



Boston - City Business Guide

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Overview

Having played a major role in the history of the United States, Boston has inspired such epithets as "Cradle of Modern America", "Hub of the Solar System" and "Athens of America". But Boston is also a vividly modern city, a center of learning, as well as of commerce and trade. A mid-sized cosmopolitan metropolis, Boston exhibits reverence for its past while looking toward the future with vigor and ambition, remembering to enjoy itself in the process. In many respects the epitome of a charming New England "town", in autumn Boston is stunning as multicolored leaves make a lovely backdrop for white church steeples in the suburbs and the buzz of thousands of students returning to their studies in what is the largest American college town.

Business Etiquette

* Formal dress is the norm for corporate executives and those working in the legal, consulting, accounting and banking industries. Dress is more casual in other sectors, particularly in the technology domain and particularly during hot summer weather.

* Appointments should be made and kept punctually.

* It is customary to open and end a meeting with a handshake.

* Casual conversation, lasting a few minutes, often starts a meeting.

* Business cards can be presented at the start or end of a meeting.

* Privacy should be respected in business contexts.

* An open and direct business style is the norm.

* Deals should be followed up and confirmed in writing as quickly as possible.

* Friendships in the business community are key to getting things done.

* Ask where (and when) smoking is permitted.

* If invited to someone's house, it is customary to bring flowers or another hostess gift.

Chamber of Commerce

Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce

Tel.: +1 617 227-4500

French American Chamber of Commerce

Tel.: +1 617 247-1366

Embassies and Consulates

British Consulate General

15 School Street; Tel.: +1 617 245 4500

French Consulate

31 St. James Avenue, Suite 750; Tel.: +1 617 832 4400

German Consulate

3 Copley Place; Tel.: +1 617 369 4900

Irish Consulate

535 Boylston Street; Tel.: +1 617 267 9330

Japanese Consulate

600 Atlantic Avenue; Tel.: +1 617 973-9772

Business Centers

Business centers provide a range of services that include secretarial, translation/interpretation, and office services, including computer rentals, audio/visual equipment rentals, cellular phone rentals, copy and printing services, and temporary office space and staff.

Boston Harbor Hotel

70 Rowes Wharf; Tel.: +1 617 439-7000

Hq Global Workplaces

28 State Street # 1100; Tel.: +1 617 573 9030

Hq Global Workplaces

101 Federal Street, Suite 1900 ; Tél : +1 617 342 7000

Alliance Business Centers

8 Faneuil Hall Market; Tel.: +1 617-973-6400

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Bayside expo center

200 Mount Vernon Street; Tel.: +1 617 474 6000

John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center

900 Boylston Street; Tel.: +1 617 954-2000

World Trade Center

164 Northern Avenue; Toll-Free Tel.: 877-SEAPORT; Tel.: +1 617 385 5000

Translation Offices

Boston Language Institute

Tel.: +1 617 262-3500

Boston translation company

Tel.: +1 617 778-0594

New England Translations

Tel.: +1 617 426-4868

TransPerfect Translations

Tel.: +1 617 854 6566

Courier/Messenger Services

Best Of Boston Courier SVC

Tel.: +1 617 562 1787

Beacon Hill Couriers

Tel.: +1 617 742-1358

United Couriers Group

Tel.: 781938-8911

US Express & Logistics

Tel.: 617 269-2626

Expressit Logistics

Tel.: +1 800 335 4837

RS Express

Tel.: +1 617 350-0247

Security Courier CORP

Tel.: +1 781 289 5699

DHL

Tel.: +1 800 225-5345

FedEx

Tel.: 800 463-3339

UPS

Tel.: +1 800 742-5877

Internet Connection Place

All upper-range and most medium-priced hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many hotels offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafes are few and far between:

Cafe Armani

Tel.: +1 617 437-0909

Visas & Customs

Passports valid for at least six months after arrival are required for all. In general, travelers visiting the U.S. are required visas. However, under the Visa Waiver Program, citizens of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom are allowed to stay for 90 days without a visa. Citizens of Canada and Mexico do not need a visa but must carry proof of citizenship and identity.

Beginning October 26, 2004, all travelers, including children of any age, who want to travel visa-free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program must have a Machine-readable passport.

Duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 2 kilograms of tobacco, 1 liter of alcohol, and gifts worth up to \$100. Meat products, seeds, plants, fruits, and hazardous goods are prohibited. To travel without a visa within the Visa Waiver Program, all passports issued after October 26, 2005 must be biometric. Machine-readable passports issued before this date are also valid for visa-exempt travel.

Phone Information

The Boston area code is 617.

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency police, fire, and ambulance

911

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

For local calls, dial the seven-digit telephone number. For long-distance calls within the U.S., dial 1, then the three-digit area code, then the seven-digit number. For long-distance calls outside the U.S., first dial 011 and the country code. Five special prefixes, "800," "888," "877," "866", and "900," are not area codes but indicators of special services. "800," "888," and "877" are toll-free calls. The "900" numbers charge you for the call and are often expensive. For collect calls or operator-assisted calls, dial "0" instead of "1". For local directory assistance, dial 411. For long-distance information, dial 1, and then the appropriate area code followed by 555-1212. The most common public phone is the coin-operated type. Telephone-card phones are becoming increasingly common.

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

There are several cellular service providers in the U.S., including: Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, Cingular, AT&T Wireless, and Sprint PCS. Mobile phone numbers follow the regular telephone number convention, with the seven-digit telephone number followed by the area code.

If you choose to bring your cellular phone into the U.S., be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

Money

Foreign currency must be exchanged to U.S. dollars. Money can be exchanged at banks and various foreign-exchange services. Most restaurants, shops, and hotels will take travelers' checks and major credit cards. Travelers can also withdraw cash from ATMs.

The basic unit of U.S. currency is the dollar, which equals 100 cents. Coins are the copper penny (1 cent) and four silver coins: the nickel (5 cents), the dime (10 cents), the quarter (25 cents), and the half-dollar (50 cents). Silver \$1 coins and "golden" dollar coins also exist. Paper bills come in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100.

Tippling

* **Restaurants** 15 to 20 percent of bill, none at fast-food restaurants

* **Bars** About US\$1 per drink or 10% to 15% of drink prices

* **Airport Skycap/Porter** US\$1 per piece of luggage

* **Taxis** 10 percent of fare

* **Hotel Bell Desk** US\$1 per piece of luggage or per taxi summoned

* **Hotel Housekeeping** US\$1 per person per day

* **Hotel Room Service** 15 percent of bill

* **Parking Attendant/Valet** 15 percent of parking rate

* **Haircare/Personal Services** 20 percent of bill

Time Difference

Boston is in the Eastern Time Zone (Greenwich Mean Time minus five hours). The city switches to Daylight Savings Time from the first Sunday in April through the last Saturday in October.



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VAT & Taxes

Sales tax in Boston is 5%. There is no VAT.

Voltage

110V AC, 60Hz. Plugs are of the flat, two-pin type.

Local Transportation

Boston is known as "America's Walking City," and indeed walking is by far the easiest way to get around. A car is only necessary for locations outside the city. Much of the central part of Boston was built before cars and so lends itself to exploration on foot, and public transport in and around Boston is good and not expensive. The Massachusetts Bay Transport Authority (MBTA), 10 Park Plaza operates four subway lines (blue, green, red, orange), which spread out from a central point at Park Street Station, at the northeast corner of Boston Common. MBTA also operates public buses, which are cheaper and have many more stops than the subway but can be more difficult to utilize. A single fare costs US\$1 on the subway and US\$0.75 on buses. Taxis are plentiful and can be hailed on the street or reserved by telephone, but they are not cheap. All rides within the city are metered at US\$1.50 for the first quarter-mile, then at US\$1 for each subsequent half-mile. Pick-ups from hotels will incur surcharges. An interesting way to get to know the inner city area is to use the water taxis, which run throughout the year both as commuter taxis and ordinary water buses.

Health Info

No specific immunizations are needed to enter the United States. For more information, contact the Center for Disease Control; Tel.: +1 800 311-3435

Climate

Attracting visitors throughout the year, Boston experiences four distinct seasons. Winter is accompanied by strong winds, occasional snow and gray skies, while the warm gusts and bright sunny spring conditions bring Boston's flower gardens to life. Long sunny days and clear nights for stargazing are the norm in summer. In autumn richly hued leaves are emphasized against clear blue skies. Boston's most pleasant period is between early April and early November.

Public Holidays

- * **New Year's Day** January 1
- * **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** Third Monday in January
- * **Presidents' Day** Third Monday in February
- * **Easter** Sunday in mid-March or early April
- * **Memorial Day** Last Monday in May
- * **Independence Day** July 4
- * **Labor Day** First Monday in September
- * **Columbus Day** Second Monday in October
- * **Veterans' Day** November 11
- * **Thanksgiving** Fourth Thursday in November
- * **Christmas** December 25

Where to Eat

Due to its coastal location, Boston is one of the greatest places for seafood. **Legal Seafoods** has gained international fame for its offerings. Established in 1826, the **Union Oyster House** might be America's oldest restaurant. At **Radius**, the chef Michael Schlow offers a modern French menu with the best products of the east coast. For a sophisticated Mediterranean meal, **No 9 Park** owned by the chef Barbara Lynch, features classic French cuisine in a 19th century mansion. For sublime New American dishes, refined atmosphere and discreet service, try **Aujourd'hui**. As well as a breathtaking view of Boston's skyline, **The Bay Tower Room** provides creative culinary fare. For a cosy evening, Boston's four-star bistro, **Hamerstley's Bistro**, is known for its innovative contemporary cuisine and its open kitchen.

Local Gift Ideas

Boston offers chic, cosmopolitan shopping. Its many shops retail a variety of designer clothes, shoes and accessories. Filene's and Filene's Basement are world-renowned for bargain hunting. No sales tax is added to clothes purchases under US\$175; purchases over US\$175 are taxed at 5%. For gifts, Boston has a wealth of local original boutiques, bookstores, galleries and handicraft shops with interesting selections. Wordsworth in Cambridge is one example.

Leisure Time

Boston's history can be explored during a walk along the well-known Freedom Trail. Harvard University hosts four internationally noted museums The Fogg Art Museum and The Bush-Reisinger Museum for European art, The Arthur Sackler Museum of Islamic and Asian arts and The Museum of Natural History. Other cultural sites to visit in Boston include the Museum of Fine Arts, John F. Kennedy Library and Museum, the Museum of Science, John Hancock Observatory and the New England Aquarium. Famous for its classical music scene, Boston is home to the Boston Symphony Orchestra, which gives scheduled performances in Symphony Hall, as well as the Boston Philharmonic and the Boston Chamber Music Society, which give concerts in the Sanders Theatre. Greenery and serenity can be found at the Charles River Esplanade or at Boston Common, the U.S.'s oldest public park. Other recreation sites include Boston Harbor Islands State Park and Castle Island Park. If your visit coincides with baseball season (April to September), you may want to catch a Boston Red Sox game.

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