

Planning Your Travel to Woodstock School

If you want help with reservations, taxi bookings, train schedules, or housing, contact the Woodstock Travel Office at: TravelOffice@woodstock.ac.in.

Arriving in India

The nearest international airport is Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi. On arrival at IG Airport, there are several prepaid taxi services both inside and outside the arrival hall. These are the best way to get into Delhi to a hotel or to make a connection. Avoid taxi touts. In the near future the Delhi Metro will open its link from the airport to the city centre –this promises to be an excellent option.

If you are planning to come direct to Mussoorie by taxi, you can arrange to be met at the airport by one of the Mussoorie taxi companies. See below for more information or contact the school's Travel Office. TravelOffice@woodstock.ac.in.

Travelling to Mussoorie

The journey trip from Delhi to Mussoorie can be made by car, bus or train. Recently a **local flight** has become an option; Jolly Grant domestic airport is about 2 hours from Mussoorie. Flights are available through Kingfisher Airlines but are weather dependent.

The **rail terminus** for Mussoorie is Dehra Dun where taxi and bus services are available for the 37 km (23 mile) climb up the mountain. Travel from Delhi to Dehra Dun is efficiently done by AC, chair-car train, called the Shatabdi, for Rs. 1000 round trip (about \$22). A taxi from Dehra Dun to Mussoorie is about 500 (\$11).

The Interstate **bus service** leaves from Kashmiri Gate in Delhi and the ISBT terminus in Dehradun. A taxi from here to Woodstock will cost about Rs. 550 (\$12).

Taxis make the trip from the Delhi airport to Mussoorie for Rs. up to 5000 (\$110).

Rail

Two trains run daily between Delhi and Dehra Dun, the nearest railhead to Mussoorie. Dehra Dun is 37 km/23 miles (one hour) away at the foot of the mountains.

The Shatabdi

The Shatabdi leaves the New Delhi railway station at 7 am, arriving in Dehra Dun at 12.40 p.m. It leaves Dehra Dun at 5 p.m. and arrives at the New Delhi railway station at 10.40 p.m. The Shatabdi is the most comfortable way to travel. The chair cars are comfortable, air-conditioned and the traveller is provided with a bottle of water, tea, juice, a newspaper and a meal. Luggage space is limited to a rack above your seat, or perhaps there may be some room in the front of the car, or behind the last row of seats. Tickets may be booked through some travel agents, or from the Railway booking office near the railway station in Pahar Ganj, New Delhi. There are two classes available:
1st class AC, Dehra Dun to Delhi Rs. 1020 Delhi to Dehra Dun Rs. 915

AC chair car, Dehra Dun to Delhi Rs. 535 Delhi to Dehra Dun Rs. 465

The Jan Shatabdi

The Jan Shatabdi runs every day except Sunday and leaves New Delhi railway station at 3.30 p.m. Arriving in Dehra Dun at 9.10 p.m. It leaves Dehra Dun at 5.10 a.m. and arrives at the New Delhi railway station at 11.05 a.m. The chair cars are comfortable, one coach is air-conditioned and rest of the coaches are non air-conditioned, and food and drink are available for sale. Luggage space is limited to a rack above your seat, or perhaps there may be some room in the front of the car, or behind the last row of seats. Tickets may be booked through some travel agents, or from the Railway booking office near the railway station in Pahar Ganj, New Delhi. There are two classes available:

AC chair car, Rs. 380

Non-AC chair car Rs. 117

The Mussoorie Express

This slow overnight train leaves the Old Delhi railway station daily at 10.15 p.m. and arrives in Dehra Dun at 8 am. The Mussoorie Express overnight train leaves Dehra Dun daily at 9:15 p.m. and arrives at the Old Delhi railway station at 7 am. The Mussoorie Express overnight train provides no food or drink en route, though local vendors (and beggars) may board during station stops. Food and bottled water are available on the station platforms. There are several options/classes:

- 2nd class non-Ac 3-tier sleeper, Rs166. All luggage should be securely chained under your bunk, as there is considerable traffic through these cars. Bogey doors are not locked and there is easy access by beggars, thieves and coolies in a hurry to carry your stuff.
- 2nd class AC 2-tier sleeper, Rs 676. Two tier bunks are provided with sheets, pillow and blanket. A curtain can be pulled to provide some privacy. Chain and lock your luggage below the bunks. Bogey doors are usually locked in transit to provide some security.
- 1st class non-AC, compartment, Rs.599. Two–tier wide bunks, no bedding, a lockable door to each compartment, sufficient space for luggage.
- AC 3-tier sleeper, Rs 437. Three tier bunks are provided with sheets, pillow and blanket. A curtain can be pulled to provide some privacy. Chain and lock your luggage below the bunks. Bogey doors are usually locked in transit to provide some security.
- 1st class AC, luxury compartment, Rs. 1273. Two tier, wide bunk, bedding provided, lockable doors, space for luggage.

The Nizamuddin Express

This fast overnight train leaves Nizamuddin railway station every night at 11:25 and arrives in Dehra Dun at 5:05 a.m. The return train leaves Dehra Dun at 11:55 p.m. and arrives at Delhi at 5:40 a.m. Prices:

- 3-tier AC Rs. 434
- 2-tier AC Rs. 561

- 1st Class Rs 912.

Sheets and blankets are provided on all classes.

Bus

From the ISBT bus stand, located at the Kashmir Gate in Delhi.

Regular buses leave every 30 minutes for Dehra Dun. Cost is approx. Rs. 150. The journey takes 6-12 hours, depending on road conditions. Buses stop often to pick up passengers until they are full, at which point they continue straight to their destination with one half-way stop for refreshments. Seats are lightly padded, but do not recline. Legroom is extremely limited. Female staff traveling alone should sit with other women. Some buses have “Ladies only” seats. Drivers may play Hindi movie music.

Deluxe buses leave every hour for Dehra Dun. Cost is approx. Rs. 250. The journey takes 6 – 9 hours. Seats are wider, legroom is better.

On arrival at the bus station there are usually touts who will offer private “deluxe” buses or shared taxis. The private buses are usually no better than the state deluxe buses and may be higher priced. Make sure you go **inside** the bus station and find the Dehra Dun bus stand. Shared taxis can be a good option (see below).

Taxi

Delhi taxis may be taken from the Ajmeri Gate in New Delhi, to Mussoorie. A Delhi taxi will charge you for a round trip, to cover their return - approximately Rs. 3600 + State taxes. It is possible to share a taxi and share the cost. Touts may also offer shared taxis at the Inter-State Bus Terminal at Kashmiri Gate (see above).

A Mussoorie taxi company can be booked ahead of time to take you one way, either to or from Delhi, and will not charge for their return trip. Cost: Rs. 4,000 – 5,000, depending on whether you’re coming from the airport or from in the city. If you would like this service, please email ericroberts@woodstock.ac.in with your travel details. These rates may change due to state taxes and hikes in fuel prices.

Taxi journeys take 6-10 hours depending on road conditions and the time of year. During the pilgrimages in July, traffic may be rerouted. During monsoons, some places may flood for a few hours. During sugar cane harvest, the roads will be full of ox carts at all hours of the day or night. It is generally not recommended that you travel at night. Drivers do not dim their lights for oncoming traffic. The roads carry all manner of travellers, from pedestrians, bicycles and ox carts to elephants, buses and trucks. All this with speeding cars weaving in and out.

General Travel Information

Train tickets can be booked in Mussoorie. Tickets must be paid for in cash at the time of purchase. E-ticketing has recently been introduced for some trains (including the Shatabdi and the Jan Shatabdi (go to www.irctc.co.in/)). Train is one of the most comfortable and economical ways to travel in India, with railways connecting all major cities. Local taxis can be booked by phone and paid at the time, or billed later. The school

works with President Travel in Dehra Dun to book flights both within India and internationally for students or staff.

For help with international and domestic airline bookings as well as travel arrangements within India, the following agencies are used by many staff and visitors:

President Travel (www.presidenttravels.com)

Uday Travel and Tours (www.udaytour.com)

Vinstring (www.vinstring.com/main.htm)

Momo Tours (www.momotours.com)