

Report# 2
Preparation Before Arrival
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The luggage allowance from Taiwan to any European cities is only 20-23kg per person (I assume everyone flies with coach class); which means it is very important about how shall you prepare before your arrival. For your better understanding, I am listing a few details including housing and visa issues for your reference.

Visa Issues - The visa issues are one of the simple issues, you just have to make sure you follow up OIP office's structure how to provide documents for your visa application. I was a bit lucky because I actually applied my French student visa in Brussels, Belgium; the visa cost is only EURO 99. Why? Because I was studying in Holland for spring 2012 and switching to ESCP Europe Paris for fall 2012. Due to this special situation, I did not have to fly back to Taiwan for applying visa. My classmate in TW whom applied for French student visa in Taipei said he paid around EURO 300 for student visa.

Housing issues – I am extremely lucky about this. I found my cheap place within 3 days after I started researching. There is a small Ad section on school website, the former tenant of my room posted the room information there and I contacted her. After 2 Skype interviews, I found my place for only EURO 350 per month. (Sorry, my landlady decided to sell the house after I move out. So, please do not ask me her contact information). **If you decided to study in Paris, one biggest issue you shall remind yourself and your parents is housing very expensive. Most of my classmates pay at least EURO 650 -900 per month. So, please evaluate this before you make the school choice!** How to find a place? Sign up for school housing, looking for small Ad on school website or go to [留法台](#)

[灣同學會-解悶來法國](#)

<http://roc.taiwan.free.fr/bbs/index.php?w=0&h=0>

Packing - I personally love fashion which means I cannot stand to wear the same clothes all the time. Thus, I actually shipped 2 big boxes of

clothes weighed 25kg and 30kg from Taiwan. If your exchange is only 1 semester, you may reduce the numbers down to 1 box. My case is I am studying in Europe for 1 year, and I am trying not to spend too much money on shopping while I am here. How to ship your boxes? Depend on your school choice, luckily that **Taiwan post office does provide OCEAN SHIPMENT to France; the cost is very reasonable, NT\$ 900 for 30 kg ocean shipment.** But please keep in mind that "ocean shipment" takes 2 months to arrive; you shall always start packing your stuff at least 3 months before your departure. If you haven't found the housing that time, you can always send your package to the international office at your exchange school. However, I would like to give you a warning that **SHIPPING FROM EUROPE BACK TO TAIWAN IS VERY EXPENSIVE!** For example, it costs EUR 100 for 30kg stuff AIR-SHIP in France. (No ocean shipment available from France to Taiwan).

If your study is in USA, PLEASE DO NOT SHIP ANYTHING. Because everything is cheaper in USA and choices are various, all you need is 2 suitcases.

What shall you pack into your ocean shipment boxes?

1. Instant Noodles – In Paris, you can find Taiwanese instant noodles at Chinese supermarket easily but a bit more expensive, around EURO 0.50-0.75 each. Also, the flavors are not as many as in Taiwan. If you think you will miss instant noodles, ship some.

2. Gloves - If you are doing exchange study during FALL semester, please make sure you ship gloves which would make your hands warm. Of course, they sell here but the price is not cheap. Coming for fall semester, please make sure you at least pack 1 waterproof gloves. It gets really cold in the winter.

3. Shoes - Especially running shoes and boots (for girls), shoes are extremely expensive and ugly in Europe. You can find cheap shoes like EUR 25-45 but the quality is not good. A pair of leather boots will still cost you at least EUR 150 even its 50% off already; thus, **I strongly recommend you to ship your shoes if you are coming to Europe.** Personal experience, I shipped 2 pairs of boots, 2 black high heels for meeting propose, 2 pairs of running shoes (because I love running), 1 pairs of

sandals, 2 pairs of flip flops. For flip flops, you can find cheap ones here, but I personally like one particular brand, so I shipped them over.

4. Fashion - If you are arriving in January for spring semester, you will find many good sales for WINTER CLOTHES. If you love fashion like I do, be careful on the types of clothes you pack. Otherwise, you will have to do a lot of shopping after you arrive in Paris. [The popular styles in Asia like high heels, short skirts and dresses are not really something French girls do in autumn and winter time because it gets really cold.](#)

5. Medicine - Even you are requested to buy student insurance in Europe, going to doctor is not convenience. Make sure you pack some medicine that you usually use when you get a cold.

6. Winter Coat - Make sure you pack a very nice and warm winter coat if you are arriving in January for spring study. The weather can be crazy sometimes.

7. Contact lenses and cleaner - It is very expensive in Europe. Try to ship 2-3 bottles of contact cleaner if you wear contact lenses a lot. Also, please make sure you bring a few pairs of contact lenses.

8. Glasses - If you wear glasses and will study in Europe for more than 1 semester, it is better to take 2 pairs of glasses to come because it is very expensive to get lenses and glasses. My friend paid for EUR 350 for a new pair of glass in Italy.

9. Values - When you have your boxes ready at post office in Taiwan, you have to fill out the value of your stuff. [Please try to write down NO MORE THAN EUR 50, otherwise, you might get tax charged when your boxes arrive in Paris. Also, sending your boxes to your exchange school is a good solution for avoiding tax charge.](#)