New Online Visa Form DS-160

Improving the Non-Immigrant Visa Application Process

AGENDA

- How the Form Works
- Tips & Checklists
- Common Visa Misconceptions

U.S. Embassy Bridgetown

Background: U.S. Visa Application

- For many years, our NIV application forms (DS-156, DS-157, DS-158) were filled out on **paper** with a pen or a typewriter

- In 2006, we launched **EVAF** – the **E**lectronic **V**isa **A**pplication **F**orm
  - forms filled out online and printed, but data not submitted to State Dept electronically

- In 2010, we shift to electronic submission of data:
  - DS-160 Online Visa Application Form at the Consular Electronic Application Center (CEAC)

Key Changes

old E V A F	new C E A C
Electronic **V**isa **A**pplication **F**orm	**C**onsular **E**lectronic **A**pplication **C**enter
Hard copy (paper)	**Soft copy (electronic)**
Fill out 3 forms: **DS-156, DS-157, DS-158**	**Fill out 1 form:** *** DS-160 ***
Print entire application: **3 to 8 pages**	**Print confirmation page only:** **1 page**
Sign on paper	**Electronic signature**
Static Form (same for all, unchanging)	**Dynamic Form** (form changes based on key factors)

U. S. Department of State Streamlines the Visa Process

Online Non-Immigrant Visa (NIV) Form: DS-160

- Speed the NIV application process
- Eventually increase number of NIV applications that U.S. Consular staff can evaluate daily
- Transform the process into a more "green", environmentally-friendly operation

Note: You are not applying for a visa online. You are submitting your application form online -- you still must be interviewed by a U.S. Consular Officer.

DS-160 Launch

2008 : DS-160 piloted at US Embassies / Consulates in Mexico & Canada

2010/FEB/19 : All visa applicants served by Bridgetown will be able to use DS-160

2010/MAR/22 : DS-160 obligatory at U.S. Embassy Bridgetown

2010/APR/30 : DS-160 obligatory worldwide

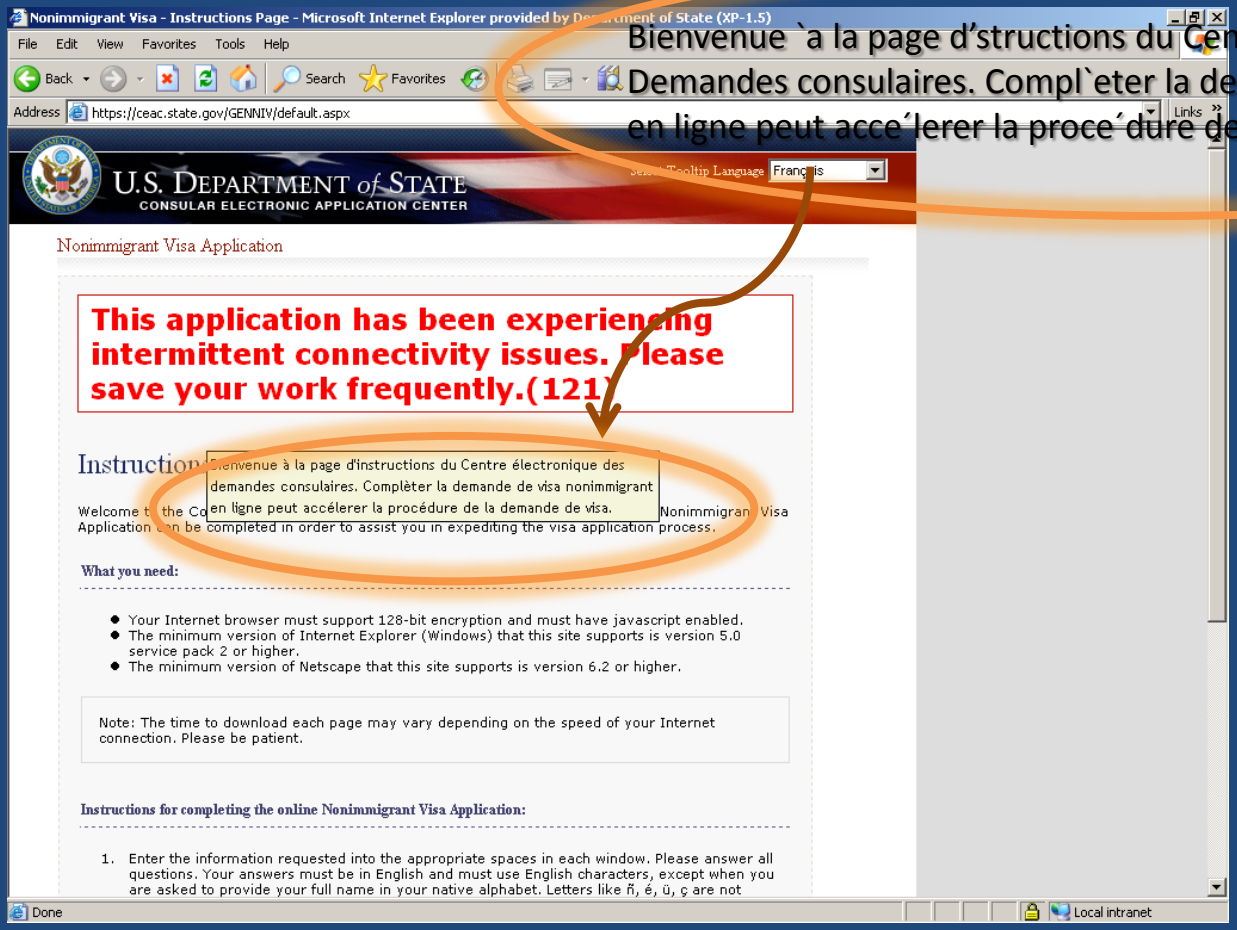
Overview of Process
https://ceac.state.gov

1) Enter information into the online application form (75 min)
2) Verify that the application data is correct
3) Upload a digital photo of the applicant
4) Approve with eSignature by entering your passport number & the code displayed on the screen
5) Print the confirmation page (color or black-and-white)
6) Make an appointment
7) Bring the following to interview
    1) Confirmation page
    2) Current passport and all old passports
    3) Supporting documents (invitation letter, itinerary or travel plan, C.V./resume, etc)
    4) Payment for application fee
    5) 1 extra photo (in case the uploaded photo is unacceptable)

https://ceac.state.gov/genniv

How will it work? (1 of 5)

Main instructions are in English. For another language, select "French" to show pop-up "Tooltip" help in French when the user "hovers" mouse pointer over the text.

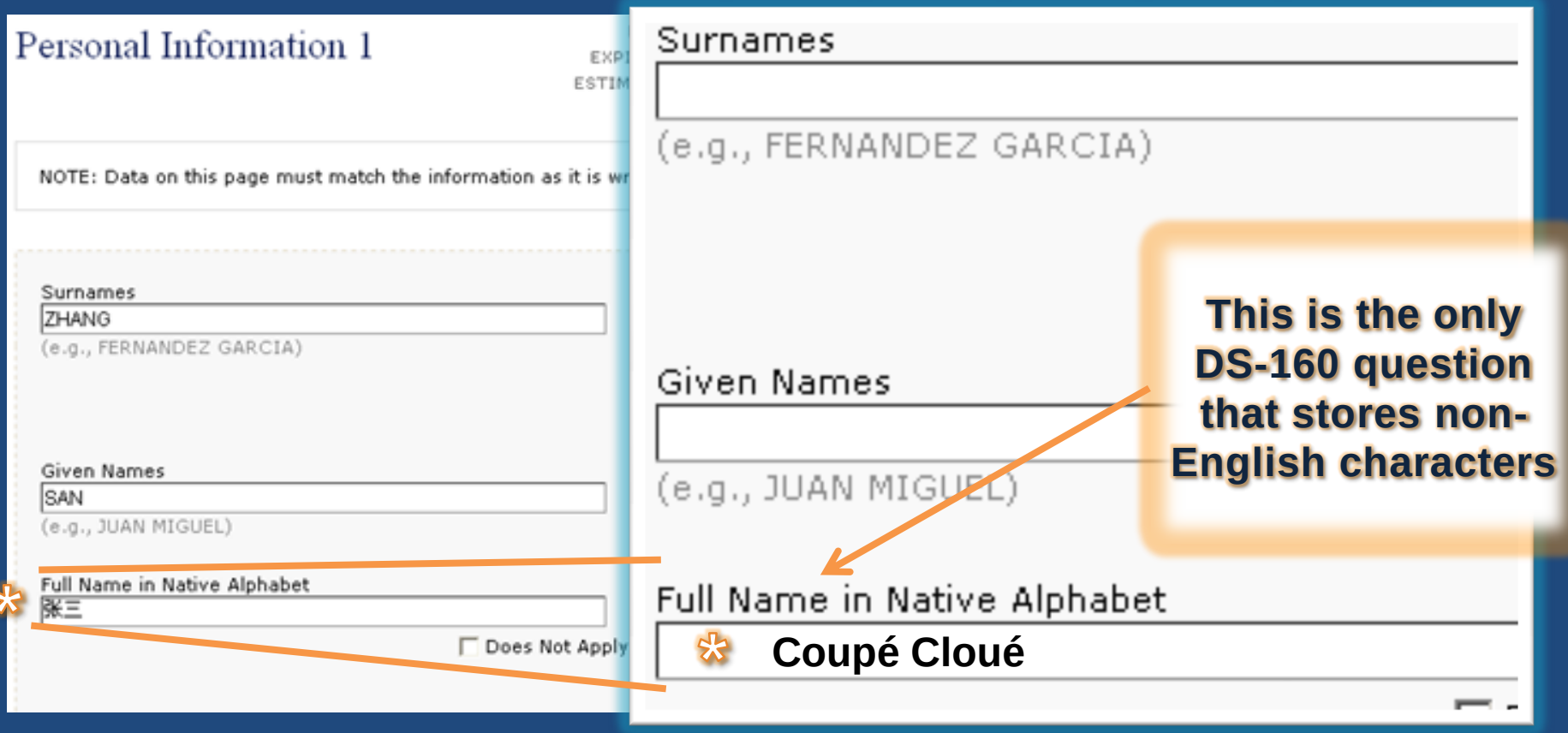


Bienvenue `a la page d'structions du Centre e´lectronique des Demandes consulaires. Compl`eter la demande de visa nonimmigrant en ligne peut acce´lerer la proce´dure de la demande de visa.

https://ceac.state.gov

How will it work? (2 of 5)

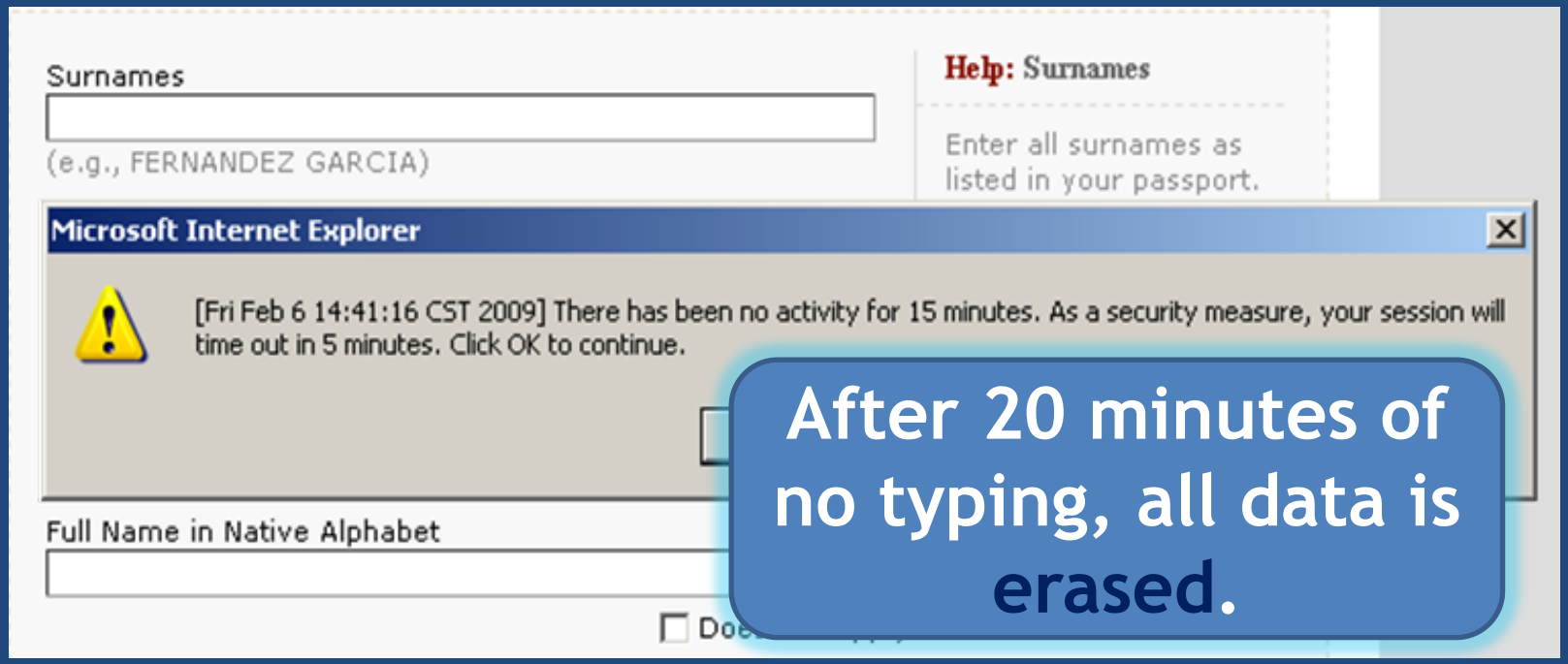
Answer all* questions in English



https://ceac.state.gov

How will it work? (3 of 5)

- Save regularly to your computer hard drive
- Warning message after 15 minutes of no typing in the form
- If the form remains inactive for 20 minutes, **the form resets and all data is lost/erased**. If you haven't saved the form, you will need to re-start all over again from the beginning
- Saving the file on hard-drive is crucial in case corrections are needed

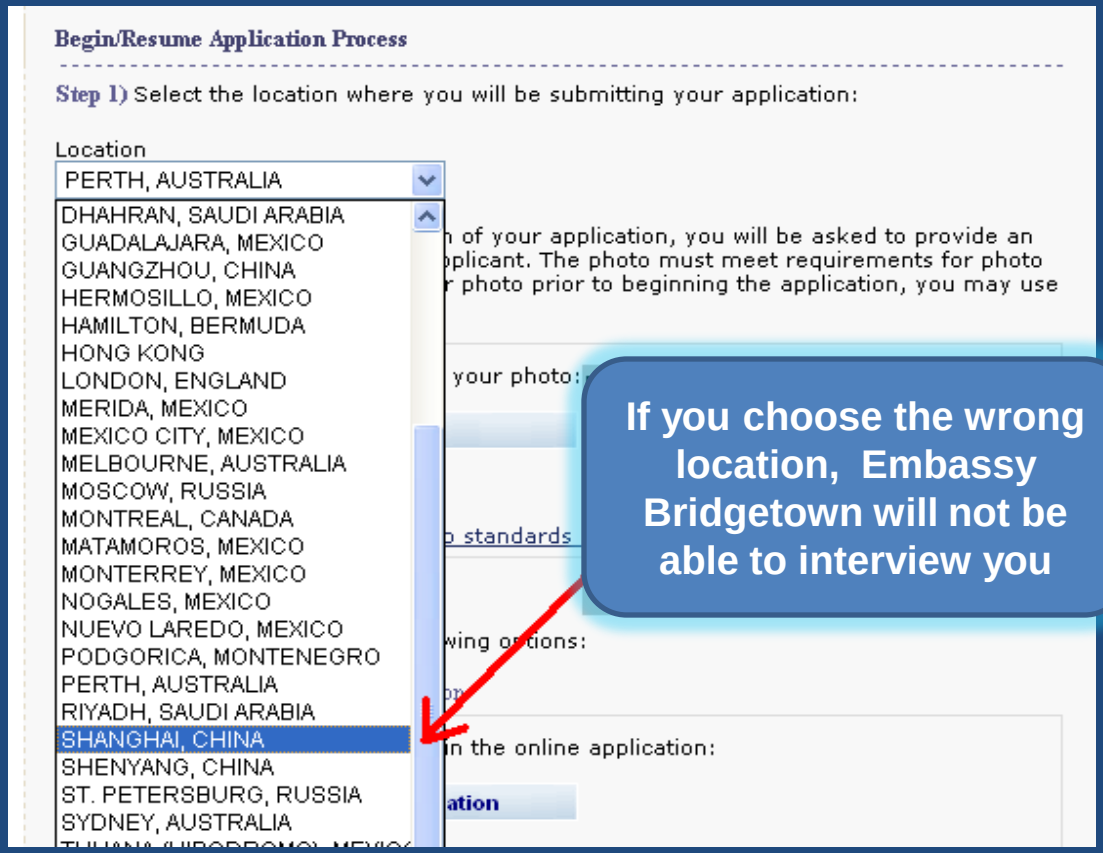


https://ceac.state.gov

How will it work? (4 of 5)

Select the Embassy (or Consulate) where the appointment will be scheduled:

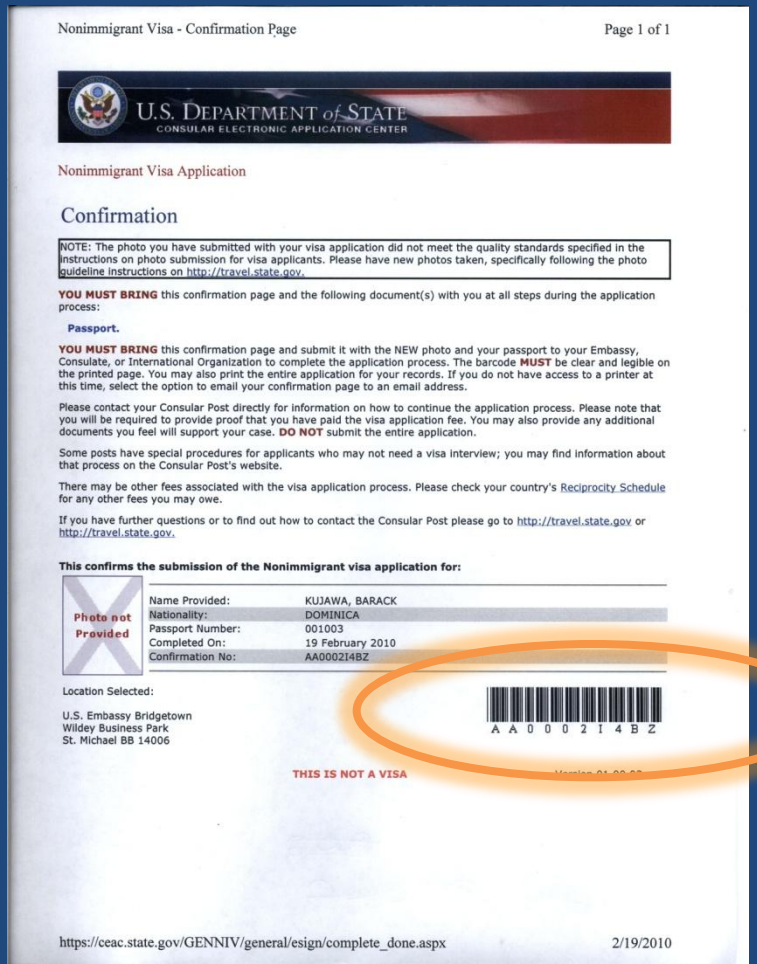
Bridgetown



https://ceac.state.gov

How will it work? (5 of 5)

Print the confirmation page (color or black/white) and bring to the Consular Section for visa interview.



Nonimmigrant Visa - Confirmation Page Page 1 of 1

U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE
CONSULAR ELECTRONIC APPLICATION CENTER

Nonimmigrant Visa Application

Confirmation

NOTE: The photo you have submitted with your visa application did not meet the quality standards specified in the instructions on photo submission for visa applicants. Please have new photos taken, specifically following the photo guideline instructions on http://travel.state.gov.

YOU MUST BRING this confirmation page and the following document(s) with you at all steps during the application process:

Passport.

YOU MUST BRING this confirmation page and submit it with the NEW photo and your passport to your Embassy, Consulate, or International Organization to complete the application process. The barcode **MUST** be clear and legible on the printed page. You may also print the entire application for your records. If you do not have access to a printer at this time, select the option to email your confirmation page to an email address.

Please contact your Consular Post directly for information on how to continue the application process. Please note that you will be required to provide proof that you have paid the visa application fee. You may also provide any additional documents you feel will support your case. **DO NOT** submit the entire application.

Some posts have special procedures for applicants who may not need a visa interview; you may find information about that process on the Consular Post's website.

There may be other fees associated with the visa application process. Please check your country's Reciprocity Schedule for any other fees you may owe.

If you have further questions or to find out how to contact the Consular Post please go to http://travel.state.gov or http://travel.state.gov.

This confirms the submission of the Nonimmigrant visa application for:

Photo not Provided

Name Provided:	KUJAWA, BARACK
Nationality:	DOMINICA
Passport Number:	001003
Completed On:	19 February 2010
Confirmation No:	AA0002I4BZ

Location Selected:

U.S. Embassy Bridgetown
Wildey Business Park
St. Michael BB 14006

AA0002I4BZ

THIS IS NOT A VISA

https://ceac.state.gov/GENNIV/general/esign/complete_done.aspx 2/19/2010

Bar code must be printed clearly

Need bar code to make appointment

Tip 1: Accuracy matters

Important to complete the form correctly .

Verify:

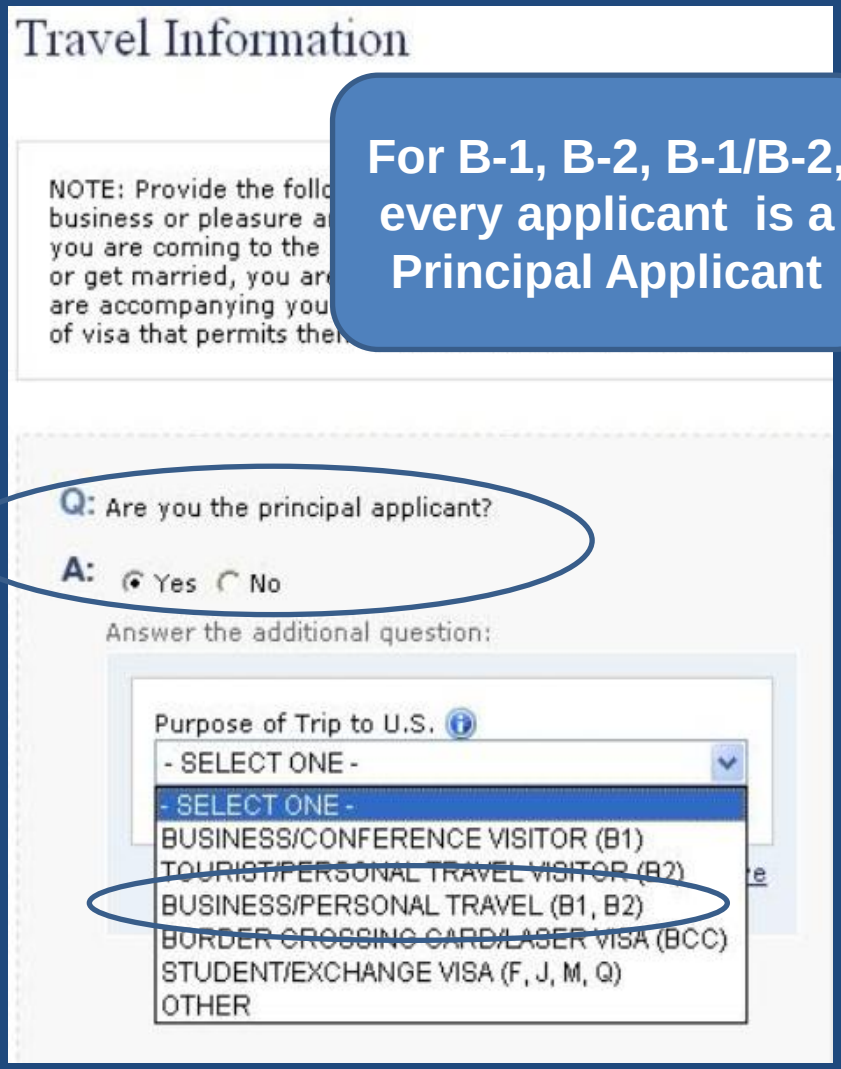
Surname, Given Names, Date of Birth (DOB), gender/sex, passport number.

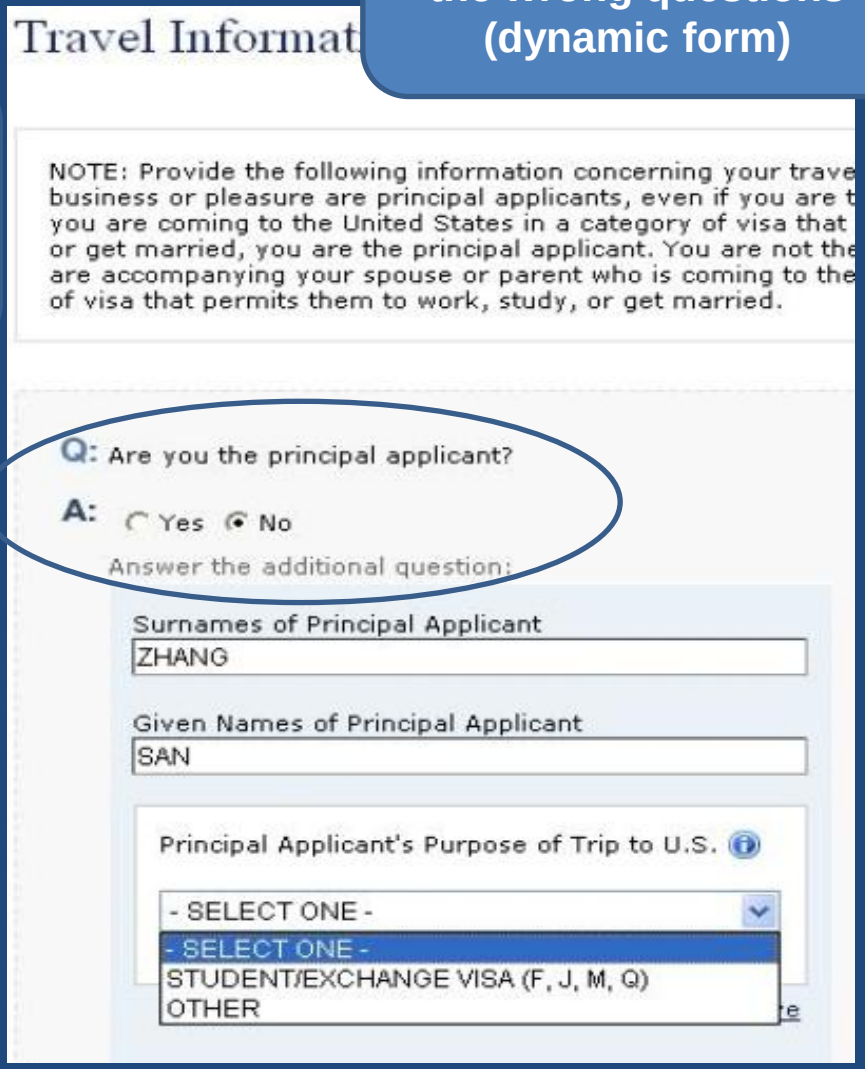
Questions like this are difficult to answer correctly if not answered by applicant himself/herself

Tip 2: Focus on Visa Type

If you chose wrong visa type, form may ask the wrong questions (dynamic form)

For B-1, B-2, B-1/B-2, every applicant is a Principal Applicant

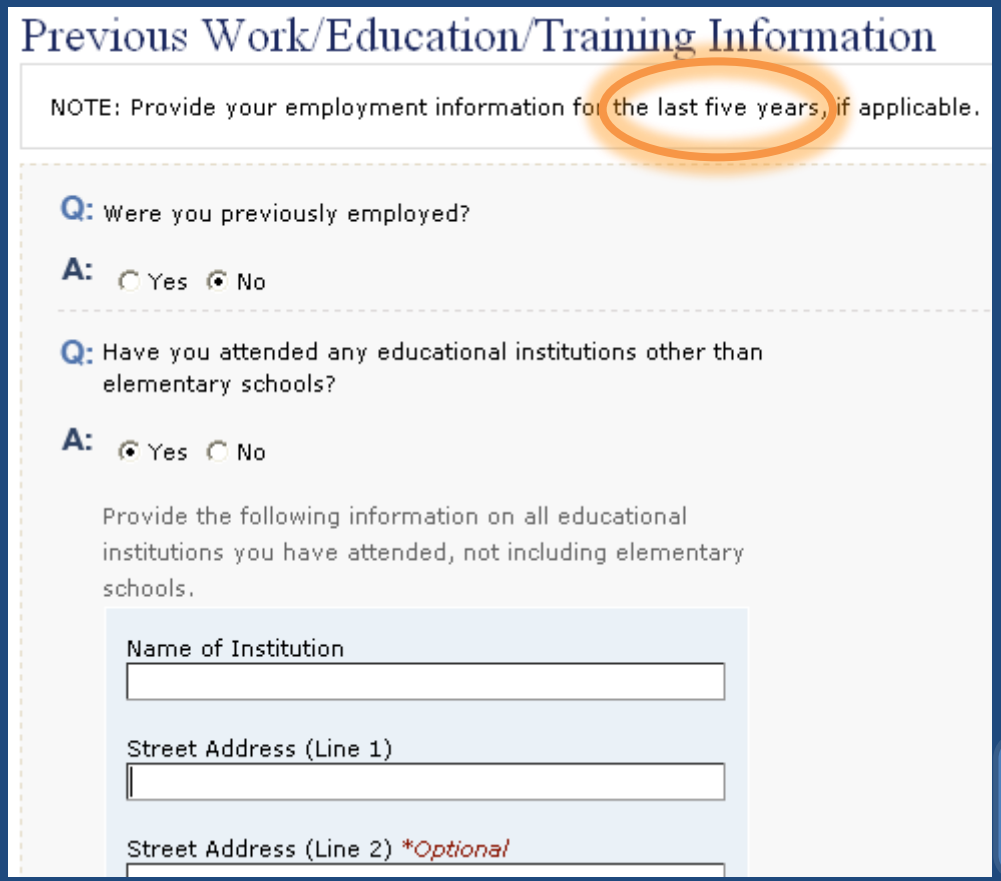




Tip 3: Be Thorough and Specific

Applicants will not be interviewed if education and employment data is incomplete.

Only use "do not know" or "does not apply" if true.



Applicant must state **monthly salary**

In addition to explaining your work duties, you may use the **duties textbox** to explain salary calculations

If retired, explain previous employment and current salary/earnings

Tip 4: List Previous Travel

Be sure to list **all** other countries you visited in the period specified (list every country -- not just the USA)

Visa Number is **red** (8 digits)

Providing information about previous U.S. visas (and previous refusals) can speed up the application process.

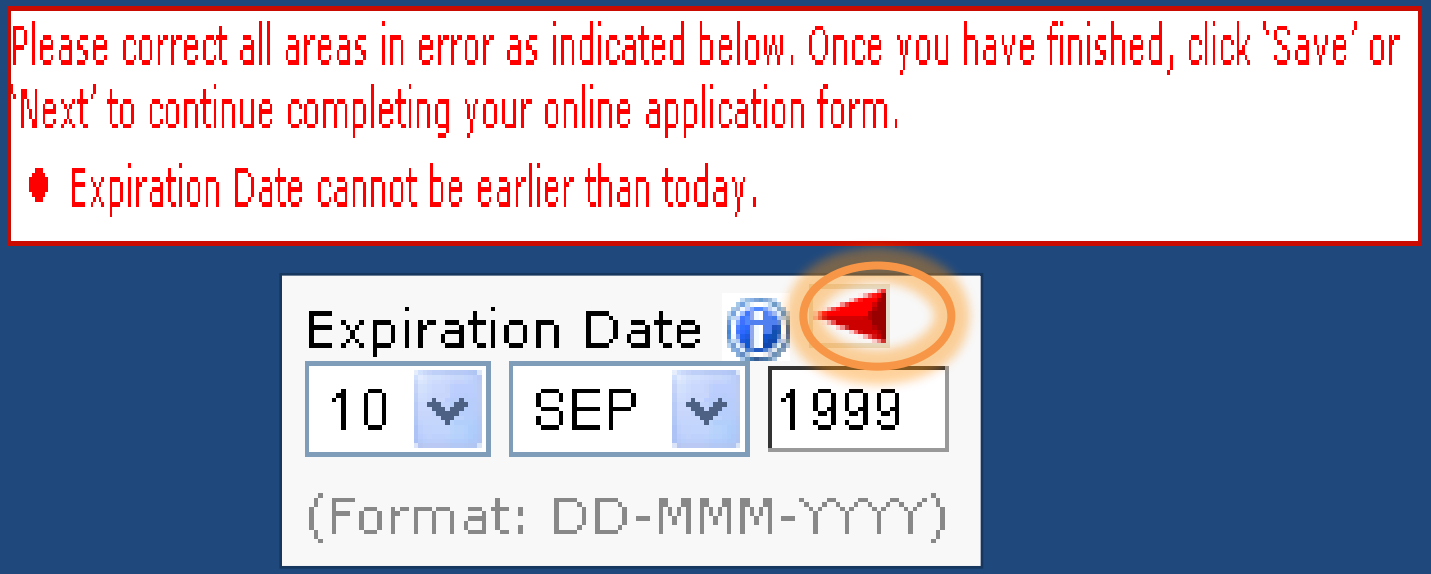
Hiding a previous refusal can result in being refused again.

Tip 5: Be Honest and Accurate

- Be honest when answering questions; otherwise you may be refused a visa and be permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa.

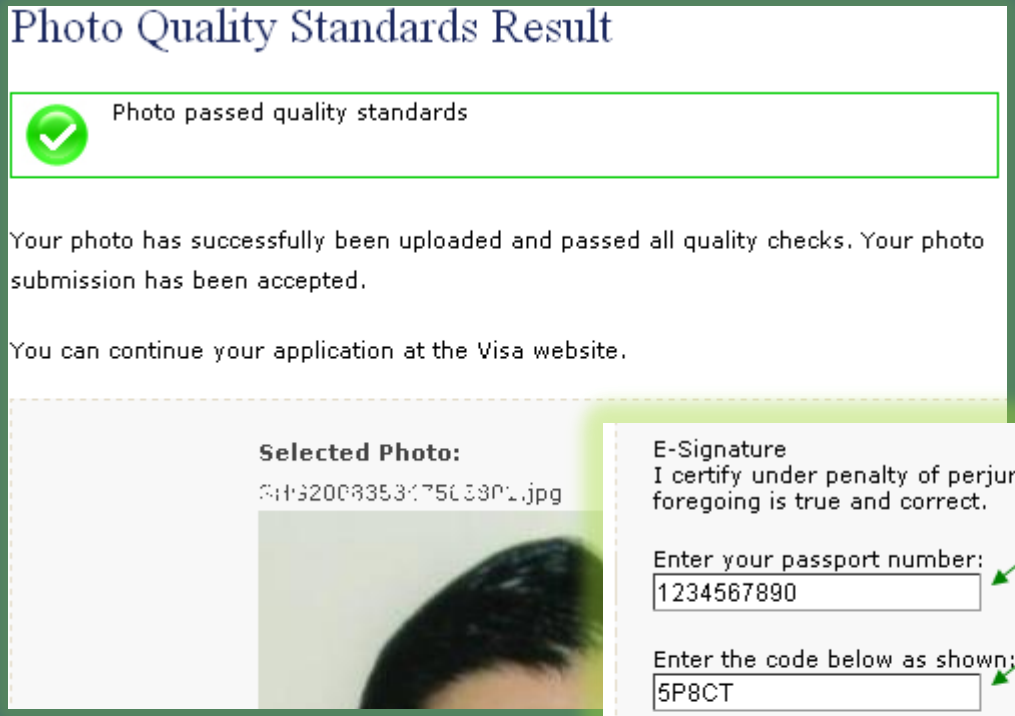
Other Tips

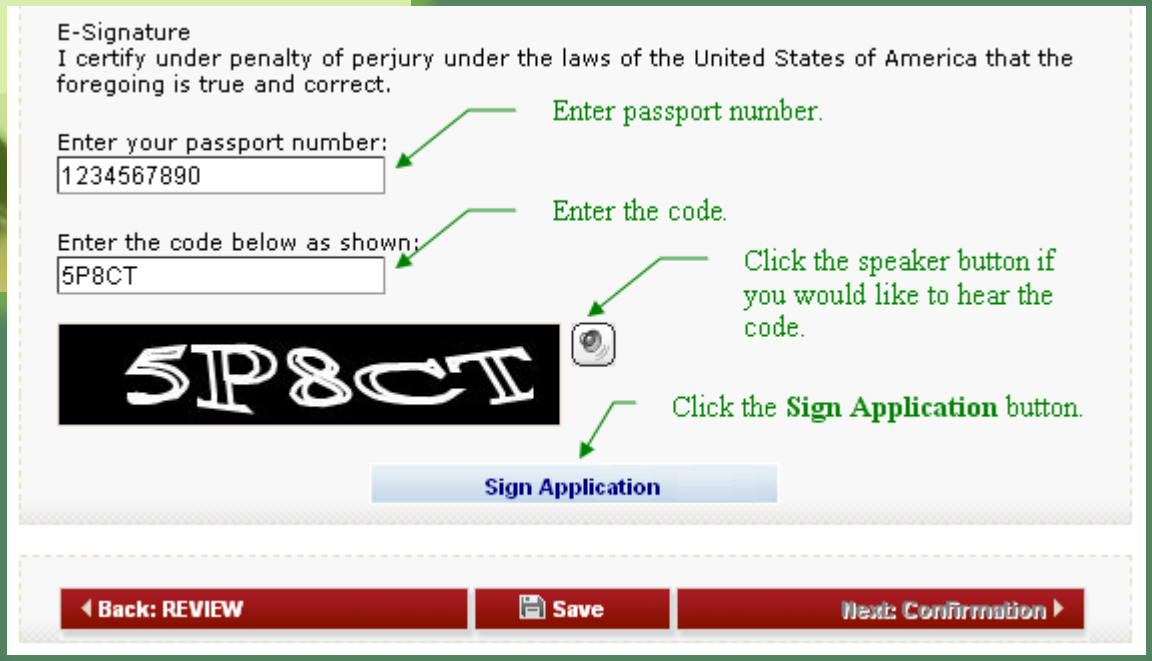
- To find your country in the list of countries, press the first letter to jump to the countries that start with that letter.
- To find USA in list of countries, type ‘U’ to jump to countries that start with ‘U’ (6 times)
- Errors will be indicated with a read arrow. These must be corrected before proceeding.



DS-160 Steps (review)

1. Enter data
2. Upload photo
3. Verify all data
4. E-signature
5. Print confirmation





DS-160 eSignature

By clicking “Sign and Submit Application” you are electronically signing the application. You are required to electronically sign your application yourself, unless otherwise exempt by regulation, even if the application has been prepared by someone other than yourself. Your electronic signature certifies that you have read and understood the questions in this application and that your answers are true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. The submission of an application containing any false or misleading statements may result in the permanent refusal of a visa or the denial of entry into the United States.

Checklist to Avoid Common Mistakes
1 of 2

- ☑ State if the application was filled out by a different person other than the applicant
- ☑ List all other names and spellings
- ☑ Be specific about employment

  (Do not say: employee, businessman, teacher)

  (Do say: chief of finance bureau, V.P. of marketing, history teacher)
- ☑ If monthly salary is variable, provide average
- ☑ Always specify travel plan
- ☑ Complete “Persons Traveling with You” field
- ☑ Only place to enter native language is applicant’s “full name in native alphabet”
- ☑ Any non-English characters will appear like this: ¿¿¿¿
- ☑ Nationality should match the passport with which one is applying.

Checklist to Avoid Common Mistakes
2 of 2

- ☑ List previous refusals.
- ☑ List all countries visited in the last five years, if prompted.
- ☑ List parents, even if deceased.
- ☑ List spouse, even if divorced or widowed.
- ☑ For education: list middle school, high school, and all universities attended, not just latest.
- ☑ For university education: specify level and major (examples: Bachelors degree in English, Masters degree in Business, PhD in Molecular Biology)
- ☑ New photo for every new application (photo from last 6 months)
- ☑ Save the .dat file and send a copy to yourself as an email attachment

Process

- New procedure: Applicants must bring the following to visa interview:
  - Confirmation page, supporting documents, and 1 photo

REMINDERS:

- *Reminder: bring <u>all</u> old passports*
- *Reminder: it is often helpful to bring proof of ties*
- *Reminder: Do not book travel until visa has been issued.*

MYTH 1 : “It’s difficult to get a visa to the United States.”

FACTS:

- The U.S. welcomes legitimate travelers and works to facilitate business, exchange, and educational travel.
- In 2009, U.S. Embassy Bridgetown adjudicated approximately 40,000 NIV applications.
- Approximately 85% applicants in Bridgetown are issued visas.

MYTH 2 : "There is a "right" answer to the visa officer's questions."

FACTS:

- There are no "right" or "wrong" answers. We expect truthful and accurate answers.
- 214(b) presumes immigrant intent
- In order to overcome 214(b), applicants must have a legitimate purpose of travel and be able to show strong economic or social ties to their resident nation.
- Visa officers assess the overall credibility of an applicant and whether or not the trip makes sense.
- Being part of a group is not enough to qualify for a visa. Every applicant must qualify as an individual.

MYTH 3 : “Applicants can wait until just before intended travel date to apply for a visa.”

FACTS:

- Applicant should try to request a visa appointment at least 45 days in advance of the planned travel.

- Even after the visa appointment, if special processing or other information is required, the issuance of the visa may be delayed.

MYTH 4 : “There is no consequence for submitting false documents or false information.”

FACTS:

- Using false documents – including a fabricated invitation letter, business license, employment letter, etc – can mean permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa
- Making false statements to a Visa Officer can mean permanently ineligible for a U.S. visa

Useful Websites

- DS-160 online NIV application form
  https://ceac.state.gov/genniv
- U.S. Embassy Bridgetown's website
  http://barbados.usembassy.gov/visas.html
- U.S. Dept. of State website
  http://travel.state.gov

Questions?