friendly. Do not be discouraged by blank looking faces in the classrooms, if you approach them, they will most certainly engage in conversation with you. The United States has a rather individualistic society, with less social pressure to conform. As a result, you will need to become more assertive and to speak out on your own behalf. In an interview, talk about your goals and accomplishments.

14 Eye contact is also important. It is not a sign of disrespect, but instead an indication of openness, honesty, and enthusiasm.

15 When two people are talking to each other, they tend to stand a specific distance apart. If someone steps into this personal boundary, they will feel uncomfortable and move away to increase the distance between them.

16 Touching may be a little too intimate for casual acquaintances. However, there is an exception for close friends and relatives.

17 Smoking is prohibited in government and public buildings, and many businesses, especially restaurants, will not permit smoking on the premises.
Academics

18 You don’t need to buy ALL of the books for your classes, you can find them in the Library and check them out or share with a classmate. Some professors put the required books on reserve in the library as well. http://www.lib.msu.edu

19 Sometimes the Spartan Bookstore in the International Center can be pricey with their books so you can either rent them from SBS on Grand River or buy them used from http://www.allmsu.com/home, http://www.ebay.com, http://www.amazon.com, http://www.half.ebay.com. Once the semester is over you can sell your used books at SBS, but know that you might get only a third of the price you paid for it.

20 Check the website http://www.allmsu.com/home for ads (buy/sell), apartment ratings, professor ratings, book sales, roommate searches and much more!

21 If you like to study alone, go to the library’s third or fourth floor, It’s really quiet and you can even find places there during finals week.

22 Start studying for upcoming exams a week before. A really useful habit is to buy a calendar you can write on and as soon as you get your class syllabi, (and you should get a syllabus for every class you go to) you should mark on your calendar the dates of exams and quizzes and deadlines for projects for all of your classes.

23 Don’t be afraid to sit on the front row or to raise your hand during lectures if you do not understand something.

24 A couple of days before classes start, you should walk to all of your classes in order. This way you can time yourself and know how long it will take you to get from class to class. Also, once you become more familiar with campus you can create your own shortcuts.

25 Go see your advisors twice a semester or as much as you need. Tell them what you’d like to do after graduation and what topics interest you, this way you can create a four-year plan with all of the courses you should take to achieve those goals.
26 Enroll in your classes early! Also, take into account your study style. Be honest with yourself, do not enroll in a class you know you are not going to go to because you don’t want to wake up early. http://schedule.msu.edu; https://webenroll.msu.edu/Start.asp

27 DO NOT SKIP CLASS. You may notice American students skipping class and sleeping in class, however, you are an international student and there is a reason why you chose to study in the US. Not to mention, as an international student you pay almost double what American students pay, so every class you skip is a lot of money wasted and new material you missed.

28 Talk to your professors after class or during office hours. This is a good way to establish a relationship with a faculty member that could later on be beneficial for a recommendation letter or research position.

29 Make sure to be a full-time student, go see an OISS advisor if you have questions regarding online courses, under-enrolling, travelling, working or anything else. http://oiss.isp.msu.edu

Where To Go

30 Go to the Wharton Center shows! They are really cool and you can get a chance to see really cool artists and Broadway musicals! http://whartoncenter.com

31 Go bowling at the Union’s Basement for free on Thursday nights. Get there early so you don’t have to wait for a lane! And don’t forget to wear socks when you go! http://www.msuunion.com/activities/index.html

32 Check out Brody Square Cafeteria. A brand new cafeteria with a lot of different food options in one place! From Sushi, vegan/vegetarian food, pizza, sandwiches, made-to-order pasta, salads, spicy food, etc

33 Go to U-Fest at the Union. Lots of free give-aways, live entertainment, photo opportunities with Sparty, palm reading, etc.
34. The library will most likely be full during exam week so unless you plan to get there early, try to find other places where you can study like your residence hall study lounge, the Union, Grand River Café, Biggby’s, Gone Wired Cafe or a smaller library in other buildings.

35. Get homemade ice cream in MSU dairy stores (in the Union or the Anthony Hall) – it’s made on campus! [http://dairystore.msu.edu](http://dairystore.msu.edu)

36. Attend the international coffee hour (every Friday in the Interanational Center), great way to meet new friends or relax after a long week! [http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/feature_coffee.php](http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/feature_coffee.php)

37. There is good sushi in East Lansing: Omi, Maru, Sushi Y, Udon, and Sansu (ask for the open tatami table)!

38. If you want to try African food, go to Altu’s (1312 Michigan Avenue). Great experience and excellent Ethiopian food!

39. Try Bubble Island on Grand River, (next to the Peanut Barrel), it is a great place with great drinks and a very relaxed atmosphere where you can study or hang out

40. Good American-style breakfast food can be found at Golden Harvest, Beggar’s Banquet, Theio’s, and Hannah’s Koney Island.

41. If you are bored on a Friday, Saturday or Sunday evening and have nothing to do, go see one of the movies that are playing at Campus Center Cinemas for free. You can check upcoming shows here: [http://uabevents.com/calendar](http://uabevents.com/calendar)

42. The IM buildings have extra-curricular classes you can take with friends that are really fun. You can take classes like taekwondo, pilates, yoga, dance. There is also a great swimming pool if you like to swim, and it’s free! [http://www.imsports.msu.edu](http://www.imsports.msu.edu)
43 For authentic Mexican food try El Azteco, Pablo’s in Old Town, El Oasis on Michigan Ave, Cancun in Okemos, That Little Mexican Place in Frandor and Los Tres Amigos.

44 La Bodega is a fair trade clothing store on Grand River where everything is under $15.

45 Uncle John’s Cider Mill in St. Johns is great in the fall for hay rides, apple cider, and other fun activities. [http://www.ujcidermill.com](http://www.ujcidermill.com)

**MSU Services**

46 MSU offers many excellent AND free services to students in the academic and career opportunities area, such as etiquette dinners and workshops. [http://careernetwork.msu.edu](http://careernetwork.msu.edu)

47 Use the free tutoring services that MSU has to offer. Wells Hall - Math tutoring [http://www.math.msu.edu/CurrentStudents/LearningCenter/Default.aspx](http://www.math.msu.edu/CurrentStudents/LearningCenter/Default.aspx), each complex has specific class tutoring, there’s a writing center for International students, and the 3rd floor of Bessey Hall offers another free writing center.

48 Invest in a business suit and take advantage of the mock interviews at the Lear Center [http://broad.msu.edu/undergraduate/careers](http://broad.msu.edu/undergraduate/careers) and the career fairs at the Breslin Center. [http://www.breslincenter.com](http://www.breslincenter.com)

49 The Multicultural Business Program gives free tutoring by other MSU students. Demand is high so sign up early. [http://broad.msu.edu/undergraduate/mbp/tutoring](http://broad.msu.edu/undergraduate/mbp/tutoring)

50 Spartan Walk is located in the MSU library. One male and one female student will escort you where ever you need to go on campus for free so you don’t have to walk home alone. [http://www.lib.msu.edu/features/?e=173](http://www.lib.msu.edu/features/?e=173)

51 On the Main Library’s fourth floor there is a Multimedia Center which has 2
computers with scanners. You can also go to the Union Building Basement’s Computer Center. Scanning can also be done at 133 Erickson Hall (TIES) or Technical Interns in Education (for students in Education). They also have video cameras, tripods and such for borrowing. If you need to fax something, you can also do this at the Copy Center, 5th floor Erickson Hall. They also have other services you should check out but keep in mind this is self-service.

52 Talk to your resident mentors! Their job is to help you and adjust to your life living in the dorms. Also, don’t be afraid to approach the dorm staff (cooks, cleaning crew, etc...) they are all super friendly!

53 The 2nd Floor of the Student Services Building offers a counseling center. You can talk to a counselor, get a free back massage from a certified massage therapist, or light therapy in the winter. [http://www.counseling.msu.edu](http://www.counseling.msu.edu) On the same floor is also free GRE (Graduate school preparations) practice is offered with free materials, and testing to get you ready for taking the test. [http://www.testingoffice.msu.edu](http://www.testingoffice.msu.edu)

54 The RHA (Residence Hall Association) offers movie rentals at some of the residence hall buildings – ask your Resident Mentor! [http://www.rha.msu.edu/newsite](http://www.rha.msu.edu/newsite)

55 Olin Health Center offers 3 free visits for students... get to know the services they offer! [http://olin.msu.edu](http://olin.msu.edu)

56 Use Totally Take Out and Combo X-change for your meals. In addition to your unlimited meal plan, you can go to one of the Sparty’s or other locations for Totally Take Out and get food to bring back to your dorm and eat.

Get Involved

57 Get involved in the student community! Go to student organization meetings and join all the clubs that interest you. [http://studentlife.msu.edu/current_students/rso/orgs.htm](http://studentlife.msu.edu/current_students/rso/orgs.htm)

58 Go to Sparticipation right outside of Munn Ice Arena. This is a great event where you will find all of the registered MSU Student Organizations. It's a great way of meeting new
people and finding something that interests you and that you can be involved with as an MSU Student.

59 Check out MSU’s Center for Service Learning. Here you can find volunteer opportunities, but you have to be fast to enroll in them because they work in a first-come-first-serve basis and positions fill in pretty fast!  [http://www.servicelearning.msu.edu](http://www.servicelearning.msu.edu)

60 Read everything, from e-mails to all the free campus publications around MSU, they are very useful in finding out about MSU, student life, and career tips.

61 You might think you don’t have enough time for an on campus job but most employers work well with your schedule and just working 8-10 hours a week will make a huge difference in your bank account.

62 If you are interested in buying football, basketball or hockey tickets the website to go to is [http://www.msuspartans.com/tickets/msu-tickets.html](http://www.msuspartans.com/tickets/msu-tickets.html)

### Getting Around

63 Buy a CATA bus pass. During the winter you might not want to walk when it is snowing outside so you can always take the bus and avoid the hassle and cold. CATA bus drivers actually know their routes so you can ask them if bus 31 stops at Holden Hall or wherever you need to go. It’s okay to miss your stop or get on the wrong bus; you will master the bus system with some practice! CATA buses will may stop if you run fast enough and wave vigorously. Don’t be shy!  [http://www.cata.org](http://www.cata.org)

64 From 2am-7am if you need to be somewhere and do not feel like walking, call CATA and they will give you a ride to wherever you need to go. [http://www.cata.org](http://www.cata.org)

65 Be ready for snow. You should try to orient yourself and know your way around campus before it starts snowing, because by then it’s all covered in white and everything looks the same.
The best way to orient yourself around campus is to find the big chimneys that are next to the Stadium, you can see those from nearly anywhere on campus.

Get a campus map. http://maps.msu.edu

**Must-Haves**

Get good winter clothing! Thermal underwear, winter jackets, snow boots, gloves, hats, rain boots...it doesn’t matter if you look silly, the point here is that you don’t slip and you stay warm!

Get a bike! You can buy a new one or rent one at the MSU Bike Service for a semester or for a year. http://www.bikes.msu.edu. Bikes can save you money on transportation and help you stay in shape while getting to class on time. Do not forget to get a lock for your bike, preferably a U-lock. Also make sure to register your bike online and get a permit, it's free and it saves your bike from getting impounded.

Make sure your bike is registered with the MSU police. http://police.msu.edu/bikeinfo.asp

Always carry your student ID with you. And if you lose it you'll have to pay for a new one.

Collect reward cards at various restaurants/cafes/shops (Noodles & Company, Espresso Royale, Sparty’s, Bigby, Chapellure, Gone Wired Café, Plato’s Closet theater…) to get free meals/coupons/tickets.

You can never have too much MSU apparel.

Keep your I-20 and passport in a safe place you can remember!

Do not lose your room keys! They are expensive to replace and you will have to pay
for it.

76 Buy a rain coat/boots and a good umbrella! Preferably a wind-stopping umbrella - it's worth it.

77 If you are not old enough to get a license or do not wish to drive, you should get a State Identification Card. This is considered a government-issued identification, this way you do not need to carry around your passport at all times. [http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students_license.php](http://oiss.isp.msu.edu/students_license.php)

78 Quarters are a must! Have quarters for laundry - you can get them almost anywhere, including your dorm reception desk.

79 Bring practical shoes or buy them! Tennis shoes/sneakers are great when walking around MSU's campus.

80 Do not carry more than $100 cash in your wallet. This is just a precaution measure because you might lose your wallet or be tempted to spend it all, and it just looks a little bit shady when a foreign-looking individual pays for a TV at Best Buy in all cash. It's OK to have money, but it's safer to keep it all in a debit or credit card.

81 You can buy an Ethernet cable from the MSU computer store located in the computer center. [http://cstore.msu.edu](http://cstore.msu.edu)

**Other Tips**

82 1 kg=2.2 pounds. 1 meter=3.3 feet. 32 degrees Farenheit is 0 degrees Celsius.

83 Watch what you eat! It can be really easy to gain weight the first couple of weeks you arrive in the US because everything looks yummy (and it is) but you should not give in.

84 Don't forget to tip in restaurants, taxis, shuttle buses, hotels, salons, etc. (15%-20% if the service is good).
85 Do not spend all of your money in the first two weeks; do not buy all of your stuff at once!

86 If you don’t have a car: car rental companies offer great deals (especially on the week-ends). Enterprise even picks you up. http://www.enterprise.com/car_rental/home.do

87 You can store all of your stuff at a storage center (such as Rock Student Storage or the MSU Surplus Store) when you leave for vacation, costs will vary depending on how much you have to store but it’s worth it!

88 Do a ‘wardrobe turnover’ when you go home. For example: For fall semester you can take with you summer clothes and a couple of cold-weather clothes, then, when and if you go back home for winter break, you can leave all or most of your summer clothes at home and bring with you a couple more winter clothes for the Spring semester. Bring some dressy clothes because you might need them for conferences, dinners, career fairs, etc.

89 Make sure you pay when you park (in the meters) because you will get a ticket if the meter runs out of time.

90 If you will be driving a car, make sure to get a parking permit and know where you are allowed to park with it around campus. Note that not all parking lots are allowed for students with parking permits. http://police.msu.edu/permits.asp

91 If you are really into TV shows, you can access the networks’ webpage and watch the episodes online. Also, you should check out http://www.hulu.com. It has a huge database of many American TV shows for you to watch online.

92 Go to http://www.vprgs.msu.edu /acronyms - A to see some of the acronyms commonly used at MSU

93 http://www.campusfood.com is a great way to order food online.
94 The number for an emergency in the United States is 911. This number will work for the police, ambulance or fire department

95 If a police officer stops you while driving, drive to the right shoulder of the road. Make sure to be still and wait for the officer to approach your car. Do not get out of the vehicle. Roll down your driver side window in order to speak with the officer.

96 American names are written and spoken with the given name first and the family name last. So John Smith’s family name is Smith, not John.

97 In the United States, dates are written as month/day/year. This is the opposite of the British method, in which dates are written day/month/year. So while 4/3/67 would be March 4, 1967 in Europe, it is April 3, 1967 in the United States. It is best to write out dates using the month name in order to avoid confusion.

98 Most electrical outlets in the United States operate with a voltage of 110-120 volts, 60 cycles. If your equipment requires 220 volts, bring a transformer and plug adapter.

99 International DVDs will not necessarily play correctly on American DVD players.

100 When you hear “Go Green!” you should shout “Go White!”