The following list is of some of the most common stereotypes of Americans held by people in other countries. Go through it quickly and underline those attributes that you personally think are positive and put an X beside those attributes that you personally think are negative.

Do NOT mark according to what people you know think or about what you think you are supposed to believe. Instead, put an X or underline according to how you perceive these attributes.

U.S. Americans are

☐ Optimistic
☐ Outgoing, Friendly
☐ Informal
☐ Loud, Rude, Boastful, Immature
☐ Naive
☐ Hard Working
☐ Aggressive
☐ Judgmental, Moralistic
☐ Superficial
☐ Extravagant, Wasteful
☐ Confident they have all the answers
☐ Politically naive and/or Uninformed
☐ Ignorant of other countries
☐ Lacking in Class Consciousness
☐ Disrespectful of Authority
☐ Racially Prejudiced
☐ Wealthy
☐ Generous
☐ Impatient, always in a hurry

It's also widely believed that the
☐ Women are promiscuous

While most Americans clearly perceive some of these stereotypes as positive and others as negative, they are not viewed the same everywhere in the world.

For example, most Americans think that being informal is positive because it puts everyone on the same level and makes people feel comfortable and "at home". This is definitely not the point of view of all cultures. Try to learn how the culture of the country you are visiting perceives these traits and values. Then, think about how your own attachment to some of these traits might make it either difficult or easy for you to adjust to the host culture.

Do you think these stereotypes are accurate? If not, then which ones do you think are inaccurate?

It's important to realize that some of the people you encounter will attribute these traits and values to you before knowing you, because of the stereotypes they formed before meeting you. How will you react? We suggest that you try to remain calm rather than becoming angry or defensive and that you try, if possible, to break the negative stereotypes people have of Americans.

What ideas (stereotypes) do you have about the people from the host country? What ideas do other Americans have about them? Where do these ideas come from?

Most likely, you have stereotypes about non-Americans in general and about those who live in the country where you will study. Though not necessarily wrong, stereotypes do prevent us from moving to the deeper level of understanding that is beyond them. Hence, educate yourself about your host country and its culture before you leave. Also, learn about current events and try to talk to people who are from the host country or who have extensive experience there. Once you’re in the country, you will hopefully be able to go beyond the stereotypes and come to understand why things are different.