

## How to Prepare for a Service Trip...

**So, you've chosen an organization, a country and a project you'd like to work on, you've filled out the application form, and you've been accepted for the trip. Now what? Well, basically you just wait in desperate anticipation for a trip that you know is probably going to change your life forever. But while you're doing that, here are a few things you could do to properly prepare.**

*(If you have chosen to participate in a service trip that is in the U.S. some of these steps may not apply to you.)*

### **THIS IS NOT SCHOOL! START EARLY! DO NOT PROCRASTINATE!**

1. After you have filled out your application form and have been accepted, you will most likely receive a letter from the organization outlining the next steps of the process. Read this carefully, follow all directions, mark down all deadlines in your phone or calendar, and ask as many questions as possible.
2. Find your passport and keep it safe. You will need it!
3. Fill out any required paperwork early.
4. Get your vaccinations out of the way and retrieve any necessary information from your primary care physician.
5. Book your flight as early as possible. Compare the airfares of various airlines (and airports, if you live in close proximity to more than one.) If the organization has partnered with a travel agent, go through them if they can get you a cheaper flight.
6. Read any materials that the organization provides (e.g., volunteer handbook). This will explain a lot of what you need to know.
7. Do as much research as possible about the country, culture, and type of work you will be doing. Read books, watch movies/documentaries, browse the web, find friends or family that have either visited or are from the country to which you will be traveling, listen to music that is native to that particular region of the world. Immerse yourself in the culture as much as possible before you go.
8. Begin working on the "Young Adult Service Journal," which can be found at [www.uua.org/youngadultservice](http://www.uua.org/youngadultservice).
9. Begin packing as early as possible. Please don't wait until the night before your flight.
10. Catch your flight! Missing it would be terribly expensive for everyone involved.