# Table of Contents

- Living in Chicago ........................................ 2
- Chicago Neighborhoods ................................. 2
- Suburban Living ........................................... 4
- Finding an Apartment .................................... 5
- Apartment Finding Services ........................... 6
- Chicago Rental Basics .................................... 6
- Glossary of Terms ......................................... 7
- Signing a Lease ............................................. 8
- Note on Housing Costs ................................... 8
- Apartment Checklist ..................................... 9
- Chicago Transportation Information.................. 10
- Driving in the City ......................................... 11
- Biking in Chicago ......................................... 11
- Navigating Chicago ....................................... 12
- Religious Worship and Spirituality ................... 13
- Resources and Reviews ................................... 14
- Things to Do in Chicago ................................. 14
  - Theatres ................................................... 14
  - Museums .................................................. 15
  - Festivals .................................................. 15
  - Sports .................................................... 15
  - Fitness .................................................... 15
  - Farmers Markets ....................................... 15
- Other Attractions ......................................... 16
- Temporary Housing ....................................... 16
- Staying Safe ............................................... 17
- Helpful Numbers ......................................... 18
- Chicago Neighborhood Map ............................ 19
- CTA Map .................................................... 20
- Additional Information for International Students 21
Welcome to Chicago! While it can be challenging to move to a new city while entering a graduate program, we in Student Services and Admissions have put together this insider’s guide to get you acquainted with our city and help you find your place in Chicago.

Some basic facts:
Chicago is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique character.

Rent and other costs of living will vary depending upon the neighborhood in which you live.

The best way to find a place to live is to do your research, explore neighborhoods, and see what feels right to you.

Most students who live in the city (as opposed to a suburb) live on the North Side, near a CTA “el” line. The Chicago School is easily accessible by the CTA Brown and Purple Lines, with the Blue Line one block south. Other CTA trains, express buses, and Metra lines also stop only a few blocks away.

Students at The Chicago School live all over the city, but tend to congregate in neighborhoods off of the Brown/Red/Blue lines. Below are some of the neighborhoods popular among students at The Chicago School and other schools in Chicago. For a more complete listing of Chicago neighborhoods, visit www.explorechicago.org.

Chicago Neighborhoods

Lakeview
Trendy, busy and friendly neighborhood populated by college students and young professionals, along with older middle class residents. Lakeview is large and diverse, featuring many smaller communities with distinct vibes. These include Boystown (east), Belmont Harbor (far east), Buena Park (far north), Roscoe Village (northwest), and Wrigleyville (around Wrigley Field). The Wrigleyville area is especially popular among recent transplants, with a ton of nightlife and sports enthusiasm. Boystown is one of Chicago’s historically GLBT-friendly neighborhoods and home to a number of restaurants, bars, and clubs, as well as the city’s annual Pride Parade. Roscoe Village offers some of the area’s least expensive rents and best bets at parking, as well as a charming and very walkable strip of shops, restaurants, and bars. Public transportation is readily available, most notably the Red, Brown, and Purple Line trains.

Lincoln Park
Older, more expensive neighborhood populated mostly by professionals and some college students. The neighborhood features many parks and recreation areas, including the Lincoln Park Zoo and has a high density and wide variety of shops, restaurants and bars. Parts of the neighborhood can be a bit busy and congested, and its proximity to DePaul University can make for rowdy Saturday nights. Housing stock tends to involve vintage buildings and recent condo rehabs, but often smaller and more expensive units than you might find further from downtown. It can be very difficult to find parking, but the neighborhood is extremely walkable with reliable transit options including the Brown Line.

Near North Side
Conveniently located near school, the Near North Side includes Old Town, the Gold Coast, River West, Streeterville, and River North. Again, housing is beautiful but older and smaller, and much more expensive than other neighborhoods. Old Town: numerous beautiful buildings, many of which are on the historic register. Many art galleries are in this area, as well as designer clothing stores. The Gold Coast: beautiful, quiet, and expensive neighborhood. River North: many popular restaurants, night clubs, and comedy clubs. These neighborhoods are serviced by the Red and Brown Line trains, as well as a number of bus routes.

Printers Row/Dearborn Park/Burnham Park/South Loop
The “Loop” is Chicago’s downtown area, bordered by el tracks that form a loop. The South Loop is the area south of the el tracks, featuring high rise buildings, converted loft spaces, and other nice, newer housing stock. Prior to a few years ago, the South Loop did not have much going on compared to downtown, but now is undergoing something of a renaissance with new development projects abounding. Housing stock is still cheaper than living in the Loop proper or on the Near North Side, and
you’re near a variety of shopping, dining, entertainment options, and museums, as well as the lake. The South Loop is serviced by the Red, Orange, and Green Line trains, as well as an immense number of bus lines.

**Wicker Park/Bucktown**
Wicker Park and Bucktown are two very popular neighborhoods on the near Northwest Side. Wicker Park features several prominent landmarks in Chicago’s art and music scenes and is home to a mix of students and young professionals. The neighborhood is less expensive and congested than Lakeview and Lincoln Park, but has been experiencing significant population growth in recent years. Bucktown is similar to Wicker Park, but generally quieter and less congested. Both offer a strong neighborhood feel and great access to transit through the CTA Blue Line and bus routes. This area also offers some of the most plentiful shopping, dining, and entertainment options on the Northwest Side. Many young people new to the city feel comfortable starting out here.

**Ukrainian Village/West Town**
Located south of Wicker Park, Ukrainian Village and West Town are greatly varied, multi-ethnic neighborhoods, currently attracting an influx of younger residents. Ukrainian Village lies just south of popular Wicker Park and features a variety of shopping, dining, and hangout spots. A number of students and young professionals have made this neighborhood home in recent years due to the neighborhood’s attractive and affordable housing options and proximity to popular bars, restaurants, and shops. Noble Square is the portion of West Town between Chicago and Division on the Blue Line, featuring charming housing stock and access to parks. Ukrainian Village and Noble Square are relatively quiet and safe at night and also feature fairly plentiful parking. Areas labeled East Village and West Town may be a little rougher around the edges, with fewer shopping and dining options immediately nearby. The CTA Blue Line serves Noble Square and Wicker Park. While the Blue Line is still accessible from Ukrainian Village, residents may find themselves relying on busing, biking, or walking more than residents of Wicker Park.

**Logan Square/Avondale**
Located northwest of Wicker Park and Bucktown, Logan Square and Avondale are culturally diverse neighborhoods, with a mix of young people, professionals, and working class families. Logan Square, especially, has been rapidly transforming due to gentrification and features an ever-growing array of coffee shops, galleries, record stores, book stores, etc. Logan Square has several boulevards lined with historic buildings and a constantly expanding range of trendy bars and restaurants along Milwaukee Avenue, especially near the California and Logan Square stops on the Blue Line. It is typically possible to obtain more housing space for less money compared to other neighborhoods closer to downtown, though with the neighborhood’s booming popularity, competition for the best housing can be fierce. Avondale is a little quieter and less developed than Logan Square, so it’s easier to find affordable housing for cheap. Avondale has become something of a foodie paradise, with restaurants including Kuma’s Corner, Hot Doug’s, Urban Belly, and Smoque calling the neighborhood home. Avondale also is a mecca for Chicago’s Polish population (the largest outside of Warsaw!). Logan Square and Avondale are served by the Blue Line, as well as several major bus routes.

**Lincoln Square/North Center/Ravenswood**
North Center is a very family-oriented part of the city, which also attracts a large number of students and young professionals drawn to the affordable housing and proximity to transit. Lincoln Square has a European feel, with shops and restaurants reflecting the early residents of this neighborhood. The area around the Western Brown Line offers an eclectic mix of shops, restaurants, and bars, ranging from German fare to Thai food. This part of town has a more stable history of development than some other neighborhoods, leading to a strong community feel and well-established annual events, such as Ribfest. North Center features both established families and new immigrants, old and new housing stock, and a mix of trendy new businesses and neighborhood institutions. The neighborhood is very well-served by public transit, with several Brown Line stations, the Ravenswood Metra, and a number of bus lines, including the 24-hour Western and Lawrence routes.

**Albany Park/Old Irving**
West of Lincoln Square and north of Avondale, the Albany Park and Old Irving neighborhoods are quiet, affordable housing options that draw a mix of established Chicago families, recent immigrants, and students. Albany Park is extremely diverse and located further west along the Brown Line from Lincoln Square. The area can be a little rough around the edges in places, but it offers a variety of ethnic restaurants and shops from all parts of the world, as well as some of the city’s cheapest housing stock. While extremely accessible by the Blue Line, Old Irving is more established and quiet, and can feel like there’s less to do in your immediate area.
Uptown/Edgewater
Cheaper than other North Side neighborhoods, but with good and bad sections, Uptown and Edgewater are popular among students and young professionals. Many historic buildings are currently undergoing rehabilitation as residents work to clean up the neighborhoods, reduce crime and attract investment. For the most part, these neighborhoods have fewer shops and restaurants than other North Side neighborhoods (i.e. Lakeview, Lincoln Park), but the options available tend to be interesting. Uptown and Edgewater are served by the CTA Red Line, as well as numerous bus routes. This area also includes Andersonville, a small neighborhood centered at Clark and Foster that has Swedish and Middle Eastern influences as well as a large LGBT population. Andersonville has the densest concentration of shops and restaurants and tends to be populated by young professionals. While still affordable, it can be more expensive than other parts of the neighborhood. Uptown contains several popular concert venues, including the Aragon Ballroom, the Riviera, and the Capone-era jazz club, the Green Mill. More so than many other North Side neighborhoods, Uptown can vary greatly block-by-block and potential residents are encouraged to visit the area several times, day and night, to get a good feel before signing a lease. The neighborhood is also home to thriving Asian community and boasts numerous Thai, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Chinese grocery stores and restaurants.

Rogers Park
This is the northernmost neighborhood in Chicago along the lake. This area is mixed, with safer and less safe areas. The neighborhood was historically a seat of Jewish culture in Chicago, though now it is one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods in Chicago. Like Edgewater to the south, Rogers Park has undergone a significant amount of renewal lately and many residents are very invested in improving the community. While still less commercially dense than Andersonville or Evanston (the suburb immediately to its north), Rogers Park has a number of shops and restaurants including The Heartland Café and General Store, a center for neighborhood activism since the 1970’s. Loyola University is located here, and many students live nearby. The neighborhood has some of the most reasonable rents on the North Side, as well as more plentiful street parking than neighborhoods further south.

Hyde Park
This South Side neighborhood is home to the University of Chicago, historic buildings, and a number of parks and museums. The neighborhood has a diverse population and student atmosphere and is home to many shops and restaurants. Hyde Park offers good transportation, primarily in the form of buses and the Metra to downtown. Housing options tend to be larger, older, and well-maintained, as well as fairly expensive. Parking may be difficult. Due to its geography and distance from downtown and popular North Side neighborhoods, Hyde Park can feel somewhat isolated.

Pilsen/Bridgeport
A growing number of younger people looking for a deal on rent are checking out these South Side neighborhoods. Located on the near Southwest side of Chicago, Pilsen features a diverse and eclectic mix of people and places. The neighborhood is home to the National Museum of Mexican Art and The Chicago Arts District. There are a number of shops and restaurants here, including a wide range of authentic Mexican cuisine. Many young and artistic people are drawn to Pilsen for the unique cultural flavor and the inexpensive housing. The Pink Line provides transit to downtown, but other transit options are somewhat limited. The neighborhood can feel a bit isolated and rough around the edges, but may be a good fit for people wanting to feel connected to the local art scene. Bridgeport is a near South Side neighborhood that is home to many Chicago institutions, including the Daley family. In recent years, it has grown beyond its machine politics roots to be one of Chicago’s most diverse neighborhoods, and home to burgeoning arts and restaurant scenes. Transit options include buses and the Orange and Red Line trains.

Suburban Living
Several students have suggested the suburbs as a viable alternative to city living. Keep in mind that every suburb is different in terms of price, distance from school, access to public transportation and expressways, and standard of living. The following are only a few of the suburbs surrounding Chicago where students live.

Evanston is the suburb just north of the city limits on the lake. A lot of housing is available starting in May and June because of the Northwestern University students leaving for the summer. The Pioneer Press and the Evanston Review are two papers that have a lot of listings. One student highly recommends Evanston as “a safe, close, cultural and convenient alternative to the city.” The proximity to Northwestern University provides many student perks and discounts. The “L” (the city train system)
and Metra (the suburban commuter rail system) go to Evanston. Prices tend to be on the high side (think Lakeview/Lincoln Park); although South Evanston tends to be somewhat cheaper.

**Skokie** is just west of Evanston and tends to be considerably cheaper because it is farther from the lake. The students who live there like it and a weekday branch of the CTA “L” (The Skokie Swift) goes directly into Skokie from the Howard Station in Evanston. Note that the Skokie Swift does not run on weekends, nor during all hours of the day.

**Oak Park** is just west of Chicago. The Green Line of the “L” goes directly into the town. It has inexpensive and expensive areas, and is a nice mix of urban and suburban. Oak Park has a reputation as quite cultural and open-minded.

### Finding an Apartment in Chicago

The most helpful advice we can give is to start your apartment search early. You can start looking online even before you are able to physically come to Chicago to begin to get a sense of the available housing stock and pricing. This will help you avoid choosing an apartment you wouldn’t normally choose just because you’re in a hurry. Below are some resources we’ve used in our apartment searches.

Apartment listings can be found in the classifieds section of any area paper or through an online service. For example, The Chicago Reader, a free weekly newspaper, contains extensive apartment listings, found online at [www.chicagoreader.com](http://www.chicagoreader.com). There are also a wide variety of online listings that are free for you to use. We recommend taking a look at several of these and picking your favorite 2 or 3 to check regularly.

Some of the most popular apartment search websites are:

- [chicago.craigslist.org](http://chicago.craigslist.org)
- [www.rent.com](http://www.rent.com)
- [www.domu.com](http://www.domu.com)
- [www.trulia.com](http://www.trulia.com)
- [www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com)
- [www.apartments.com](http://www.apartments.com)

If you’re really not sure where to start looking, one tool we like is [www.padmapper.com](http://www.padmapper.com), which plugs classifieds listings into a Google map. It’s not your best source for reliable contact information for specific listings, but it gives a fairly user-friendly overview of rental options and prices in different areas of the city.

There are also many apartment finders in the city. These services are usually free for renters and receive their payment from the landlords they match you with. Many will drive you to apartments after going over your requirements and preferences in their office. You usually don’t have to make an appointment, but call ahead to be sure about this and verify that they don’t charge a fee. They can be great ways to tour available housing stock as you’re becoming familiar with the city, but they may try to push you out of your price range or pawn off units that don’t meet your criteria. Agents may also have less knowledge about the apartment than a landlord would, so you may find difficulty getting your questions answered, or even getting let in the door.

If you find an area you like, you can also walk around looking for “For Rent” signs. This will connect you with landlords renting units directly and may result in good deals (someone who can’t be bothered with a Craigslist ad may also have skipped doing research on what units rent for in the area). However, there is less information available on the average “For Rent” sign than in most online listings, so you may spend a lot of time asking about units you don’t actually want to see.

So, if you like the challenge of looking for a place on your own, or if it’s worth it to spend a little more time and effort in order to get the right place, you’d be better off looking online or walking around specific neighborhoods. If convenience and saving time are important, use an apartment finder.
Apartment Finding Services -- a Sampling

The Apartment People 3121 N Broadway 773.248.8800
www.apartmentpeople.com
The Apartment & Home Seekers 51 W Huron 312.335.8802
www.aptandhomesseekers.com
The Homestead Group 5354 N Broadway 773.784.9100
www.chicago-apts.com
Chicago Apartment Finders 821 N Milwaukee 312.433.9100
www.chicagoapartmentfinders.com
Apartment Savvy 906 W Belmont Ave 773.883.8800
www.apartmentsavvy.com
Rent Here Realty 2835 N Clark St 773.348.8921
www.rentherereality.com
North/Clybourn Group 3021 N Lincoln Ave 773.782.1000
www.northclybourngroup.com
Dwell Chicago 806 W. Washington Suite #200 773.252.0600
www.dwellchicago.com

Chicago Rental Basics

In a city as large as Chicago, you can imagine that a variety of housing options are available. Below is a guide to the most common kinds of apartments you’ll see. Please note that unlike college towns, where students tend to rent large houses with 5 or 6 roommates, your cheapest rental options in Chicago will be 2 or 3 bedroom apartments, shared with 1-2 roommates. Houses are available in the city, but you tend to pay a premium for the personal space, parking, and outdoor space they provide.

**Studio/Efficiency Apartments:** These units, usually consisting of one large room plus a bathroom and kitchen facilities, are intended for one person. Sometimes the kitchen will be separate, or there might be an alcove for a bed. There is usually room for a bed or futon, a small table or desk, and a dresser. Sizes vary widely depending upon the area and the building.

A **convertible** is a small apartment that usually has an alcove or other space that can be blocked off with a screen or other divider. It is usually larger than a studio and smaller than a one bedroom.

**One, two, or three bedroom** apartments are common. Bedrooms vary in sizes, but can often be small, especially in older buildings. If not listed, you may want to ask the rental agency about the size of the rooms before you see a unit.

**A garden apartment** is on the lower level, usually partially below ground, and often with lower ceilings and smaller windows than upper-story apartments. These tend to be cheaper, but may also be less safe. If you choose to live in one, make sure windows and entryways are well-lit and in good condition.

Most apartments are **unfurnished.** You must supply your own furniture. Most apartments, however, will supply window blinds and major appliances (including the refrigerator, Californians!).

You will pay more for amenities such as a pool, door attendant, and fitness room.

Many apartment buildings do not have elevators, so be sure to check this out as well if stairs are difficult for you. Mid-rise and high-rise buildings will have elevators, but may also charge for moving in and out and assign specific move times.

Some apartments will have a building manager who lives on site. The manager takes care of rent, maintenance or complaints. In other buildings, you may contact the landlord directly for these. Your landlord should provide this information when you sign your lease.
When you find an apartment you want, the landlord will want to do a credit check (a check of your credit, including where you lived before, to see if you have paid rent on time and in full in the past). Credit checks cost around $25–$50 and you are generally responsible for the cost.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS - - explain to the landlord that you are an international student and ask if s/he would be willing to forego the check or accept a letter from the school’s DSO confirming your financial standing. Be aware that some may not want to rent to you without a credit check.

Once you have been offered a lease and sign it you will most likely also have to give the landlord the **first month's rent plus the security deposit.** The security deposit typically is equal to one month’s rent and may be up to two months. Your security deposit and first month’s rent is typically due when you sign your lease.

Security deposit example: if the apartment rents for $700 a month, and the security deposit is $700, you will have to pay the landlord $1,400 up front to secure the apartment. Remember, if your apartment is in good shape when you move out, you should get back the $700 security deposit. You may want to take pictures of your apartment after you move your furniture out and do the cleaning to show that you left the unit in good shape, should your landlord dispute this.

Pet security deposits are typically required in buildings that accept pets in addition to the regular deposit.

**Glossary of Terms**

**Rehab**—short for rehabilitated. Usually an older building that has been fixed up. Also referred to as remodeled.

**Vintage** means an older, usually very beautiful building that has been rehabbed (but not necessarily). Often means that the rent is higher.

**A two-flat** means a building with two apartments in it. These, as well as three-flats, are very common in Chicago. They are usually brick.

**Walk-up** means an apartment building without an elevator.

Be aware that apartments may not actually be as described in the ad. For example, “cozy” often means small.

Common abbreviations found in newspaper ads:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1BR/2BR/3BR</th>
<th>one, two or three bedrooms</th>
<th>appls</th>
<th>appliances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ww cpt</td>
<td>wall to wall carpet</td>
<td>rm</td>
<td>room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hdwd firs</td>
<td>hardwood floors</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>central air (air conditioning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nr L train</td>
<td>near L (elevated train/subway)</td>
<td>bsmt</td>
<td>basement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nr trans L</td>
<td>near transportation (usually)</td>
<td>refs req</td>
<td>references required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DR bath ht</td>
<td>dining room bathroom heat</td>
<td>gdn apt</td>
<td>garden apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>elec 1BA/2BA</td>
<td>electricity one bathroom/two bathrooms</td>
<td>inc</td>
<td>included</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balc cking gas</td>
<td>balcony cooking gas</td>
<td>sec dep</td>
<td>security deposit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avail</td>
<td>available</td>
<td>W/D</td>
<td>washer/dryer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lv msg</td>
<td>leave message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pkg</td>
<td>parking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is an example of how a classified advertisement in the newspaper might look:

Logan Square 2BR, sep DR, hdwd firs, nr L, $850 + sec dep.
Pkg avail. Avail immed. Call 555.5454.

Translation: Logan Square (or somewhere vaguely near Logan Square) two bedroom apartment with a separate dining room and hardwood floors, near the elevated/subway train. Parking space is available (for an additional fee). $850 a month plus a security deposit (most likely the same amount as the monthly rent, though you would need to ask).
Signing a Lease

In almost every circumstance you will have to sign a lease for an apartment. This is a legal document that serves as a contract between you and the landlord. You each have rights and responsibilities that are established by the city in which the apartment is located. Be sure to read the lease carefully. Most landlords will use a standard city of Chicago lease, but there may be riders or slight variations, specifically in small, owner-occupied buildings. Note your responsibilities and discuss any concerns with the landlord before you sign.

At minimum, the lease should list the dates of occupancy (usually one year), who is to live there, what the tenant (you) is responsible for, such as heat, electricity and telephone, the amount of the rent and security deposit, and any restrictions, such as whether you can have a pet. In general, the landlord is responsible for general maintenance of the common areas (hallways, entryways) and anything that breaks or stops working in your apartment (broken windows, stove stops working, sink is clogged). You are responsible for cleaning the apartment and such things as light bulbs and batteries for the smoke detectors.

A copy of Chicago's municipal code can be obtained from city hall or on the city of Chicago’s website (http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/dcd/supp_info/rents_right.html) if you wish to review the specific rights and responsibilities of the landlord and the tenant. These laws vary outside of Chicago (i.e., in the suburbs), so you'll need to ask those cities about their landlord/tenant laws. In the city of Chicago, your landlord is required to present you with a statement of your rights under the landlord and tenant ordinance. This document contains information about rights and responsibilities for everything from repairs to what to do if you need to break your lease (move out before the end of the lease).

If conflict arises and you are unable to reach a resolution following the guidelines in the landlord and tenant ordinance, there are several tenant rights organizations that assist tenants in the case of a landlord tenant dispute. Two such organizations are Metropolitan Tenants Organization (http://www.tenants-rights.org/) and the Illinois Tenants Union (http://www.tenant.org/index.php).

A Note on Housing Costs

It's important to know your rent limit and stick to it, but make sure you're going to be comfortable wherever you live. Graduate school can be stressful at times and you want your home to be a place where you can relax and de-stress. To help keep within your housing budget, here are a few more costs to keep in mind.

In the city of Chicago, landlords are required to put your security deposit in an interest-bearing account that is separate from the account into which your rent payment goes and return the interest to you each year. Some landlords avoid this requirement by charging a move-in fee—typically, this amount is much smaller than a security deposit ($300-500 instead of a month’s rent), but it’s also non-refundable.

It is important to check out what kind of heat is offered in an apartment. Although it will most likely be very warm when you are looking, be aware that Chicago can get extremely cold in the winter months. How your apartment is heated will become very important to you. There are several options for heat, including: radiator—usually (but not always) paid for by the landlord, uses steam (which puts moisture in the air), very warm, often difficult to regulate; gas—paid for by the tenant and can be expensive, depending on how warm you like to keep your apartment and how old the furnace is; electric—paid for by the tenant, can be costly and inefficient. Older buildings often have radiator heat. If you have to pay for your own heat, ask the landlord to tell you the average cost per month and show you a bill from the previous year if possible.

You are responsible for paying for your telephone and cable television, if you choose to have it. Most places will also require you to pay for your electricity. The landlord almost always pays for water, sewer and garbage pickup.

Many, but not all, apartment buildings have laundry facilities in a basement or other room. Sometimes these are free, but often they are not. Usually a wash costs up to $2 (in quarters) and a dry from $.25 to $2. If there isn’t a washer and dryer on site, find out where the nearest Laundromat is and imagine yourself traveling that distance every time you need to wash clothes.
## Apartment Checklist

Below is a checklist of items, which will help you evaluate how well the building will meet your needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>GOOD</th>
<th>FAIR</th>
<th>POOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Furnishings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stove</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walls</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Floors and carpets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plumbing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water pressure and temperature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows (incl locks)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire escape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoke detectors/Carbon monoxide detectors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire extinguishers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiring</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pest control/garbage collection/ recycling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elevators (passenger and freight)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air conditioning/ ventilation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heating/thermostat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hallways/common areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closets/storage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitchen</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedroom(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bathroom</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snow removal/ landscaping</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chicago Transportation Information

Chicago has an extensive public transportation system. It is possible to live in the city (and even some of the suburbs) without a car. Here is some basic information about the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority)’s three segments—CTA, Metra Suburban Rail, and PACE suburban bus system.

The CTA (Chicago Transit Authority)

Unless you live or work in the suburbs, you will primarily take the CTA as a student. It consists of the elevated trains (the “L” or “El”) and the bus system. Full-time students at the Chicago campus will receive a CTA U-Pass, which provides unlimited rides on CTA buses and trains as part of your student fees.

The L has eight lines, each coded by color: the Red Line (Howard-Dan Ryan), a 24-hour train; the Blue Line (O’Hare-Forest Park), a 24-hour train; the Brown Line (Kimball-Loop), runs early morning to late evening; the Green Line (Harlem-Loop), runs early morning to late evening; the Orange Line (Midway-Loop) early morning to late evening; the Pink Line (Loop-54/Cermak), runs early morning to late evening; the Purple Line (Linden-Howard/Loop), serves Evanston early morning to late evening and runs from Howard to the Loop during rush periods; the Yellow Line (Skokie Swift), limited weekly hours and no weekend service.

CTA buses run on most major streets and cost the same as the L. Some run all night (Owl Service), while others only run until early or late evening. While not as fast as the L, there are more of them and they go to all parts of the city.

System maps and route information for CTA buses and trains are available at www.transitchicago.com. The CTA also offers free transit trackers which update you with the next arrival time for your bus or train. While the CTA hasn’t developed apps for these, mobile apps are available that use this information.

Fares—The CTA uses fare cards which cost $2.25; this covers a one-way trip. Each station has fare card machines that dispense fare cards. You can add money in any denomination, from $.05 to $100 after an initial $2.00 (or higher) to purchase the card. Station agents will not make change, although there are change machines in some stations. Transfers from bus to rail, bus to bus, or rail to bus cost $.25 and must be used within two hours. A second transfer within the two hour time frame is free. The fare cards automatically keep track of the time. You can also buy pre-paid cards in the following denominations: 1 day, 3 days, 7 days, and monthly.

Several L stations have Park & Ride lots and drop off points. The CTA also has a number of Bike & Ride initiatives, including ample bike parking at stations and space for up to two bikes on each bus and train car (during non-peak hours).

As the CTA moves forward with modernization projects, an increasing number of L stations are accessible to riders with disabilities. The CTA maintains a list of accessible stations, elevator status updates, and paratransit services at www.transitchicago.com. In addition, all CTA buses are wheelchair accessible.

Metra Suburban Rail

Metra trains run from downtown in several directions to the suburbs. The fares are calculated based upon the zone to which you are traveling. You can buy tickets on the train or at the station. There are three stations downtown from which trains depart. Note: if you buy your ticket on the train, and you boarded the train at a station that had a ticket agent, you'll be charged an additional dollar. The CTA U-Pass is not applicable to Metra fares.

Metra operates 12 surface train lines serving the six-county area which hub into downtown Chicago from the outlying Chicago suburbs. For more information on routes, visit www.metrarail.com or call Metra Passenger Services at:
Weekdays 8:00am to 5:00pm CT  
Metra Passenger Services  
312.322-6777  
TDD 312.322.6774  

Evenings & Weekends  
Transit Information Center  
836.7000 - City or Suburbs  
TDD 312.836.4949

PACE  
Pace provides suburban bus service. You can call RTA at 312.836.7000 for detailed schedule and fare information, as well as for maps and other information. RTA includes CTA, Metra and PACE. Check out their Web site at www.transitchicago.com.

Driving in the City

While it is possible to drive and park in Chicago, owning a car in the city can be expensive and frustrating. Parking can be difficult, as well as pricey. Automobile insurance is more expensive in the city. City residents need to buy a city sticker. Additionally, if you live on certain blocks, you may need to buy a parking permit. If a certain percentage of residents sign a petition, the city designates that block as permit parking only. Permits are not expensive, and you can get visitor permits for a small fee.

Traffic

Traffic can be congested on the expressways during rush hours. Here in Chicago, rush hours are from approximately 6:30 am to 10:30 am and 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm. It is often better to wait until rush hours are over to travel on the expressways, especially the Kennedy and the Eisenhower. Traffic is often congested at any time on these two expressways, however. Traffic is also worse any time it rains or snows, regardless of the condition of the roads. Traffic is extremely congested on Fridays, with rush hour beginning any time after noon. Traffic is also affected by season and, as they say here, “there are two seasons in Chicago, winter and construction.” Always allow extra travel time, especially if you’re used to traffic where a 5-mile drive actually takes 5 minutes.

A word about No Parking and Tow Zone signs

Take these signs seriously. Never park in an area marked “Tow Zone”. In all neighborhoods, and other upscale and parking-deficient areas, your car can be towed before you’re even all the way inside the building. Towing charges are expensive ($100 or more) and the lots are never convenient. There is nothing more heart-stopping than walking outside and realizing that your car is not where you left it.

Watch for street cleaning or other “no parking” signs tied to fences and trees. If you are parked on that side of the street on the day posted, your vehicle will be ticketed or towed (see above). This is important for those of you who have found a great spot and don't want to move it: be sure you check on your car daily. Also, from approximately December 1 until April 1, many major streets are designated Snow Routes. This means that after a snowfall of 2 inches or more, it becomes a tow zone (see above). This occurs even in the middle of the night, so if the forecast calls for snow overnight, you might want to move your car from those streets.

Driving to the Chicago School

Should you choose to drive to campus, driving directions and parking information are available on our website. Street parking is extremely difficult near the school, but The Chicago School does offer validated parking for two garages nearby.

Car Sharing & Car Rentals

If you don’t have a car in Chicago, you may find occasions where you still need to drive, such as the traditional new apartment furniture splurge at IKEA, a cheese curd run to Wisconsin (trust us—Mars Cheese Castle is worth a trip), or buying a year’s supply of toilet paper at Costco.

Car Sharing Companies

Car-sharing companies are rental companies that allow members to pay by the hour. They can be very cost efficient. Usually there is a small membership fee and a driver’s license is required.
I-GO  
www.igocars.org  
773-278-4446  
I-Go is a nonprofit car sharing network with an annual membership and a variety of car sharing packages available. Members can also connect cards with CTA Chicago Cards for added convenience.

Zip Car  
www.zipcar.com  
866-494-7227  
Zip Car is the largest car sharing network with locations all over Chicago, among other cities. There are various membership packages and options to rent a car in increments from one hour to several days.

Getaround  
http://getaround.com/  
Getaround offers peer-to-peer car sharing with no monthly membership fee. Users sign up with a Facebook account and car owners set their own hourly rates and minimum/maximum rental times.

Car Rentals  
Car rentals are done for a longer period of time from 24 hours to several weeks. Renters must be 21 to rent and require a valid driver’s license along with a debit/credit card. Below is a small sampling of car rental companies in Chicago.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Website</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avis Rent-A-Car</td>
<td>214 N. Clark St.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.avis.com">www.avis.com</a></td>
<td>312-782-6825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprise Rent-A-Car</td>
<td>303 W Lake St.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.enterprise.com">www.enterprise.com</a></td>
<td>312-332-7783</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hertz Rent-A-Car</td>
<td>210 S. Canal St.</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hertz.com">www.hertz.com</a></td>
<td>312-928-0538</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Biking in Chicago  
Chicago has undertaken several initiatives to become a more bike-friendly city and many residents own and ride bikes, whether for recreation or commuting. While biking in the city can seem intimidating at first, it is often a quick and direct way to get where you’re going. You can get more information about biking in Chicago and also request free city bike maps at www.chicagobikes.org.

Navigating Chicago  
A bit of Chicago history: after the Great Chicago Fire, the city rebuilt and grew rapidly, just as urban planning was really taking off as a concept in the United States. Local businessmen took interest and commissioned Daniel Burnham to draft a Plan of Chicago. The Burnham Plan was unveiled in 1909, calling for an open lakefront for public use and a systematic arrangement of streets, among other items. Much of the plan was enthusiastically adopted and it became the blueprint for future development.

As a result, you’ll hear a lot about “The Grid” in Chicago. The majority of our streets are arranged in a grid pattern, with State and Madison streets downtown marking the center of the grid. For the most part, streets run either north-south or east-west. There are also a few diagonal streets radiating out from the city center in a northwest or southwest direction, such as Clark, Lincoln, Clybourn, Milwaukee, and Archer.

State and Madison are numbered zero (0), and every block moving away from the center is 100. An apartment at 3200 N will be 32 blocks north of Madison. An apartment at 1600 W will be 16 blocks west of State. For the most part, there is a major street every 4 blocks (800 N, 1200 N, 1600 N, etc.). You won’t see “East” in too many addresses, as the center of our grid is located only a few blocks west of the lake. If you’re lost, you can always orient yourself by figuring out where the lake is.

As you become familiar with the city, you’ll learn many of the major streets and their corresponding numbers, which will help in finding an address. In navigating, many Chicagoans ask for the “cross streets” of their destination, typically the nearest intersection of two major streets.

The grid system isn’t perfect, and features such as expressways and the river will cause some navigational difficulty. However, for the most part, you can count on the street you’re on continuing in the direction it’s going, bus routes following major streets, and building numbers rising as you get further from the Loop and the lake.
Religious Worship and Spirituality

Because of Chicago's history as a hub of immigration, many ethnic groups have called Chicago home throughout the decades. As a result of this, Chicago has accumulated a rich diversity of religious traditions and houses of worship. The churches and houses of worship mentioned below represent a small fraction of the diverse religious communities in Chicago.

Baha'i
Baha'i House Of Worship
100 Linden Ave., Wilmette
847.853.2300

Islam
Downtown Islamic Center
231 S. State St., 4th floor
312.939.9095

Additional Chicago area Mosques
http://www.aiamasjid.org/aia/masajidmosques-chicago-area.html

Baptist
Armitage Baptist Church
2451 N. Kedzie Ave.
773.384.6800

Praise Temple of Restoration
5443 W. Huron St.
773.261.6700

Buddhist
Buddhist Temple of Chicago
1151 W. Leland Ave.
773.334.4661

Zen Buddhist Temple
1710 W. Cornelia Ave.
773.528.8685

Episcopal
Cathedral of St. James
65 E. Huron St.
312.787.7360

Church of the Ascension
1133 N. Lasalle St.
312.664.1271

Greek Orthodox
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1017 N. La Salle Dr.
312.664.5485

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2701 N. Sheffield Ave.
773.525.1793

Buddhist
Buddhist Temple of Chicago
1151 W. Leland Ave.
773.334.4661

Zen Buddhist Temple
1710 W. Cornelia Ave.
773.528.8685

Episcopal
Cathedral of St. James
65 E. Huron St.
312.787.7360

Church of the Ascension
1133 N. Lasalle St.
312.664.1271

Greek Orthodox
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1017 N. La Salle Dr.
312.664.5485

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2701 N. Sheffield Ave.
773.525.1793

Jewish
Central Synagogue of Chicago
The Traditional Egalitarian Conservative Synagogue Of The Near North Side
15 W. Delaware Pl., Suite 913E
312.787.0450 (Water Tower Place)

Chicago Loop Synagogue
16 S. Clark St.
312.346.7370

Lutheran
St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church
846 N. Menard Ave.
773.378.7881

Park Community
Multiple Locations
312.361.0500

New Life Covenant
Multiple Locations

Trinity United Church of Christ
400 W. 95th St.
773.962.5650

Episcopal
Cathedral of St. James
65 E. Huron St.
312.787.7360

Church of the Ascension
1133 N. Lasalle St.
312.664.1271

Greek Orthodox
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1017 N. La Salle Dr.
312.664.5485

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2701 N. Sheffield Ave.
773.525.1793

Episcopal
Cathedral of St. James
65 E. Huron St.
312.787.7360

Church of the Ascension
1133 N. Lasalle St.
312.664.1271

Greek Orthodox
Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1017 N. La Salle Dr.
312.664.5485

St. George Greek Orthodox Church
2701 N. Sheffield Ave.
773.525.1793

Presbyterian
Fourth Presbyterian Church
126 E. Chestnut St.
312.787.4570

Lakeview Presbyterian, a More Light Congregation
716 W. Addison St.
773.281.2655

Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Chicago
Holy Name Cathedral
735 N. State St.
312.787.8040

Old St. Patrick Church
700 W. Adams St.
312.648.1021

United Methodist
Chicago Temple First United Methodist Church
77 W. Washington St.
312.236.4548

Broadway United Methodist
3338 N. Broadway St.
773.348.2679
Welcomes all, including the LGBTQ community

Unitarian Universalist
Second Unitarian Church of Chicago
656 W. Barry Ave.
(773) 324-4100

First Unitarian Church of Chicago
5650 S. Woodlawn Ave. Chicago, IL 60637
(773) 324-4100
Resources and Reviews

Beyond the places and events listed above, there is much more to explore in Chicago. We’ve put together a list of some of our favorite resources for keeping up on what’s new in the city and finding things to do. From reviews of bars and restaurants to free activity ideas to local news and events, the websites below can help you make the most of your transition to life in Chicago.

The City of Chicago
Useful resource for Chicago residents with information on city services and programs, as well as Chicago tourism.
www.cityofchicago.org

Yelp
An incredibly useful site for reading and writing reviews of local businesses. They also send weekly e-mails with picks for things to try.
www.yelp.com/chicago

Meetup
Want to meet people outside your cohort? Search for local groups that share your hobbies and interests or start your own. Walking groups, book groups, live music groups, and more all use this free service.
www.meetup.com

Chicago Reader
Chicago’s free alt-weekly paper. Information and recommendations on things going on around town.
www.chicagoreader.com

Gapers Block
A local website featuring reviews, announcements, and a weekly calendar of events.
www.gapersblock.com

Chicagoist
A website focusing on local news and events, part of the Gothamist network. Has info and ideas for everyone from foodies to sports fans to music snobs.
www.chicagoist.com

Time Out Chicago
Magazine with focus on Chicago entertainment and events, including reviews and recommendations for things to do around town.
www.timeoutchicago.com

Chicago Magazine
Another magazine focused on Chicago living. News and politics, arts and entertainment, bars and restaurants, and local culture are all covered in-depth here.
www.chicagomag.com

Metromix
Website with reviews of restaurants, bars and clubs, local events, and more. Maintains a comprehensive list of free Chicago events. Partnered with several local publications.
chicago.metromix.com

Citysearch
Another searchable website with reviews of businesses and information on things to do in Chicago.
chicago.citysearch.com

Things to Do in Chicago

Now that we’ve covered how to find an apartment in Chicago and how to get around the city, we want to take a moment to talk about things to do in the city once you’re here. Chicago is an amazing place to live and there’s always something going on. The following is a sampling of some of the many things to do in Chicago, useful for starting to explore or for finding places to take your family when they visit. This list is by no means complete, and inclusion in this list does not equal a recommendation. Part of the fun of the city is exploring it, so use this as a jumping-off point and have fun!

Theatres
Steppenwolf Theatre (Gary Sinise, John Malkovich)–1650 N. Halsted
Chicago Theatre–175 N State St
Briar Street Theatre (Blue Man Group)–3133 N. Halsted
Second City/Second City, Etc (comedy, improvisation)–1616 N. Wells
iOTheater (improvisation)–3541 N. Clark
Goodman Theater–170 North Dearborn Street
Broadway in Chicago
- Cadillac Palace Theatre–151 W. Randolph
- Ford Center for Performing Arts, Oriental Theatre--24 W. Randolph
- LaSalle Bank Theatre--22 W. Monroe

Chicago Shakespeare Theater
Hot Tix (1/2 price tickets the day of a show)--72 East Randolph

Museums
- The Art Institute of Chicago--S. Michigan Ave. & Adams St.
- Museum of Contemporary Art--220 E. Chicago
- The Field Museum of Natural History--Roosevelt at Lake Shore Drive
- The Museum of Science and Industry--57th & Lake Shore Drive
- Adler Planetarium--1300 S. Lake Shore Drive
- Shedd Aquarium and Oceanarium--1200 S. Lake Shore Drive
- Chicago Cultural Center--78 E. Washington
- National Museum of Mexican Art --1852 W. 19th Street
- DuSable Museum of African American Art –740 E. 56th Place

Dance/Music
- Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO) –Symphony Center, 220 S. Michigan
- Lyric Opera of Chicago --20 North Wacker Drive
- Joffery Ballet (Auditorium Theatre, 50 E. Congress Parkway)
- Harris Theater --205 E. Randolph Dr.

Festivals
- Air and Water Show (North Avenue Beach, August)
- Blues Festival (Grant Park, June)
- Chicago Folk and Roots Festival (Wells Park, July)
- Jammin’ at the Zoo (Lincoln Park Zoo, June)
- Jazz Festival (Grant Park, Labor Day weekend)
- Taste of Chicago (Grant Park, ten days from late June to early July)

Sports
- Chicago Bulls (NBA Basketball) - United Center
- Chicago Blackhaws (NHL Hockey) - United Center
- Chicago Cubs (NL Baseball) - Wrigley Field
- Chicago White Sox (AL Baseball) - U.S. Cellular Field
- Chicago Bears (NFL Football) - Soldier Field
- Chicago Fire (MLS Soccer) - Toyota Park (Bridgeview)
- Kane County Cougars (Class A Baseball) - Geneva (western suburb)
- Chicago Wolves (AHL Hockey) - Allstate Arena (in Rosemont, by O’Hare International Airport)

Fitness
- iFit--222 Merchandise Mart, Ste 951 (discounted membership for TCS students), www.ifitfitness.com
- YMCA--various locations, www.ymcachicago.org
- Xsport Fitness—various locations, www.xsportfitness.com
- Chicago Athletic Clubs—various locations, www.chicagoathleticclubs.com

Farmers Markets
- Daley Plaza Farmers Market—Loop, Thursdays May-October, www.chicagofarmersmarkets.us
- MCA/Streeterville Farmers Market—Tuesdays May-October, www.chicagofarmersmarkets.us
Chicago Attractions

Navy Pier - http://www.navypier.com/
Located just east of Downtown and on Lake Michigan, Navy Pier has been a Chicago attraction since the start of the 20th century. Navy Pier was originally designed to be a shipping facility but also served in two world wars as a military training and recreation site.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the pier began to break down and fall apart due to poor maintenance. In 1989, the ownership of Navy Pier was taken under by the Metropolitan Pier and Exposition Authority. Within years, this authority transformed the once dissolving pier into one of nations most visited attractions. With it’s collection of various shops, restaurants, and recreational facilities, Navy Pier remains one of the most exciting attractions in the Chicagoland area.

Millennium Park - http://www.millenniumpark.org/
What is now known as Millennium Park began with a vision in 1909 of creating a park surrounding the much used Illinois Central Railroad. This railroad was of such importance that “In Daniel Burnham’s 1909 Plan of Chicago he considered the railroad property to be so untouchable that he developed the Grant Park portion of the plan around it.”

As Grant Park was complete, the once thought “vital railroad into Chicago” soon became a sore spot in the eyes of various city groups. To aid in the assistance of covering up the railroad blunder, four Chicago civic groups came together in 1977 and proposed the “Lakefront Gardens for the Performing Arts”. Today, Millennium Park stretches over 24 acres and completes a vision brought on by Chicago’s first leaders almost 100 years ago.

Chicago Botanic Gardens - http://www.chicagobotanic.org/
The mission of the Chicago Botanic Garden is to promote the enjoyment, understanding and conservation of plants and the natural world. The garden continues to strive to meet the lofty goals set more than a century ago.

The Chicago Botanic Garden, with its world-renowned plant collections and displays, is one of the country’s most visited public gardens and a preeminent center for learning and scientific research. The 385-acre garden features 23 display gardens and three native habitats, uniquely situated on nine islands surrounded by lakes.

Brookfield Zoo - www.brookfieldzoo.org/ (Brookfield-west suburb)
Garfield Park Conservatory - www.garfield-conservatory.org/ (Chicago-west side)

Temporary Housing

For those students in need of short term housing while they look for more permanent accommodations, below are some suggestions. It is recommended that you make arrangements for temporary housing before you arrive if you do not already have permanent housing so that you do not have the added stress of arranging temporary housing after you arrive in Chicago.

Private Residence Halls
Fornelli Hall is a privately owned company that functions as a Residence Hall. Students from any school in Chicago can rent a furnished dorm room. Fornelli Hall Charges per semester: http://www.fornellihall.com/

The International House of Chicago (http://ihouse.uchicago.edu), a hostel managed by the University of Chicago, will house students (both International and domestic) on a short term basis for a modest fee.
Hostels
Staying in a Hostel is one of the most cost-effective options, but accommodations can vary widely so be sure to inquire as to what to expect, as well as your accessibility to your room. The J. Ira and Nicki Harris Family Hostel is the closest hostel to The Chicago School. However, there are several options. Below are a few sites which can help you find Hostels in Chicago.
http://www.hostelbookers.com/
http://www.hostelworld.com/
http://www.hichicago.org/

Corporate housing/temporary furnished apartments
One option to consider is The DeWitt Place (http://www.dewittplace.com/). The DeWitt Place offers Chicago corporate housing and temporary furnished apartment rentals for short-term, intermediate and long term temporary housing solutions. Located near Lake Michigan, the DeWitt Place is only about a 20 minute walk to campus.

Another option is Just Passing Through, Inc. With Gold Coast locations at 1036 N. Dearborn and 1140 N. La Salle, apartments are available for rent on a weekly or monthly basis. Cable, internet and utilities are included.
http://www.justpassingthrough.com/

Staying Safe
Many students moving to Chicago from different environments worry about safety. The city is large and full of unfamiliar people and places. It’s natural to feel concerned, especially as you’re becoming acclimated to the city. While there’s no guaranteed way to avoid risk altogether, here are some resources that can help you understand crime and safety in the city and feel more confident in your move.

Schools are required to release information on campus safety each year. You can find The Chicago School’s annual security reports on our website here. For information on crime rates for the City of Chicago, especially specific neighborhoods, you can visit our larger local papers (www.suntimes.com, www.tribune.com) or the Chicago Police Department.

Looking at the crime statistics for a neighborhood can help you determine how safe you can expect you and your possessions to be. This isn’t necessarily the number of reported crimes, but type—if you see reports of occasional burglaries or minor vandalism, your neighbors care about crime and call the police, who respond and file reports. If nothing but serious crime is listed, you may want to steer clear. That said, vandalism and burglary can happen anywhere. So can fires and burst pipes. We strongly recommend getting renter’s insurance to protect your stuff. Most major insurance companies offer renter’s insurance, so shop around.

Beyond looking at statistics, you can also get a sense of your new neighborhood’s safety by walking around, observing your environment, and meeting neighbors. Are there people outdoors, walking dogs, playing with kids? Do they seem friendly? Are properties run down and trash-strewn or well-cared-for? Once you move into a neighborhood, meeting your neighbors and getting involved in the community is a great way to feel safe and comfortable, as well as to feel more connected. Consider joining a neighborhood association—you’ll usually see flyers around or be able to find information online. It’s a great feeling to know who your neighbors are and that they’re looking out for you!

As a final note, some students may consider self-defense courses as an added way to feel safer and more confident. One such program is Impact Chicago.

However, the biggest influence on a sense of security is time and awareness of your surroundings. We strongly encourage you to get out there and familiarize yourself with the city. Chicago is our home and we want it to feel like yours!
Helpful Numbers

The Chicago School of Professional Psychology 800.721.8072
312.329.6600

ComEd (electric) (www.comed.com)
Service Dept. 800.334.7661

People's Gas (gas/heat) (www.peoplesenergy.com) 866.556.6001

Cable Television
Comcast (www.comcast.com) 800.266.2278
RCN (www.rcn.com/chicago) 800.746.4726
AT&T (U-Verse) (www.att.com) 800-288-2020

Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) (www.transitchicago.com)
In Chicago 312.836.7000
Outside Chicago (customer service) 888.968.7282

Chicago Department of Housing
Landlord-tenant questions 312.742.7368

Illinois Tenants Union (http://www.tenant.org/index.php)
Landlord-tenant problems, tenant rights 773.478.1133

Metropolitan Tenants Organization (http://www.tenants-rights.org/)
Landlord-tenant problems, tenant rights 773.242.4988

Chicago Department of Inspection Services
City Building Inspector 312.743.3600

Chicago Police Department 312.746.8458
Emergency 911
Non-emergency 311
Auto Pound Tow records www.findyourvehicle.cityofchicago.org

Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities 312.744.6673

Cook County State's Attorney's Office 312.603.1880

Free Legal Aid by Phone 312.554.2031

Immigration & Naturalization Services 312.385.1500

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
Driver's License/Titles/Plates 312.793.1010
Additional Information for International Students

Cultural Adjustment
Although being in a new country with new opportunities can be very exciting, at times it will be hard to adjust to a completely foreign culture, language, and lifestyle. The adjustment cycle is continuous. You may move from one stage to another and then back again – this is normal. We have identified some ways in which you can help to cope with homesickness and make your experience the best that it can be!

Stages of Cultural Adjustment*

**Honeymoon Stage:** The first stage is marked by exhilaration, anticipation and excitement. You are beginning your dream of working or studying in the U.S. and feel cooperative, quick to please, and take an active interest in the lives of others. Because you are eager to please, misunderstandings may occur when you want to understand but do not. When the frustration of misunderstandings start to add up, you may move to the next stage…

**Hostility Stage:** The next stage is distinguished by irritation, anger, anxiety, and sometimes depression, loss of appetite, disruptive sleep patterns or indigestion. You may feel frustrated because you have studied English, but you cannot seem to understand people. You may become hostile towards your environment and U.S. culture in general. You may get highly irritated over minor frustrations, become very untrusting and even fearful of Americans. It is here that academic problems arise along with a lack of motivation, and at worst, complete isolation.

**Humor Stage:** The third stage takes place when you notice yourself relaxing into new situations and laughing at misunderstandings which, in the hostility stage, would have caused major frustration. At this point you will have learned how to manage the ins and outs of the College system and will have made friend and acquaintances.

**Home Stage:** The final stage occurs when you not only feel a sense of unity with your home culture, but also “feel at home” here in the U.S. It is time to congratulate yourself, as you have successfully adjusted to life at a The Chicago School and have discovered how to live successfully in two cultures!

*Stages of cultural adjustment identified by Gregory Trifonovitch.

What to Bring

**Clothing**
You will want to bring warm clothing, as Chicago’s winter temperatures can be extremely cold. Sweaters, long-sleeved t-shirts, pants, sweat suits, and jeans are a few suggested items. Once you are here, it is suggested that you visit some stores that have the appropriate coats, gloves, hats, and scarfs that you will need for the winter months. However, even though the temperatures in Chicago are cold during the winter, the temperatures can also be extremely hot and humid during the summer months, so be sure to bring summer clothing items as well as a lightweight jacket.

**Medication**
If you require any medications or vitamins, it is recommended that you bring them with you. You will also want to bring an English translation of any prescription medication or for eyeglasses and contacts. Initially, you will want to bring some toiletries with you but there are many stores near campus that carry these items as well. If you have questions regarding what products you may and may not bring, visit the U.S. Customs website at www.cbp.gov.

**Electronics**
Although your cellular phone will work in the U.S., you will need to purchase a “SIM Card” from a US based cellular service provider. There are many carriers to choose from. If you plan to bring electronics from your home country, please be sure to bring an adapter if you are not coming from a country that uses the same current. The voltage needed in the U.S. is 120.

It is recommended to only bring necessary items. School supplies, sheets, blankets, dishes, pots and pans, and other household items can all be purchased once you have arrived. Finally, many students find it helpful to bring one of two sentimental items from their home country to help ease the occasional and inevitable bout of homesickness.
Housing
See the temporary housing suggestions above for places to stay when you first come to Chicago. In addition, international students may want to take advantage of homestay programs. A homestay can provide an opportunity for students to live in an American household for a determined period of time.

http://www.chicagohomestay.us/become_host_family.html
http://www.usa.worldwidehomestayagency.com/chicagocityinfo.html
http://www.chicagohomestays.org/

When you apply for an apartment, in addition to the tips in the Guide above, you may need some supplemental materials from the school. Explain to your landlord that you are an international student and ask if s/he would be willing to forego the credit check or accept a letter from the school’s DSO confirming your financial standing. Be aware that some landlords may not want to rent to you without a credit check.

Banking
While you are in the United States, you will want to open up a bank account so that you will have a place to save and deposit your personal funds. Opening a bank account will also allow you to write checks and withdraw money from your accounts. If you sign up for an ATM (Automated Teller Machine) card with your bank, then you will be able to make transfers and withdrawals at ATMs. There are many banks with branches or ATMs near campus. Some ATMs will charge a fee if you are using an ATM that is not associated with the bank where you have established your checking account.

Banks near TCSPP Campus*
There are several banks near campus:

Fifth Third Bank
222 Merchandise Mart Plz #206
312-396-4300

Citibank
400 N Clark St.
312-670-3146

Bank of America
203 N. La Salle St.
312-267-6100

Chase
230 W Grand
Chicago, IL 60654
312-644-2748

*TCSPP does not endorse or have an agreement with any of the banks listed.

In addition to ATM cards, it is also common for people to pay for items by credit card. Visa, MasterCard and American Express cards are usually accepted in most grocery stores, retail shops and restaurants.

Currency exchanges are very common in Chicago. Although they are called currency exchanges, most will not exchange foreign currency into U.S. dollars. At a currency exchange one can pay bills, send money through Western Union, and buy a CTA pass.

Money can usually be changed at major banks.
Driving
Chicago has an excellent public transportation system and many students find that having a car is more hassle and more expense than what it is worth. If you do choose to drive, it is important to take into consideration the costs and the regulations surrounding driving in the U.S.

Obtaining a Driver's License
An international student who does not qualify for a Social Security Number can obtain an Illinois Temporary Visitor Driver’s License (TVDL). There is a facility in Chicago where international students may apply. For more information, visit the following urls:
Illinois Department of Motor Vehicles: www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/drivers/home.html
Department of Homeland Security’s Fact Sheet on Driving in the United States: http://studyinthestates.dhs.gov/students/resources/driving

Car Rentals
See “car rentals” section above. Note that Renters must be 21 to rent and require a valid driver’s license from your country along with a debit/credit card. For car sharing programs, official driving history documentation from your country is required.

Useful Websites Concerning Immigration
U.S. Department of State: www.state.gov
U.S. embassies and consulates abroad: www.usembassy.state.gov
Embassy World a Directory of the World’s Embassies & Consulates: www.embassyworld.com
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) for more information on port of entry: www.ice.gov
USCIS Case Status Tracking: https://egov.uscis.gov/cris/Dashboard/CaseStatus.do

Welcome to The Chicago School!