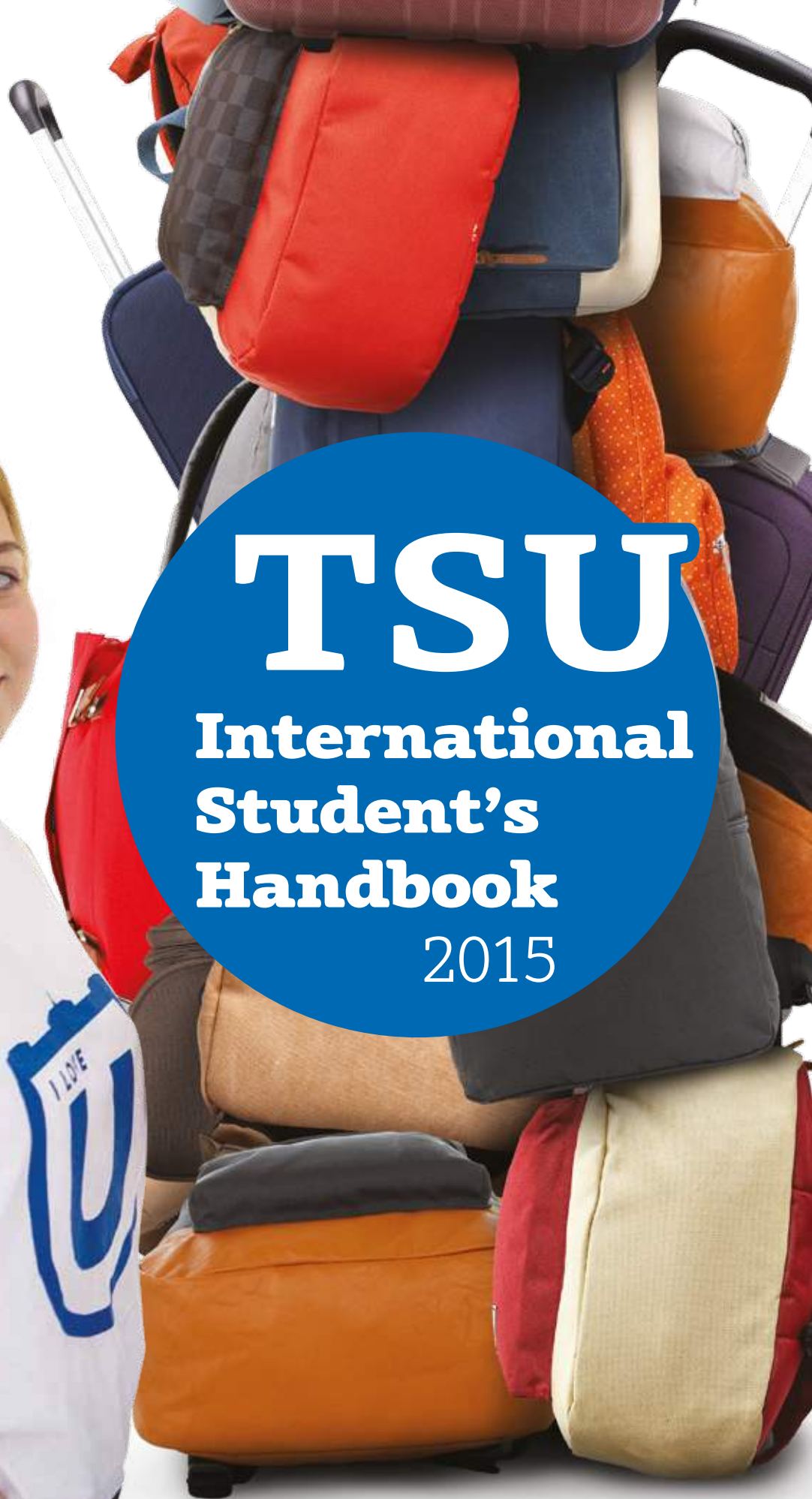




National Research

**Tomsk
State
University**



TSU

International Student's Handbook

2015

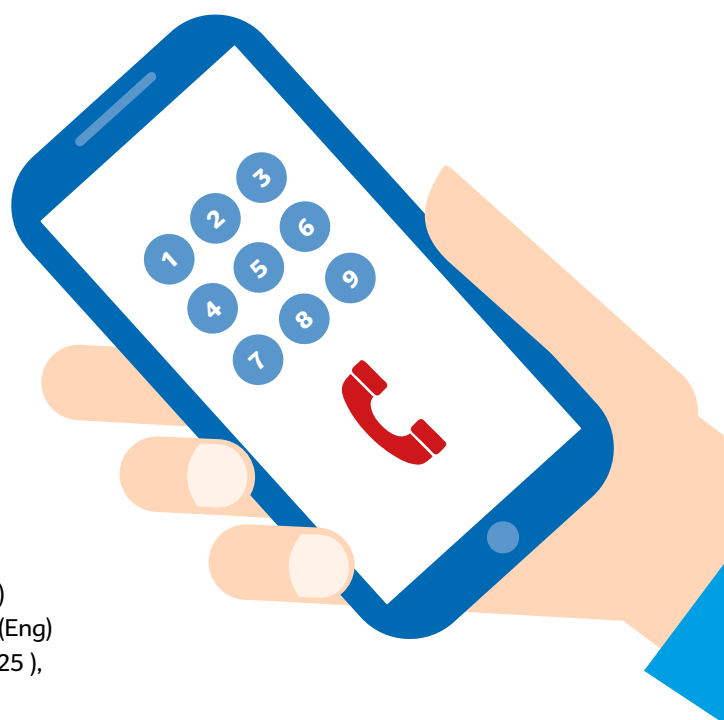


Introduction

This Handbook will serve as your guide during your stay at Tomsk State University, in the City of Tomsk. We have tried to pull together the most important information for you, as an international student: registration, accommodations, food availability, and lots of other useful information. We have tried to make this guide as simple as possible in order to avoid useless information, yet still to assist you in becoming better oriented in your new surroundings.

We will be very pleased to receive your feedback and suggestions on how to improve this Handbook. Thank you, and our very best wishes to you in your studies at National Research Tomsk State University.

Important telephone numbers



Listed below are the most important telephone numbers which you can use to get information in English (Eng), Deutsch (De), or in Russian (Rus).

- International Programs Office: +7 (3822) 52-95-58 (Eng/De)
- International Student Services Center: +7 (3822) 52-95-58 (Eng) (www.tsu.ru/english/student_s_life/student_services_centre/) (Eng)
- Psychological services: (the main building basement, office №025), +7 (3822) 53-47-56 (Rus)
- TSU dormitory: (the first floor, office №15) or dmitrieva@ums.tsu.ru, lidiadmitrieva@ngs.ru. (Eng)
- University hospital: +7 (3822) 55-46-66, +7 (3822) 55-41-30 (Rus)

Emergency services:

Emergency service	landline phone	MTS, Megafon, TELE2 (cell-phones operators)	Beeline (cell-phones operator)
Ambulance	03	030	003
Police	02	020	002
Gas leakage service	04	040	004
Firefighters and emergence service	01 (112, 102)	010 (112, 102)	001 (112, 102)

Additionally, we strongly recommend you write down phone numbers of responsible or knowledgeable persons, such as friends, a Russian student, advisor, or any university staff or specialists who could assist you with issues which may face you in your new surroundings. Keep in mind that if your cell phone is out of money or charge, you can make a call from someone else's telephone.

1) Name:

Tel.:

2) Name:

Tel.:

3) Name:

Tel.:

4) Name:

Tel.:

5) Name:

Tel.:



Preparations for your adventure

Clothes and other stuff

As you are heading to another country, it is high time to think over a few things to prepare yourself. The Siberian winter is severe and long, so you need to stock up on some very warm clothing, including good headgear, footwear, coats and gloves. The average January temperature is about -19° to -21°C below zero, but sometimes it can be as cold as -30° or -35°C . Tomsk is rather snowy, so you'll need good and warm waterproof boots, with soles that are well-suited to snowy or icy sidewalks. By the way, waterproof boots, a raincoat, and an umbrella are necessary for autumn and spring, too, when it can also be windy and wet. The Siberian summer is relatively short and sometimes rainy; with the average July temperature of $19-21^{\circ}\text{C}$ by day and 16°C by night, though sometimes it can reach 30°C and higher.

Before leaving your Tomsk room at any time of year, it is a good idea to always check the weather outside and also the forecast. For example, here in Tomsk: www.pogoda.vtomske.ru/, www.pogodavtomske.ru/.

If you do not bring warm clothes with you, you can always buy things you need here in Tomsk.

There are many shops and markets where you can find suitable clothes. While the prices in some of the shops may be expensive for students, it is also possible to buy winter clothing items at the open markets relatively inexpensively, as well as in many second-hand shops. This may be a more practical approach to having what you actually need. Perhaps you can earmark some money to get things locally, rather than trying to guess what you will need, spending a lot of your money, having to pack everything, and then perhaps discovering that what you have brought is not what you really needed, after all.

In case your Russian language skills are quite good, you may be able to shop in the Russian stores on your own, even using the list of shops with their phone numbers to check on needed items by telephone. For most students it is recommended that you ask for help from your responsible person or other native speaker who knows this city and shops, and who can help you find just what you need. You can also call the International Student Services Center, where you can obtain more detailed information.

**from
 -35°C
to
 $+35^{\circ}\text{C}$**

*can change
temperature
Tomsk
throughout
the year*



Sportmaster
(Спортмастер)

Lenin Ave. 217, building 22
(пр. Ленина, 217, строение 22)
www.sportmaster.ru/ (Rus)
+7 (3822) 90-07-10 (Rus)
A wide range of sports clothing and footwear, and accessories.



Terranova

Lenin Ave. 217, building 22
(пр. Ленина, 217, строение 22)
+7 (3822) 52-82-76 (Rus)
A wide range of different clothing.



Gloria Jeans

Lenin Ave. 82a
(пр. Ленина, 82a)
www.gloria-jeans.ru/ (Rus)
+7 (3822) 51-09-61 (Rus)
A wide range of jeans, clothes, accessories.



Изумрудный город
(Izumrudnyi Gorod)

Komsomolskiy Prospect, 13B
(Комсомольский пр. 13Б)
www.izumrudniy.tomsk.ru (Rus/En)
+7 (3822) 28-13-82 (Rus)
A wide range of different clothing, footwear, outerwear, and others.



СмайлCity
(Smile City)

Uchebnaya st. 48d –
Kotovskogo st. 19/3
(Учебная, 48д – Котовского, 19/3)
A wide range of different clothing, footwear, outerwear, and others.

This list is open,
in this city you also will find
different second hand shops,
markets, brand shops
and so on according
to your clothe and price
preferences



IMPORTANT

We also recommend you bring certain things you will undoubtedly need.

Personal hygiene items. For the first few months in Tomsk your body will need to get used to new conditions (dry air, moisture, snow, and frost when winter arrives), and that may cause temporary problems with skin, hair, and nails. It is recommended you bring a moisturizing cream, hygienic lip balm, masks, and possibly oils or lotion to help your body during this period.

Anything that would remind you of home. A change of lifestyle and place, and a great distance from your home, can lead to depression or loneliness. So, even if you are enthusiastic about your upcoming studies, we recommend bringing with you a few photos of your family, a souvenir given to you by friends, or a few items from your current home to your new home. These little things will make your new home, “homier” and more comfortable.

A laptop or notebook, as modern education requires the active use of computers.



Meeting and accompaniment

You should be sure to inform the International Programs Office and International Student Services Center in advance about your arrival for an accompanied ride in from the airport or railway station. Since you will likely be visiting Russia for the first time and may not know how to travel to the TSU campus from the airport or railway station, we can provide a person to meet you and to accompany you directly to the University. This service is available for you if you fill in this document in advance (link – www.tsu.ru/english/student_s_life/student_services_centre/) at least one week or more prior to your arrival. This advance notice is required so that we can make the appropriate arrangements to meet you at the airport or station when you arrive.

Finance and currency exchange

Your ability to pay for certain costs upon your arrival in Russia is important. Prior to your coming to Tomsk, you should make sure that you will have with you not less than 5,000–7,000 Rubles (the Russian national currency). This sum should be enough for your first one or two weeks in Tomsk. You should check the exchange rate between the currencies of your country and Russia, so that you can convert at least the equivalent of 5,000 to 7,000 Rubles for your initial expenses. The remainder of your funds could be exchanged after you arrive in Russia.

R Registration and other important documents

Visa Invitation

In order to receive an invitation to come to Russia you must send your request to this email address: svg@ums.tsu.ru. Send the following documents with your request:

- copy of the first page of your passport (photo, passport number, and dates of coverage page) ;
- copy of document(s) covering your education;
- Russian translation of document(s) on your education and of your transcript of your educational achievements notarized by a notary.

After the University reviews your documents, it will send you the invitation letter allowing you enter Russia. Preparation of the invitation tends to take one and a half months. For that reason, it is crucially important to send all mentioned documents at least two months prior to the date you anticipate arriving in Russia. After receiving your invitation letter from TSU you will have to contact with Russian Embassy or Consulate in your country and apply for a Russian Student Visa.

You can find information about the location of a Russian Embassy

or Consulate in your country at: www.russianembassy.net.

You need to send email scans of your visa and tickets not later than 10 days before your arrival in Tomsk to the following address: lash@ums.tsu.ru

On the day you arrive in Tomsk, or the next work day, you must visit the TSU International Programs Office (room 327 in the North Wing of the University's Main Building) for your migration registration. Bring with you to the migration officer the following documents:

- passport and visa;
- migration card.

Within three days of this registration you will receive a copy of the detachable part of the notification of your arrival in Russia. This document will be your proof of eligibility for your legal stay within Russia.

In case you were already in Russia or were registered in some other place in Tomsk (e.g., a hotel), you must visit the TSU International Programs Office for a new registration on the day of arrival in Tomsk (or next work day).

Visa extension and duration of migration registration.



IMPORTANT

Only individuals with a Russian Student Visa may pursue their education or training in Russian Universities.



IMPORTANT

You must not leave Tomsk region, by law, while your documents are being processed in the Russian Federal Migration Service. Violation of migration registration rules would lead to administrative penalties and possibly a large fine, and in some cases, even deportation.



The period of time you may stay in Russia depends directly upon the valid period specified on your visa. You must leave Russia by the expiration date specified on your visa.

In order to extend the period of your visa and the period of stay in Russia, you have to visit the TSU International Programs Office at least one and half months prior to the expiration of your visa.

You must bring the following documents to the TSU International Programs Office for extending your visa:

- passport;
- migration card;
- copy of contract on providing educational services;
- 2 matt photos with your full name signed on the reverse side of each photo;
- receipt of payment of state fees for visa registration (1600 rubles).

All these documents and legal procedures are extremely important for your staying and studying in Tomsk at TSU. This is why we urge you to carefully meet all the legal requirements. If you have any questions related to this issue, you may either ask your Responsible Person (a student volunteer who will be appointed for your supporting) or visit the International Programs Office (room 326, in the North Wing of the University's Main Building, tel.: +7(3822) 52-95-58) or in the International Student Services Center, where you can receive full consultation and help). Failure to meet the legal requirements of the Russian Federation immigration legislation may lead to negative consequences or even to deportation.



Financial issues

Establishing your bank account and exchanging currency When you come to Tomsk you will have to open a bank account. You will be provided with a bank card which will be used for making your payments, purchases, and paying fees. Because most banks operate only in the Russian language, you will need to request the assistance of the International Student Services Center. The designated responsible person or center specialist will assist you in dealing with the bank. This should be done within the first two weeks in order to give you financial freedom. This bank card will also be used for your scholarship or grant (if applicable).

As you will need to convert any other currency to rubles for your expenses in Russia, this can be probably accomplished when you obtain your bank card. There are a number of bank offices where you can exchange your currency or take money from your account, and ATMs are available in many locations for cash withdrawals in rubles.

Location of several nearby bank offices:

1. University's Main building
 - a. Sberbank of Russia, Tomsk Branch №8616, the first floor (Rus).
 - b. Sberbank of Russia ATM (5), the first floor
 - c. Gazprombank ATM, the first floor
2. TSU Scientific Library
 - a. Sberbank of Russia ATM, the first floor
3. Building № 4
 - a. Sberbank of Russia ATM, the first floor
 - b. Gazprombank ATM, the first floor

For Information about where and how to pay your tuition and fees, or for charges for other university services, you will need to check with the International Student Services Center.



IMPORTANT

Please pay attention to exchange rates in your country and in Russia, so that you will receive the most advantageous exchange rate. Be careful in using a bank card from your country, as there is a chance that it could be jammed in an ATM.



A Accommodations in the TSU dormitory

Upon your arrival at TSU, you will be housed in a room in the new University Dormitory. After admittance, with only limited paper work, the dormitory staff will provide you with bed and all necessary bedding (mattress, pillow, blanket, bedspread and bed clothes). The dormitory is equipped with furniture and bathroom units. Shared kitchens are equipped with ovens. The new dormitory is up-to-date, built for students and their needs: internet, laundry, gym, place for dance and aerobics. There is security, with advanced CCTV and fire protection. There is the International Student Services Center on the first floor (in room 15), that is available to assist you with questions you may have.

Within 2 or 3 days after your arrival you will need to go to International Student Services Center to discuss such housing issues as:

1. Whether you would like to stay in the room in which you were originally placed or in another room where you could practice your Russian language (where you roommates will be native Russian speakers or international students with a high level of Russian language proficiency), or perhaps live with your friends, or in a room you may find more comfortable.
2. Whether you may prefer to rent a room or apartment in the city. The Center can assist you with legal and language help in dealing with real estate agencies.
3. Dormitory or other housing rules, relating to accommodation fees, fire safety exercises, procedure for extension of dormitory stays, schedule of cleaning, and other useful guidance.



IMPORTANT

If you have any questions you can call a specialist (tel. +7 (3822) 52-95-58) or your responsible person, who is ready to help you.

Renting a room or apartment in the city

For various reasons you may decide to rent a room or apartment in the city.

First, we should warn you that renting a room or apartment is more expensive than living in the dormitory. The rent would depend on the area of the city, the type of room or apartment, and a number of other factors. It is almost always going to be higher than the cost of the dormitory. Sharing a room with friends may somewhat reduce this cost, but you are likely to be further away from services provided in or near the University Dormitory. Additionally, for a person who barely speaks Russian and does not live with a native speaker, such living outside the dormitory may be a real challenge. Be careful and think twice – do you speak Russian well enough or do you have a native speaker friend who will be living with you? If yes, International Student Services Center or your responsible person can help you in searching for a room or apartment and in concluding the rental agreement.

There are certain rights, rules and regulations which relate to your staying in the University Dormitory.

1. You, as an international student, have following rights:

- to live in the same room throughout your whole period of study subject to the terms and conditions of the dormitory rental agreement;
- to use the various dormitory facilities for study, household and cultural purposes for example gym, laundry, kitchen, and others;
- to apply to the dormitory staff for the timely repair or replacement of the faulty equipment;
- to use household appliances or equipment, so long as fire safety, usage, or sharing requirements are met;

- to move in another room of the dormitory with the consent of the university administration.
- to apply for help from the head of International Student Services Center

2. You also have certain obligations:

to follow terms and conditions of the dormitory rental agreement, as signed with the university administration;

- to provide necessary documents for your residence registration;
- to carefully follow the dormitory pass control;
- to make timely payments for accommodations in the dormitory and other provided services;
- to respect and to not disturb other residents while using the premises for study, cultural, or household purposes.
- to not switch on ceiling lights, or to listen to music and TV after 11 p.m., unless neighbors consent.
- to follow Emergency Instructions (fire, safety, etc.), when they occur;
- to respect other residents by keeping your dormitory room and common use facilities clean and in order, and by cleaning up the kitchen under the agreed-to schedule;
- to conduct all health or sanitary activities in a timely way (X-rays, disinfection of rooms);
- to not throw household waste or debris out of windows;
- to protect rooms and equipment when you utilize them;
- to reimburse TSU for any damage to dormitory facilities or equipment;
- to close windows and to lock doors when leaving your room;
- to store spare keys from your room in the dormitory administration office;



- to provide your IDs upon request of the dormitory security;
- to use electric power and water economically;
- to provide room access to the dormitory administration for monitoring repairs when requested;
- to participate in fire-safety drills or activities;
- to coordinate your plans for conducting special activities in the dormitory or within its area with a dean's office, the dormitory administration, and/or the student council, as appropriate. Such activities should end no later than 11 p.m.;
- to smoke ONLY in the special Smoking Areas;
- to do laundry (wash and dry of clothes), shine shoes and other activities within special areas.

3. You are not allowed

to do the following things:

- to move from one room to another without permission of the dormitory administration;
- to have non-student visitors in your room overnight without the permission of the dormitory staff;
- to take equipment or furniture from one room to another without permission of dormitory staff;
- to conduct any change to electrical wiring or repairing of electrical mains;
- to change doors or locks, or add additional locks on the

entrance door to your room without written permission of the dormitory staff;

- to take any actions causing loud noise or vibration that disturbs other residents of the dormitory, such as watching TV or listening to music at high volume or other loud sounds from 11:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. Please, respect your roommates and other residents of the dormitory;
- to come to the dormitory intoxicated ;
- to bring to or drink alcohol in the dorm;
- to store, consume, or to distribute drugs and psychotropic substances;
- to use open flames in your room or elsewhere in the dormitory;
- to store or distribute explosives or flammable substances (including fireworks, gasoline, etc.);
- to keep animals in the dormitory, including domestic or exotic animals, including reptiles;
- to store bulky things or items limiting access of other residents to the room;
- to paste non removable posters or other items on walls of a living room or in public places, except places specifically designated for this purpose.

Detailed information can be found at:
www.tsu.ru/content/spravka/TSU/rules.php (Rus).





If I am hungry

In almost all buildings of the campus you will find either a student's café or cafeteria, or at least machines with snakes and drinks. The prices in these cafés are not high so you can afford to buy snakes and to spend a break between classes quite comfortably.



IMPORTANT

Almost all food and drinks in the student cafés and cafeterias may not meet requirements of different religions, please bear it in mind and before buying something ask a seller or cooks about it. Further you will find a list of places where you can buy products and prepared food according to your religion rules and requirements.

Title	Address	Contacts	Description
Shukran (Шукран) Halal food	Moskovskiy trakt, 43 (Московский тракт 43)	shukran.tomsk@gmail.com (Rus) Tel.: +7-923-413-37-33 (Rus) www.halalguide.me/tomsk/produktoviy-magazin/shukran-1 (Rus)	Fresh meat (beef, lamb), chicken, sausages, semi-finished products, groceries, canned meat.
Muslima (Муслима) Halal food	F. Lytkina st., 12/2 (Ф. Лыткина 12/2)	Tel.: +7-923-405-00-02 (Rus) www.tomsk-rossiya-tomskaya-oblast.halalgid.com/ (Rus) – General information about Halal food, restaurants and cafés.	Fresh meat (beef, lamb), chicken, sausages, semi-finished products, groceries, canned meat.

In order to receive detailed information about other specially prepared food, you may apply to religious minister of your religion in Tomsk (see Religious Issues).

Outside campus

Near the Campus there are a lot of places where you can enjoy fresh food and coffee.

Title	Address	Contacts (information)	Assortment
Paul Bakery (Поль Бейкери)	Lenin Ave., 55 (проспект Ленина, 55)	Tel.: +7 (3822) 97-99-64 (Rus)	Pastries, coffee and tea, cocktails, cookies, and others.
Ryba Ris (Рыба рис)	Lenin Ave., 55 (проспект Ленина, 55)	Tel.: +7 (3822) 22-58-30 (Rus)	Japanese cuisine
KFC	Lenin Ave., 51a. (проспект Ленина, 51a)	Tel.: +7-800-555-83-33 (Rus)	
Syr Bor (Сыр Бор)	Moskovskiy trakt, 2G (Московский тракт, 2г)	Tel.: +7 (3822) 20-38-20 (Rus)	Russian cuisine, business lunch.
Subway	Lenin Ave., 41 (проспект Ленина, 41)	Tel.: +7 (3822) 93-36-00 (Rus)	

Ordering food

You also can order food if you want. Here you will find a number of cafés and restaurants where you can do so, but we should warn you that you can do it only in Russian. You may ask somebody to help you with order. Most of cafés and restaurants are closed at 00.00, make order timely!

Title	Address	Contacts	Type of order
Mir Sushi Мир Суши (Japanese cuisine)	Uchebnaya st., 20 (ул. Учебная, 20)	www.55sushi55.ru/ (Rus) Tel: +7 (3822) 21-56-56 (Rus) +7 (3822) 21-58-59 (Rus)	Online order Phone order
Make love pizza (Pizza, drinks)	Altaiskaya st., 97/4 (ул. Алтайская, 97/4)	www.makelovepizza.ru/ (Rus) +7 (3822) 90-45-44 (Rus)	Online order Phone order
Dobraya trapesa Добрая трапеза (Japanese, Russian and Italian cuisines)	Uchebnaya st., 46 (ул. Учебная, 46)	www.dob-trapeza.ru/ (Rus) +7 (3822) 90-09-07 (Rus)	Online order Phone order
Papa Johns Папа Джонс (Pizza, desserts and drinks)	Frunse ave., 25 (пр. Фрунзе, 25)	www.tomsk.papajohns.ru/en (Rus/Eng) +7 (3822) 77-78-88 (Rus/Eng)	Online order Phone order
Italiano Pizza (Italian cuisines)	Frunse ave. 238 (пр. Фрунзе 238)	www.italpizza.tomsk.ru/ (Rus) +7 (3822) 22-22-11 (Rus)	Online order Phone order



Culture shock

SYMPTOMS

- Depression
- Loss or Gain of Weight or Appetite
- Insomnia
- Withdrawal from Social Activities
- Anger over minor frustrations
- A desire to return home



IMPORTANT

Remember! You are not alone; there are a lot of people who are ready to help you. Just let them know. You may also receive detailed information about different cultural events in Tomsk and TSU in the volunteering official group in FB – www.facebook.com/groups/tomskonline/

Many people who travel to foreign countries experience some form of culture shock. Culture shock is usually described as an intense physical and/or psychological response to a new environment. In some cases, the visitor cannot pinpoint all of the things in the new environment that are bothering him or her; you may simply feel that something is not right. In other cases, you understand what has triggered culture shock. It could be

anything from the tiny differences in how people handle everyday tasks, feelings of uncertainty when dealing with unfamiliar situations, frustration with an unfamiliar bureaucracy, or the feeling that one's self cannot «connect» emotionally with people in the new culture. Language can be a critical element in this, depending upon the language skills which one brings to the situation. If one does not speak the language that surrounds the individual, isolation can be intensified.

How to get over culture shock?

Some people will get over their culture shock quickly, perhaps within a few weeks; others will take longer to adjust. You may experience culture shock immediately after arriving in Russia and Tomsk, or you may struggle with culture shock later, when many small frustrations have built up. We suggest that the best way to deal with culture shock is:

- Participate in activities on campus, such as those offered by the TSU Cultural Center! Stay busy!
- Socialize with other international students who can understand what you're going through.
- Keep an open mind and to be patient both with Russians and with oneself.
- Do not withdraw from others and be aloof and alone. Spending time with other people can help.
- Try to find a new hobby, it will help you find others with similar interests.
- Consult and speak with specialists in the International Student Services Center at the dormitory – tel. +7 (3822) 52-95-58, or with the University Psychological Services in room 25a in the Main Building – tel. + 7 (3822) 53-47-56.



Psychological services

It was mentioned previously in this Handbook, that one of the first difficulties you are likely to face is culture shock due to being in a new country, and with new culture, language, and people around you. This feeling can be especially strong during the first couple of months when there are perhaps few new friends and everything seems new and different for you. The University understands this, and that is why psychological services for students are provided free of charge. The Office of Psychological Help is located in the basement of the TSU's Main Building (room 25a); telephone number: + 7 (3822) 53-47-56; working hours Monday – Friday are 10:00-17:00, with the lunch break from 13:00-14:00. You may send an email to: ps@mail.tsu.ru, or visit the website at: www.ps.tsu.ru/index.php. This office has professionals who are available to provide expert psychological assistance when one feels the need to discuss problems or stress resulting from any issues facing a student.

Because the psychologist and psychoanalyst speak only Russian, if a translator is needed you may call the TSU International Programs Office, which can provide you this service, or, you may ask your responsible person to help you. Any

discussions or consultations using a translator or other helper require extreme discretion on their part, and they must hold all information in confidence, as your secret. Within this confidential setting, it is possible for an international student to share concerns or problems with specialists in an anonymous setting, and to receive advice and counseling to make their studies at TSU more comfortable and to help prevent situations that may cause them harm.

At the dormitory, you may also receive counseling in the International Student Services Center. Specialists in this center are ready to help you with daily problems, give you tips and pieces of advice on where and what to buy, where to spend time, and to help resolve possible disputes with roommates. The International Student Services Center is in room 15 in the dormitory building, and their telephone number is: + 7 (3822) 53-47-56.



University rules



IMPORTANT

Tomsk State University, as any other major university in the world, has a number of rules to be followed to avoid problems for the student, which, in extreme cases could lead to expulsion. In this section of the Handbook, below, some basic rules are listed to which a student should adhere to avoid problems.

First things first: please respect other students, teachers, and citizens. Treat others the way you would want to be treated. Any problems and disputes can be solved in a peaceful manner; if necessary, the University is ready to provide help for you if you let us know.

International Student Services

Center: +7 (3822) 52-95-58

Psychological Services:

+ 7 (3822) 53-47-56

International Programs Office:

+7 (3822) 52-95-58

A student's status can be terminated:

- at one's own request for such reasons as: due to transfer to another institution, because of health problems and or for other reasons;
- for the failure to meet curriculum requirements in a timely way, without an approved excuse;
- for violation of the University's regulations and rules, including the Regulations and Rules of the University Dormitory;
- for not returning from academic leave;
- for criminal or socially dangerous actions.

Also students should follow rules for:

- meeting the academic requirements of the University;
- attending training sessions provided under the relevant curricula;
- observing academic discipline and submitting exercises in a timely manner, as required by the chosen academic program;
- taking examinations and tests, as required;
- observing rules for use of university facilities, equipment, museums and libraries, including the prompt return of university property provided for temporary usage;
- bearing financial responsibility for damages to university property and facilities;
- observing safety regulations when conducting workshops and experiments in the university laboratories;
- observing fire safety rules in classroom buildings and dormitories of the university;
- observing established procedures relating to educational transfers, re-training, or similar cases;
- observing the laws of the Russian Federation and generally recognized norms of behavior.

This guidance should help you avoid problems and misunderstandings. For detailed information on potential legal issues while attending the University you may consult: www.tsu.ru/content/spravka/ (Rus).



S

Safety

Many visitors to Russia, and specifically to Tomsk, are concerned about public safety and what precautions should be taken. Both the Tomsk region and Tomsk city have some of the lowest crime rates in Russia, but it is still a good idea to ask locals for advice about which areas are safer and which places one should avoid.

Here are a few pieces of advice to keep you safe in Tomsk:

- You should not walk alone late at night;
- When traveling, you are advised to not carry large sums of money or valuables or to show them openly;
- You should not hitchhike or pick-up hitchhikers;
- You should only accept rides in taxis and public transport or with people you know;
- You should familiarize yourself with the campus security office and their services, and security posts around campus;
- Phone numbers of emergency services and police are 02 or 102;
- If you are lost or need help to bring you back from a suspicious place or where you have concerns, call the International Programs Office or the International Student Services Center +7(3822) 529558.

Something else you should know about is the Russian police (Полиция), which can help you if you are lost or if you have been assaulted. In case you happen to be taken into custody by the police, please show them this sentence:

«Я являюсь иностранным студентом ТГУ, я очень плохо говорю на русском языке, поэтому прошу, пожалуйста, позвоните по этим телефонам и сообщите администрации университета о моем положении. Университет поможет разрешить эту ситуацию. Спасибо. Вот телефон +7 (3822) 52-95-58»

It means – «I am an international student of TSU and barely speak Russian. That is why, please, could you call this phone numbers and inform the university administration about the situation in which I find myself. The University will help to resolve this situation. Thank you! Here is phone number +7(3822) 52-95-58».

Another quite common situation is getting lost in a new city. Show a policeman or person at the bus station these words:

«Я являюсь иностранным студентом ТГУ, я очень плохо говорю на русском языке, и я потерялся в городе. Не могли бы вы показать маршрут автобуса до ТГУ или лучше сопроводить меня до территории ТГУ, или помочь мне вызвать такси. Я буду вам очень благодарен за помощь».

It means – «I am an international student of TSU and barely speak Russian, and I am lost in the city. Could you show me the bus lines to TSU or take me to TSU campus, or call a taxi for me. I will be very thankful for your help».

Remember! The Police are your friends, and they serve to protect you from criminals. You can contact the Police in cases of emergency. Here is a common statement which can be shown to a policeman:

«Я явлюсь иностранным студентом ТГУ, если я показываю вам это значит у меня проблемы, пожалуйста, свяжитесь с Управлением международных связей ТГУ (Тел. +7(3822) 52-95-58) или с Отделом по социальной адаптации и сопровождению иностранных студентов ТГУ (Тел. +7(3822) 52-95-58). Они смогут предоставить переводчика и другую помощь, для того чтобы я смог объяснить Вам суть проблемы».

It means – «I am an international student of TSU; if I show you this statement it means that I have a problem, so, please call to TSU International Programs Office (Tel. +7(3822) 52-95-58) or International Student Services Center +7(3822) 52-95-58».



Air and railway trips



IMPORTANT

The staff of the Tomsk airport is English speaking, but we strongly recommend you to buy tickets with a university specialist who can speak Russian in order to avoid misunderstanding and possible losses, or you can contact the International Student Services Center. We also recommend you consult with the specialist in the TSU International Programs Office about your trip, in order to avoid legal problems related to your registration and Passport or other documents.

If you decide to go to the country or to another city, the Tomsk railroad station, intercity bus terminal, and the international airport are at your disposal. The recently-expanded Bogashevo Tomsk airport, situated 14 kilometers from the city and about 5 kilometers from Bogashevo railway station. You can reach the airport by small bus 119 or by commuter bus number 119. The route begins at Lenin Square, requiring a travel time of nearly an hour on the larger bus. Frequency of the bus is about 30-40 minutes, beginning in the early morning.

However, most, if not all people, use a taxi to reach the airport (fare is 350+ rubles). Bogashevo Airport recently became an international airport with scheduled flights to China and Kazakhstan, and charter flights to Thailand, Vietnam, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Egypt, and Turkey. A much wider choice is available in the nearby city of Novosibirsk, with its Tolmachevo Airport, some 4 hours by bus from Tomsk (special buses to the airport are available).

For extra information about air travel, visit www.tomskairport.ru. (Rus)

Site for the coach or train station: www.avtovokzal.tomsk.ru/. (Rus)

You can book train tickets and check for updates in railway service on these sites: www.rzd.ru (Rus) and www.tutu.ru/poezda/station_d.php?nnst=2028156. (Rus)

Sports and sports facilities



Tomsk State University has up-to-date sports facilities and complexes where you can participate in a wide variety of sports activities. Below is contact information about the University's sports facilities and programs.

- TSU Stadium (stadium, ski-depot). Address – Crossing angle of Arkadiy Ivanov st. and Ozernyi Pereulok St. (Пересечение ул. Аркадия Иванова и ул. Озерный переулок)
- TSU Sports Complex (swimming pool, aerobics, water aerobics, shaping, gym, yoga, pilates, strip-plastic dance, martial arts, and a self-defense club). Address: Lenin Ave. 36 (пр. Ленина 36), Building 12. Tel: +7 (3822) 52-96-92 (Rus). Hours: Online www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/sport/raspis2/raspisanie_zanyatiy/ (Rus)

Physical Education is a required course for TSU students, but the TSU sports facilities also provide additional services for modest fees. The information on programs is only available in Russian, so you will need to contact your Responsible Person or the International Students Service Center to assist you.

You also may become a member of TSU sports clubs or participate in sports activities such as those listed below:

- 1) Aerobics and shaping;
- 2) Bodybuilding and Fitness;
- 3) Martial arts;
- 4) Volleyball;
- 5) Basketball;
- 6) Skiing;
- 7) Football;
- 8) Swimming;
- 9) Chess.



And sports clubs



Scuba Diving Club «Skat»

www.skate.tsu.ru
Tel. +7 (3822) 52-98-41 (Rus)
e-mail: zhdanov@mail.tsu.ru (Rus)



Mountain Climbing Club

www.alpclub.tsu.ru
+7 903-954-08-21
President of the Club,
Tabakaev Dmitriy (Rus)



Mountain Tourism Club «Berendei»

www.berendei.tsu.ru/ (Rus)
President –
Makunin Aleksey
e-mail: mclexa@mail.ru (Rus)



Speleological Club

+ 7 (3822) 24-16-25
e-mail: kgg@sibgeoi.tomsk.su



Chess Club

[www.tsu.ru/content/
cultur/sport/sport/
chessclub.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/sport/sport/chessclub.php) (Rus)



Martial Arts (Karate)

www.agat.tsu.ru/ (Rus)





IMPORTANT

The cost to participate in most of these activities is about 150-200 rubles, depending on the time and day of the week. To take part in activities, you must have all your medical certificates that prove you have any no communicable diseases. You will also have to pass a short medical examination which costs between 30 and 50 rubles.

«A sound mind in a sound body». Sports activity will help you to keep fit, to keep your cardio-vascular system working, to help you cope with cultural shock or depression, and to participate in the sports and social life of the University.



Information about different sports centers outside the university campus is also included below, so that you can discover more sports activity options:

1. Sports Complex «Aquatic» – on Campus (aquatics, yoga, aerobics, pilates, gym, swimming lessons, Zumba – Lady's Dance Club, general or open swimming)

Address: Lenin Ave., 207

Website: www.akvatika.tomsk.ru (Rus)

Phone: +7 (3822) 40-47-94 (Rus)

Working hours: 07:00-23:00

2. Sport and Recreation Park, «Pobeda» (Победа) – stadium, tennis courts, outdoor skating rink, beach sports, bike rentals)

Address: Nakhimov St., 1

Page: www.sport.sibr.ru/zima/1/service.htm (Rus)

Hours: 09:00-22:00

3. Swimming Pool, «Trud» (Труд)

Address: Gertsen St., 10

Phone: +7 (3822) 53-11-20 (Rus)

Hours: 08:00-20:00

4. Dance School, «Drive» (hustle, ballroom dancing, Argentine tango, belly dancing, Strip-Plastic Dance Club, Tribal, classical choreography, Classical dances, modern jazz, Latin, Booty Shake, body ballet, zumba, jazz-funk, yoga , school twine).

Address: Yakovlev St., 71, 2-nd Floor
Phone: +7 (3822) 40-47-94

Website: www.tomsk-dance.ru (Rus)

Hours: 17:00-22:00

5. Horse-Riding Club, «Bagira»

Address: Bogashevskiy Tract, 22

Website/ Schedule: www.kskbagira.ucoz.ru (Rus)

Phone: +7 (3822) 50-33-57 (Rus)

6. Sports Complex, «Dinamo»

Address: Lenin Ave. 42/2

Phone: +7 (3822) 51-43-09 (Rus)

Website: www.dinamo70.ru (Rus)

Hours: 09:00-22:00

Cultural activities



IMPORTANT

Please remember that the official language of most clubs is Russian, and other language proficiency of their members is likely quite low. For that reason, your initial contact with a club may need to involve your responsible person or interpreter.

Trends in higher education reflect increased expectations of higher educational institutions beyond mere academic instruction. TSU understands that a university should provide not only educational courses, but also promote the cultural and moral development of students, as well as providing students opportunities to express themselves and to develop in their own ways. A major focus of the University in giving support to student activities reflects the liberal arts background of TSU. Encouragement of student clubs is one of the ways TSU supports broadening opportunities for student events and activities. Among the different clubs on campus are those listed below.



**University
Acapella Choir**

Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural Center, room 17, 18.
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ, кабинет № 17, 18
www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc1/choir.php (Rus)



**Jazz Orchestra
«TSU 62»**

Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural Center, room 15
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ, кабинет № 15
www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc1/djazorchestra.php (Rus)
office@cul.admin.tomsk.ru (Rus)



**Violin
Ensemble**

Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural Center, room 15
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ, кабинет № 15
www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc1/fiddlers.php (Rus)
Leonid@mail2000.ru (Rus)



**Chamber
Symphony
Orchestra**

**Lenin Ave., 36.
TSU Cultural Center, room 33**
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ,
кабинет № 33
[www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/
doc2/dramaetheatre.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc2/dramaetheatre.php) (Rus)
Tel: +7-906-947-72-79 (Rus)
simlebed9000@gmail.com (Rus)



**Theatre
«Estus»**

Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural Center
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ
[www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc2/
theatreestus.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc2/theatreestus.php) (Rus)
Tel: +7 (382-2) 52-95-68 (Rus)
estus@mail.ru (Rus)



**Ensemble
of National
Dance**

**Lenin Ave., 36.
TSU Cultural Center, Concert Hall**
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры
ТГУ, Танцевальный зал
[www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/
doc3/horeogrdance.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc3/horeogrdance.php) (Rus)
Tel. +7-923-407-33-77, President
Lunin Roman (Rus)



**Dance Theatre
«Zerkalo»
(Mirror)**

**Lenin Ave., 36.
TSU Cultural Center**
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры ТГУ
[www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/
doc3/zerkalo.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc3/zerkalo.php) (Rus)
Tel: +7-906-959-2353 (Rus)
President – Latysheva Ludmila (Rus)



**Dance Club
«Twist»**

**Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural Center,
Dancing room**
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры
ТГУ, Танцевальный зал
[www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/
doc3/tvist.php](http://www.tsu.ru/content/cultur/iikul/doc3/tvist.php) (Rus)
Tel: +7 (382-2) 22-16-54,
+ 7-903-955-16-54 (Rus)
President – Andrey Klimenko
tsk-twist@list.ru (Rus)



**Dance Theatre
«Mystery of Dance»**

**Lenin Ave., 36. TSU Cultural
Center, Dancing room**
пр. Ленина, 36, Центр культуры
ТГУ, Танцевальный зал
www.mysterya.green.tsu.ru/ (Rus)



**Dance club
«Zhemchuzhina
TGU» (pearl of TSU)**

www.dc.tsu.ru/ (Rus)

You can find the most current
TSU activities and events at:
www.cc.tsu.ru/ (Rus).

If your Russian language is not
sufficient, you may call the
International Student Services
Center for assistance.

What is Interesting Away from Campus?

Here are some of the places where you can have recreation and fun, even without good Russian or places where you can combine your desire for diversion, culture, beauty and perhaps Russian language improvement.



Nº	Title	Contacts	Working hours
1	Laser Arena (Laser Tag)	Address: Proletarskaya st., 38/1 (ул. Пролетарская, 38/1) Site: www.tomsk.lazertag-portal.ru (Rus) Tel: +7 (3822) 97-99-11 (Rus) Advance booking is required	10:00–22:00
2	Quest Room (Квеструм) Well-known quest to escape from a room.	Address: Katovskogo st., 19 (ул. Котовского, 19) Site: www.томск.квеструм.рф (Rus) Tel: + 7 (3822) 34-23-49 (Rus) Advance booking is required	Depend on number of participants.
3	Entertainment Complex Fakel. (Movie theatre, night club, bowling, pool room, café, sports bar)	Address: Krasnoarmeiskaya st., 120 (ул. Красноармейская, 120) Tel: +7 (3822)55-54-11 (Rus)	12:00–04:00
4	Timecafe (timeclub)	Address: Sovetskaya st., 83 (ул. Советская, 83) Tel. +7 (3822) 94-05-45 (Rus) Group in Vk: www.vk.com/timecafevmeste	Mon-Fri – 12:00–06:30 Sat–Sun – 12:00–23:30
5	Movie Theater «Kinomir» (All movies are in Russian only)	Address: Lenin Ave., 101 (пр. Ленина 101) Tell: +7 (3822) 90-06-00 www.kinomir.tom.ru/ (Rus)	10:00–20:00



6	Tomsk Regional Art Museum	Address: Pereulok Nakhanovicha st., 3 (Нахановича переулок, 3) Tell: +7 (3822) 51-41-06 Group in FB: www.facebook.com/TomskArtmuseum	10:00–18:00
7	Tomsk Regional Drama Theatre (All plays are in Russian only)	Address: Lenin Square st., 4 (Площадь Ленина, 4) Site: www.dramatomsk.ru/ (Rus) Tell: +7 (3822) 90-68-37 (booking office Rus)	10:00–19:00
8	Tomsk Regional State Philharmonic Hall (All musicals and plays are in Russian only)	Address: Lenin Square st., 12a (Площадь Ленина 12a) Site: www.bkz.tomsk.ru/ (Eng/Rus) Tell: +7 (3822) 51-59-56 (booking office Rus)	09:00–20:30

You may also apply to the interactive city map in English to get information about other places of interest – www.domen-student.tsu.ru/en.

This is a partial list of places you may enjoy. There are likely many other locations where you can have fun, too. Just ask a specialist in the International Student Services Center who can make suggestions of places you may enjoy. Let us know of places we should add to this list to share with other students.

Volunteering



Volunteering is a great way for you to get involved in your host community, build relationships with community members, and to network. Here is a list of such clubs and groups - all of them have experience in working with international students. If you are interested and want to get additional information about them, you should contact the International Student Services Center or your responsible person to help you with this request.

Nº	Clubs and Volunteer Groups	Contacts	Information
1	TSU on-line	Vkontakte www.vk.com/club37892997 (Rus) Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/tomskonline/ (Rus)	This activity is to help International Students adapt to their new environment, obtain important skills in communication in Russian, and better understand Russian culture through various cultural and educational activities.
2	TSU English Speaking Club	Vkontakte www.vk.com/tsu_dc (Rus)	It is a free discussion club for Russian and International Students as an opportunity to improve their English language skills and to find new friends.
3	Inter Yes (ИнтерYes)	Vkontakte www.vk.com/interes_tsu (Rus)	This organization recruits International Students as volunteers and participants in different social and cultural events and activities of the city and the university.
4	Volunteering Center UNIVOL	Vkontakte www.vk.com/univoltsu (Rus)	The Center recruits International Students to volunteer to work on various international projects, including organizing and holding cultural and social activities.
5	Volunteering Organization «Iniziativa» (Инициатива)	Vkontakte www.vk.com/iniciativa_tsu (Rus)	Organization specializes in helping orphans and children with disabilities through social and educational support.



Electronic devices

Nowadays we can barely imagine the educational process without our notebook, PC, tablet, computer, or electronic book, which can contain the whole collection of a university library. If you need to purchase a new notebook, PC, smartphone or other device in Tomsk, there are many places where you will find these items for sale. Below is a list of stores, together with a little supplemental information about the establishments. The International Student Services Center (office 15, first floor, University Dormitory or, call +7 (3822) 529558), or your responsible person will be happy to help you should you need to purchase any of these items.

A list of shops

Nº	Title	Address	Contacts	Working hours	What you can buy
1	DNS	Lenin Ave., 94 Пр. Ленина, 94 1905 pereulok, 9/1 Переулок 1905, 9/1	www.dns-shop.ru 8-800-555-13-31 – free information center (10:00-20:00) (Rus)	10:00-21:00	A wide range of electronic goods, PC, cellphones, smartphones, notebooks, electronic books, and a wide range of accompanying goods. Online ordering is available.

2	M-Video М-Видео	Lenin Ave., 121 Пр. Ленина, 121	www.mvideo.ru 8-800-200-77-75 – free information center (Rus)	10:00-21:00	A wide range of electronic goods, PC, cellphones, smartphones, notebooks, electronic books, and a wide range of accompanying goods. Online ordering is available.
3	Eldoraro Эльдорадо	Lenin Ave., 129 Пр. Ленина, 129	www.eldorado.ru 8-800-555-11-11 – free information center (Rus)	10:00-21:00	A wide range of electronic goods, PC, cellphones, smartphones, notebooks, electronic books, and wide range of accompanying goods. Online ordering is available.
4	Terminal.ru Терминал.ру	Kotovskogo st., 19 Ул. Котовского, 19	www.terminal.ru 8-800-555-54-50 – free information center (Rus)	10:00-20:00	A wide range of electronic goods, PC, cellphones, smartphones, notebooks, electronic books, and wide range of accompanying goods. Online ordering is available.
5	Techni.ru Техни.ру	Tverskaya st. 81 Ул. Тверская, 81	www.tehni.ru +7 (3822) 90-06-00 – free information center (Rus)	10:00-20:00	A wide range of electronic goods, PC, cellphones, smartphones, notebooks, electronic books, and a wide range of accompanying goods. Online ordering is not available.



IMPORTANT

Make sure you sign up for discount cards at grocery stores – it can save you quite a bit of money! Be sure that you are getting only the discount card or “скидка” as you likely do not want a credit card.

Make sure you know what you are signing up for.

Grocery shopping

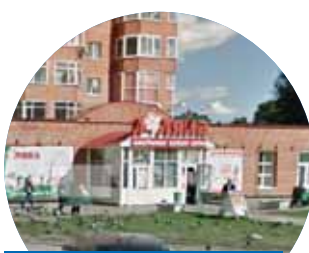
Supermarkets and smaller grocery stores sell a wide range of traditional grocery items, including fresh meats, produce, canned and frozen foods, and dry goods such as flour and sugar. Many also sell a wide assortment of prepared foods, such as hot entrees, salads, and deli sandwiches for takeout. Nonfood items that can be found at larger supermarkets include household goods, health and beauty care items, flowers, pet products, and greeting cards. As in other countries, different grocery stores or supermarkets can have different prices and varying qualities of food.

There are many grocery stores, supermarkets, and shops of every style and kind in Tomsk, and you will enjoy visiting these as your time and interests permit. Here is a list of supermarkets and grocery stores near the dormitory where you can buy a variety of products.



Supermarket
Abrikos
(Абрикос)

Moskovskiy Trakt, 17
(Московский тракт, 17)
08:00–23:00 (Rus)



Supermarket
Polyana
(Поляна)

Bazarniy pereulok, 12
(Базарный переулок, 12)
08:00–22:00 (Rus)



Grocery Shop
Buyanovskiy
(Буяновский)

Buyanovskiy pereulok, 12
(Буяновский переулок, 12)
07:00–01:00 (Rus)

You also may apply to the interactive city map where you can find detailed information about supermarkets and smaller grocery stores – www.domen-student.tsu.ru/en/. You may ask your responsible person or a Russian speaking friend to accompany you during your first shopping trip, and it should be easier for you after that. All of the listed shops and supermarkets are within a 5 to 10 minute walk from the dormitory.



D

Drugstore, medical services and medical insurance



IMPORTANT

In case of emergency, you can call 03 (Ambulance landline phone), 030 (Ambulance for MTS, Megaphone, Tele2 – Cell phones), 003 (Ambulance for Beeline MTS – Cell phones) – and you can call the responsible person any time of the day. This individual is perhaps in the best position to assist you.

Medical insurance is something each student should purchase to cover their time of study at TSU. International students are required to obtain this coverage, and failure to acquire medical insurance puts the student fully at risk for all health and financial consequences. This health insurance for illness or accidents while in Russia should cost between 3000 and 4000 rubles. The International Student Services Center, in the dormitory, will help you select and obtain this coverage. Just contact the center in this regard, right after your arrival.

Medical Services

In case of illness or other health problems, consult with a doctor in Russian (if you are able to). In case you need the help of a translator, the University stands ready to provide this service for you. You must contact the International Student Services Center for this assistance. All information in such consultations is strongly confidential, and neither the interpreter nor the responsible person will tell anybody about your personal business. During this consultation you should have at least your student card.

Services will be free if you purchased the medical insurance; otherwise, you would be responsible for all the costs of medical services. Information about the hospital is at: <http://mvb.tomsk.ru/>, address – Kievskaya st. 74 (ул. Киевская, 74) phone number + 7 (3822) 55-46-66, + 7 (3822) 55-41-30 (Rus), E-mail – mvbol@trecom.tomsk.ru (Rus). At the hospital you may

Drugstores («Аптеки»)

There are a number of drugstores around the city, and there is a list below of some of them, together with their addresses and telephone numbers. A fair number of the drugstores have English capability, 2. and a few have Smart Phones to help with translation.

How to carefully and specifically resolve these problems? There are several ways:

1. You may ask the help of a responsible person in the University Dormitory. A native speaker is in a better position to assist you with this purchase or at least write down the titles of

medicines you want. You may contact the International Student Services Center, where the specialists will be pleased to help you.

You may go to the University Hospital where, after a professional medical consultation, you will receive comprehensive information about your health problem and any medications you are to take. These drugs and medicines will be in Russian. You may then ask for language translation help from the International Student Services Center or your responsible person.



IMPORTANT

Many medicines are readily available for purchase in drugstores, but because of misunderstandings in language, differences in names of medicines in different countries, and different formularies or ingredients in medications, exercise caution to assure you fully understand what you are purchasing and how to use it. To avoid potentially serious health problems, have someone fluent in Russian and your language (English or other) confirm the medication and dosage; have someone knowledgeable about medicines for assisting you; check the Internet online.

You may also apply to the interactive city map where you can find information about drug-stores and hospitals – www.domen-student.tsu.ru/en.



Drugstore

Moskovskiy Trakt, 5
(Московский тракт, 5)

Mon–Fri., 09:00–20:00, Sat–Sun, 10:00–19:00
+7 (3822) 52-67-97 (Rus)



Zhiviza Живица

Bazarniy pereulok, 12
(Базарный переулок, 12)

09:00–22:00, +7 (3822) 51-78-01 (Rus)



Apteka.Ru Аптека.ру

Moskovskiy Trakt, 89
(Московский тракт, 89)

08:30–20:30 (Rus)



Tradition and mentality

When you come to Tomsk you will meet lots of new people, and some of them will become your friends. In order to make it easier for you to make new contacts, and friends, we would like to tell you a bit about the culture and character of the Russian people.

Serfdom did not exist in Siberia: those who came there were looking for liberty. The chief motivation to negotiate the hardships of the long road, which sometimes led the path breakers along the knife's edge between life and death, was striving for freedom, which was not known in other parts of Russia. The settlers brought a dream of having their own homestead, building a house and settling their families, sowing the grain for bread, and bringing up children. To people with such goals, conflicts, internal divisions, and the division of wealth were not necessary. The severe Siberian climate forced out people who were not patient, calm, strong, and friendly. Severe climate makes Russians more cooperative; they found that without mutual help and support they could not survive. We can see this same attitude today; Russian are unlikely to refuse your request for help.

So, in spite of the fact that Siberians live in severe conditions, in general they are frank and kind. Tomsk is a city of students, and it is easier to find an English speaker here than in other cities. It is not at all uncommon to meet people who speak English and many others who are trying to learn it. Also, there are people who speak German, French, and Italian fluently, and you meet people who speak other languages from



around the world. In recent years, travel abroad has become much more accessible, and you are likely to meet Tomsk residents who have visited countries in Europe or Southeast Asia, and for some, Great Britain or the United States.

If you are going to live and study in Russia (of which Siberia is, of course, a part), it is helpful to have at least a minimal notion about some distinctive cultural features. For example, Russians usually avoid speaking about their jobs, and, as in many other places in the world, it is not appropriate to speak about religious, political and national topics with strangers. Also, Russians are more straight-forward in expressing their thoughts and in speaking. They are likely to say, "I do not like it, it is bad," rather than, "I'm not sure that is too good an idea." When they say things this way, they do not intend to be rude. It is just a directness in communication, a feature of their mentality.

As another example, Russians may often criticize themselves and their country, but if you witness or are involved in such a conversation,

it is better not to express your position. It would be even better to try disproving the critic, so as not to offend the critic by seeming to agree with something negative. Such contradictions are natural in the Russian character.

Also, some visitors from other countries have a first impression of people in the street as lacking in smiles, indicative of restraint. But this is not truly the case about Russians. Kindness is a distinctive feature of the Russian character, along with hospitality, sympathy, and mercifulness. Yet friendliness is hidden until you get to know each other better, as Russians usually have two personas, one for public and another for private contacts. However, people on the street can be kind and helpful in a way that is warm and friendly in many situations. People do tend to speak and act in public in a way that appears more restrained than in some other countries and cultures.

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