

Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Postdocs'
Guide to Moving to Tucson & Working at the University of Arizona
Updated July 2015

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BEFORE YOU MOVE HERE

Entering the Country as a Foreign Citizen: Work Permit

- One rule: Do things as soon as possible. You want to avoid stressful delays that always show up at the last minute!
- Employees of UofA may need a work permit. You may also get instructions from your funds provider (UofA or other sources). You will have to provide a certification of income (i.e. your funding offer, or a letter from your faculty mentor), a photo for visas (they ask for special formats, make sure that your picture fits in them), and several forms for visas available from here: http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1267.html
- Once your application is completed, you have to make an appointment at the US embassy in your country to finalize the visa.
- Once you have arrived in Tucson, go directly to the UofA immigration office to validate your visa and check your health insurance papers (see next point). This is important to do within 30 days after the official start of your visa (otherwise you might lose it).

Office of International Faculty and Scholars (OIFS)
935 N Tyndall Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85721
Phone: 520-626-6289
Fax: 520-621-2757

Passport Application Acceptance Facility
Phone: 520-626-7161
Fax: 520-621-2757

<https://global.arizona.edu/international-faculty>

The office is on the campus, so a bike ride or walk will be fine!

Health Insurance

- The UofA requires that you are covered by health insurance. Employees of UofA typically get employee health insurance. Non-students with funding from elsewhere (e.g. some postdoctoral fellows) can either buy into student health insurance, or find their own insurance elsewhere. For foreign visitors, check within your country of origin to see if solutions also exist there. Note that you should be insured before arriving in the US. Note also that health expenses are very high (e.g. \$2000 for a tooth repair), so good insurance is important. There may be a 90-day waiting period between starting as a UofA employee and your health insurance starting (your insurance policy may give you some reduced coverage in this interim period).

Finding a Place to Live

- When to Look

Currently, Tucson seems to have a lot of housing that is available immediately, and not very much that is available in advance (unless you ask the manager of an apartment building personally). Sometimes a later rental date can be negotiated with a property that is available immediately. It has worked out well for some of us to move here without a place secured, and then to secure one within about a week.

- Where to Search

- Most available housing is advertised on Craigslist (<http://tucson.craigslist.org/>). There is also a new Facebook-based search at www.facebook.com/rentalsearch. You will find apartment buildings, rooms in houses, entire houses, and small guest houses typically called 'casitas'. The University is in an area called 'Central Tucson', with many individual neighborhoods within that area (See below).
- There is also rental housing listed at the University (<http://offcampus.arizona.edu/>).
- Houses are also rented through rental agencies that list properties on the web (e.g. TRT management <http://www.trtmanagement.com/>).
- If you are in town and see an apartment building that you like, you can also inquire with the manager on site.
- Another good plan is to contact future colleagues, Ph.D. students, or EEB post-docs. People can be very helpful, and if you are a foreign visitor people from your country may be especially helpful. See the information below about departmental listservs/ mailing lists. The Drift sometimes contains information about rentals and is also a place where you can post a request for information.

- Neighborhoods

- West of the UofA is an area called 'West University' which has many students and shops and is very lively. It may be more noisy too.
- East of the UofA is an area called 'Sam Hughes' which is one of the nicest and most expensive areas near campus. This is a quiet neighborhood in general.
- North of the UofA are 'North University' and 'Jefferson Park', which are nice neighborhoods with many students, but a bit quieter (not many shops).
- North-East of the UofA is 'Blenman-Elm' which is another nice area with fewer students and more families.
- South of the University is not the best area, and it is important to see the location in person if you are looking at a place there.

- Rent and Utilities

Rooms in a house cost about \$500/month with utilities included. Small houses can be rented for about \$1000/month, and larger properties are more like \$1500/month, without utilities. Apartments range widely depending on number of bedrooms, location, amenities and utilities included. Common amenities include pool and hot tub, and some complexes have gyms as well. Utilities can include internet (e.g. Cox, available here: <http://ww2.cox.com/residential/arizona/home.cox>), cable TV, water, electricity, gas, and garbage. These can come to <\$100 (for a small apartment/casita) to several hundred (for a large house) per month, so it is often a good deal when they are included (and it saves you the hassle and cost of getting utilities turned on).

- Deposits

Most rental places require a deposit to secure the rental, often in cash. Deposits range from ½ to a full month's rent.

- Finding Roommates

Contacting other postdocs and/or students in EEB is a great way to find out about potential roommates. (Note that you may want to avoid rooming with someone else in the lab... that can result in seeing WAY too much of your colleague!). Folks in the community will also advertise for roommates on Craigslist, and then you can interview one another to find a good fit.

AFTER YOU ARRIVE

University Life

First thing: Getting an Employee Number

- Before you can get most things done at the UofA, you need Designated Campus Colleague (DCC) status—this status will get you a student or employee number. Employees and visitors should check in with the EEB Human Resources Administrator, currently Lili Schwartz in Bio Sci West 310. Lili will give you the information needed to request DCC status through the Department Head Administrator, currently Lauren Harrison in Bio Sci West 306. The needed paperwork for foreign folks will be your visa.
- Once you have your UA number, you can sign up for an email address here: <http://email.arizona.edu/>.
- Note: PERT post-docs will initiate the DCC process through Teresa Kudrna (tkudrna@email.arizona.edu) .

Social Security Number (SSN)

- This is also very important for starting at the University and for getting other accounts in your personal life. Go to:

3808 N 1st Ave, Tucson, AZ 85719

(800) 772-1213

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/ic001.do#officeResults>

The office is quite far from the University (~ 15 minutes bike ride).

Anticipate that the SSN office can be crowded; you might spend a complete morning to do this. Take with you:

- J-1 visa (or other)
- Invitation letter from the University of Arizona, that justifies your presence in AZ
- A local address

You might also want to call them and make sure that this list is sufficient before showing up. Your SSN will be issued within two weeks.

Getting Your Cat Card

The Cat Card is your UofA identification card and you will need it to get keys. It can be obtained at the Cat Card Office located on the basement floor of the main Student Union building, and you will get the card right away. Be prepared to have your picture taken! Note that you'll have to have accepted your DCC status (and have your employee ID number) before getting it. They may also charge you a small fee (about \$20).

Getting Keys and Office Space

Once you have your Cat Card, you can get keys. Pick up a purple key form (from Bio Sci West 310 or 306), and have your faculty mentor help you to fill out and sign off on the form. Please take all purple key forms to Lauren Harrison (BSW 306, Lashley@email.arizona.edu). Lauren will assign office space for you and will give you the correct authorization form to take to the key desk. After you have the correct authorization forms, you can visit the Key Desk at:

U of A Key Desk
1533 E. Helen St.
Hours: Mon-Fri 6:30 am to 3 pm

The key desk is directly west of BIO5. It is best to ride a bike there, use the Cat Tran campus shuttle, or drive.

Your New Contact Information

- Your mailing address at work is:

<Your Name Here>
The University of Arizona
Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
P.O. Box 210088
Tucson, AZ 85721

Work-related deliveries can be made to:

<Your Name Here>
The University of Arizona
Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology
Biological Sciences West, Room 310
1041 E. Lowell St.
Tucson, AZ 85721

Mailboxes are in Bio Sci West, Room 305, as is the photocopier/scanner. Lauren Harrison (BSW 306, Lashley@email.arizona.edu) can assign you a mailbox, and the EEB IT Manager Barry McCabe (mccabeb@email.arizona.edu) can assign you a code for the photocopier/scanner. You can pick up big packages from room 310 (the front office).

- The fax number at the department is 520-621-9190. You can find out from your faculty mentor, or from the department website, what your lab and/or office phone numbers are.

- Department website: in addition to being on your faculty mentor's/lab's website, you can be listed on the EEB website (<http://eeb.arizona.edu/eeb-postdocs>). Contact Lauren Harrison (Lashley@email.arizona.edu) to have your contact information added to the EEB website.

UA NetID+

NetID+ requires faculty, staff, and students to use a second method of authentication (called two-factor authentication) before accessing the campus Virtual Private Network (VPN). This prevents anyone but you from accessing applications and services secured with NetID+, even if they know your password. You will see a "NetID+ Method" field when accessing the VPN with the Cisco AnyConnect VPN Client. The purpose of this new field is to enter the second method of authentication. You would have set up this method when you enrolled in NetID+. To learn more about establishing a VPN connection with NetID+ go to:

<http://uits.arizona.edu/services/vpn#establish>

To enroll in NetID+, follow these simple steps:

1. Login to enroll in NetID+ from <https://webauth.arizona.edu/netid-plus/>.
2. Log in with your NetID and password and complete the necessary steps to enroll.
Note: By enrolling in NetID+, you will also be prompted for a second authentication when using Outlook Web Application (OWA).
 - For more information about how to use NetID+, visit <http://uits.arizona.edu/services/netidplus>
 - Step by step enrollment instructions are available at <https://webauth.arizona.edu/netid-plus/pages/documentation>.
 - Video Tutorials are available at: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLXpm_6NMk1t8kQPFAY7EM4zeY3E-TFMMc
 - To automatically install the latest version of the Cisco AnyConnect VPN Client go to <https://vpn.arizona.edu>, enter your NetID and password. More detailed information on VPN and installation steps are available at <http://uits.arizona.edu/services/vpn>.

Departmental Staff Are Your Friends

It is important to realize that the departmental staff that help us with everything we need at the University, are very busy and work very hard. Treat them with respect, kindness, and gratitude. Remember that they are there to help us, but we are not their bosses. If you are concerned that you need something from them right away, the best solution is to call or visit them in person, and ask nicely. Also remember to say 'thank you'!

The business office maintains a very helpful website <http://eeb.arizona.edu/business-office> which explains business related forms and details many details, such as travel considerations.

Calendars for EEB conference rooms, BSW 302 and 115, and for departmental projector and laptop use, are located at the bottom of the EEB website. You can request to use conference rooms, projectors, or the departmental laptop for meetings by contacting Lauren Harrison (Lashley@email.arizona.edu).

Listservs

- EEB Postdoc Listserv (used for social events etc.):
 1. From the email address that you want to subscribe, send a message to list@list.arizona.edu
 2. The subject line should say: subscribe eebpostdocs Firstname Lastname
 3. First-name Last-name should be your own name, and leave the message body blank

- EEB Listserv:

It's important to be on this listserv to find out about events in the department, including the two weekly seminar series (see below). You can add or remove your email from the EEB listserv by visiting list.arizona.edu and logging in with your NetID and Password.

- The Drift:

The weekly EEB newsletter that advertises events in EEB and other departments (public lectures, etc.) as well as rooms for rent, cars for sale etc. You can contact Natalie Quintero (nataliequintero@email.arizona.edu) if you would like to sign up for or advertise in the Drift.

- Center for Insect Science:

CIS comprises members of EEB, Entomology and other departments, and is the administrative home for the PERT postdocs. Teresa Kudrna (tkudrna@email.arizona.edu) can sign you up for the CIS listserv.

Seminars

- Monday seminars are at 3pm, and are given by external speakers.
- Tuesday seminars are at 12.30pm (but often called "noon seminar"!), and are usually EEB grad students and postdocs (two half-hour slots per seminar). It's a good idea to sign up for one of these so that people in the department learn who you are; speakers often have to sign up a long time in advance in order to get a slot. If you'd like to sign up for a Tuesday seminar slot, contact the faculty member who is organizing Tuesday seminar (Lauren Harrison, Lashley@email.arizona.edu, can let you know which faculty member to contact).
- You may want to look out for seminars in other departments (e.g. Entomology, some of which are posted on the EEB listserv and listed in The Drift).
- Another departmental event is the "Hot Papers" journal club, currently on Friday afternoons, where labs take turns choosing a recent high-profile paper to discuss. This is posted on the EEB listserv and listed in The Drift.

Personal Life

Getting around town

Living in Tucson requires a bicycle or vehicle to get around town. Tucson is a very bike-friendly city and the weather is conducive to bicycling.

- **Getting a Bike**

There is a large market for bikes in Tucson, so it is important to look around before you buy to ensure you get a good deal. Do not buy a bicycle from Wal-Mart or a large-chain retailer. They are very low quality. It is a good idea to look up the brands and models of bicycles that Target and Wal-Mart carry as people will often try to sell second-hand bicycles for more than they are worth. We recommend spending \$250-\$300 on a higher-quality bicycle from a bicycle shop. These bikes are made of higher-quality components and will retain their value if you would like to sell your bike when you leave Tucson.

Here is a list of bicycle shops close to campus:

- Ordinary Bike Shop

311 E 7th St, Tucson, AZ 85705

Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 7:00 pm; Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday (closed)

520-622-6488

This is one of the best bike shops in Tucson. The new bicycles that they carry are more expensive, and **sometimes they have used bikes**. The used bikes are of high-quality and reasonably priced. The bike shop service rates are good.

- Fair Wheel Bikes

1110 E 6th St, Tucson, AZ 85719

Monday – Friday 8:00 am to 7:00 pm; Saturday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

520-884-9018

This is also one of the best bike shops. They only carry new bicycles. They are convenient – just across the street from Bio Sciences West.

- RC Bicycles

428 N. Fremont Ave, Tucson, AZ 85719

Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 6:00 pm; Saturday 10:00 am to 5:00 pm; Sunday 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

520-624-2285

RC Bicycles sells both new and used bikes. If you see a used bike that you like, take the time to google it to get an idea of its value.

- BICAS
44 W 6th St, Tucson, AZ 85705
Tuesday –Sunday 11:00 am to 6:00 pm
520-628-7950

BICAS is a community bicycling organization. This is a good place to go if you need a specific part for your bicycle, such as racks, pedals, wheels, etc., and want to save money. BICAS has a full bike shop and tons of used parts available for next-to-nothing. BICAS also offers bike maintenance courses and volunteer shop workers will help you fix your bike. BICAS also rents rebuilt bikes and occasionally has bikes for sale.

There are many more bicycle shops in Tucson... enjoy exploring them!

- Bicycle Theft

Bicycle theft is very common in Tucson. You can help prevent having your bike stolen by locking the front wheel, rear wheel, and frame with a high-quality U-Lock and keeping it inside your house at night. Don't leave anything on your bike that can be taken (e.g. lights). It is also a good idea to register your bicycle with the University. It provides some security against theft and Campus Security will open your lock if you ever lose your key. The bike registration tent at the University will also do minor repairs on your bicycle and give you a bell and other safety equipment when you register.

- Campus Bike Station
North Side of Science Library
Monday – Friday 9:00 am to 2:30 pm
<https://parking.arizona.edu/bikestation/>

- Arizona Bike Laws

You can be fined \$200 for riding your bike at night without a headlight and red tail reflector. There are other laws regarding bicycling. Read up on them at <http://bikeped.pima.gov/Publications.html#STR>
The nights are dark (and street lighting minimal) enough that a helmet and good lights will quickly appear to you as the best options!

- Buses

The bus company is called Sun Tran, and has a reasonably extensive network of regular buses. Information is here: <http://www.suntran.com/>

There is also a tram (“Tucson Modern Streetcar”) that runs through campus, from the medical school to Fourth Avenue and downtown: <http://sunlinkstreetcar.com/>

As well as the UofA Cat Tran, which is a shuttle that travels around campus: <https://parking.arizona.edu/alternative/cattran.php>

The university provides discounted passes for the bus and tram system to its students and employees. See: <https://parking.arizona.edu/alternative/>

- Getting an AZ Driver’s License

- For non-US visitors: Arizona requires that you get an AZ driving license within one month after your arrival. Note that, if you get a car, your car insurance provider will constantly ask you for an AZ license.
- For US citizens with a current license from another state: Simply bring your license and any additional government identification to the Motor Vehicle Department <http://www.azdot.gov/mvd/contact.asp>
- To take the driving exam for a new license, you will have to go to the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD, <http://www.azdot.gov/mvd/contact.asp>) with a car. Make sure that all the lights and other safety accessories are working! Foreign visitors with a current (foreign) license, you can drive there with their own car and original driving license. Just make sure to drive a car that IS insured. Also make sure to bring your passport and visa for identification.
- The exam is first a 30 question computer quiz, based on the road code available here (<http://www.azdot.gov/mvd/custsvcguide.asp>), followed by a road test. The road test starts with parallel parking (this is why you want to be confident with the car) followed by a ten minute drive around the corner.
- Anticipate that the MVD is generally crowded and this process may take several hours!

- Getting and Insuring a Car

You can, of course, buy a new car or a car from a used car business. The cheapest way to buy a car is to get one directly from another person (e.g. on Craigslist or from a student or postdoc leaving the department). Some notes about buying directly from another person:

- You might want to have an official price range for the car that you are looking at, the Kelley Blue Book is what you need: <http://www.kbb.com/>
- Make sure to fill out the ownership papers with the previous car owner. They come as a form printed on the back of the ownership certificate (title) of the car (the current owner MUST HAVE this paper in his possession).
- Get this form notarized (i.e. go to a bank or any legally competent office that will sign and validate legally the form).

- Avoid driving with an uninsured car. If you know ahead of time that you will be buying the car, set up insurance before you pick it up (see below), or have the current owner drop you at an insurance office.

Whether you buy a car from a person or a store, you must do the following:

- Get car insurance. Ask friends or colleagues about their insurance. Geico, Allstate, and Farmers are examples. All you need to start insurance is the car's Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) (often in the driver's doorway). This number is also indicated on the owner certificate.
- Go to a local Motor Vehicle Division office (i.e. MVD, see here: <http://www.azdot.gov/mvd/OfficeHourssql/ofclink.asp>) to register the car as yours and get a license plate. Note that you cannot drive the car to the MVD without a plate. You can get printable temporary plates from the MVD website.
- If you have an insurance + plates, you are set up!

If you come with your own car:

- Go to the MVD with your car to register it and get inspected.
- Call your insurance agent to update your address and plate.
- Phone:
 - Most people have cell phones for regular calls at home and work. Coverage in Tucson is the same as in any urban area, with all the major providers available.
 - Cheap prepaid mobile phones (\$30 per month for 1000 minutes), as sold in Wal-mart, are also an option. This will depend on your needs.
 - For international calls, Skype is excellent. The credits are cheap and you can get a phone number registered in your country of origin for a moderate cost (see here <http://www.skype.com/intl/fr/features/allfeatures/online-number/>). This solution is really convenient if your family wants to call you without paying international fees or using the internet. In addition, you can call them at reasonable costs. Of course, another option is to make grandma use Skype!

Furniture, Food, and Other Supplies

- Craigslist has many things of course, but the student market is active and deals are not necessarily extremely good there.
- Many used and new furniture stores have good deals and offer delivery, e.g. Furniture Plus (<http://www.furnitureplustucson.com>). Note that some stores will deliver your furniture for a reasonable price (in the range of \$50 for heavy things). This is definitely helpful at the beginning of your stay, when you may only have a bike!
- Grocery stores: Safeway (general), Trader Joe's (organics and general), Whole Foods (upscale), Sprout's (organics), Fry's (cheap), Costco (bulk), Food Conspiracy (organic food co-op), Food City (cheap, Mexican)
 - Organic vegetables delivered at your house: <https://www.mattsorganics.com/>
 - Organic vegetable pick-up program: <http://www.tucsoncsa.org/>

- Outdoors and sport goods:

Summit Hut: <http://www.summithut.com/>

5045 E. Speedway (on the east side of town), 7745 N. Oracle (north, in Oro Valley)

REI: <http://www.rei.com/stores/tucson.html>

160 W. Wetmore Road (in the Tucson Mall)

- Mattresses: Best to get a new one (there are bed bugs around). Shop around. There are 'local' mattress factories in Tucson, but these seem to be shady operations with very little product or contact information. It is better to buy a brand-name bed as you will have more of an idea of the quality of the materials and you will have a warranty from the manufacturer. When buying a mattress, make sure to check that the white 'new materials only' tag is intact. This government tag certifies that only new materials were used in the bed and that the bed is new. Some shady furniture retailers re-sell returned beds and by-law must remove this white tag. If the tag is yellow, the bed has been 're-built' or contains used materials. There are a few mattress shops on Grant Road, including Discount Mattress Barn.

Bank account

- Foreign visitors will probably find that managing your money with an US bank is easier, at least for daily expenses. You can find banks on campus (e.g. AZ State Credit Union is a great local bank) and get an account during the first days of your stay.