

Career Advancement Chicago City Guide:

How to Prepare for a Successful Summer in Chicago

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Chicago Housing Overview

Whether you are craving some relaxation at the beach, looking to explore the music scene, check out the neighborhood festivals, or just try out different cuisines—Chicago's your city!

Staying in Chicago over the summer has been a popular option for students. The summer provides students with the opportunity to explore the area outside of Hyde Park and take advantage of the many fun activities in the city. Whether you are looking to stay in the Hyde Park area or venture out to the different neighborhoods or suburbs, Chicago offers a variety of housing options.

The type of housing you're looking for, your budget, and your connections in Chicago are all factors that should help determine where you begin your housing search. The earlier you begin looking, the more options you will have and the easier it will be to choose exactly where you want to live for the summer. In the end, it is best to find housing that is near your job location with easy access to public transportation. This should be a priority when looking for housing; it will make your commute to and from work much easier and it will save you a lot of time and money.

Finding Summer Housing

Here is a list of steps you should take when looking for housing:

1. *Consider finding a roommate.* You may end up spending a good amount of your summer income paying for rent. If you can find a classmate, friend, or relative who is willing to room with you or put you up for the summer, economically, this could be your best option.
2. *Location is everything.* One strategy is to search for housing that is close to your workplace and/or near transportation that will get you to work quickly. Hyde Park has a variety of public transportation options for navigating the city and may be a great option if you will be working downtown.

3. *Decide what is important to you.* Once you've decided on what neighborhoods would be convenient for you, it's always helpful to explore what attractions they have to offer. Whether you love trying new restaurants, shopping, or visiting museums and other cultural institutions, try to find a place that will give you the most time to explore your favorite things.
4. *Politely ask your employer about housing resources.* Your employer may have suggestions for where to live, or be able to give you the contact information of other interns who are searching for housing so that you can room together or get advice from each other.

Online Housing Resources

There are a variety of online housing resources that provide short-term housing vacancies, including:

<https://chicago.craigslist.org/>
<https://www.airbnb.com/s/Chicago--IL>
<https://marketplace.chicagomaroon.com/>
<https://www.macapartments.com/>
<http://www.apartments.com/>
<https://hotpads.com/>
http://www.rent.com/illinois/chicago/apartments_condos_houses_townhouses

Student Housing Organizations

Student Housing Organizations are corporations that own large residential buildings and rent out rooms to students in the summer. Sometimes the buildings are set up like dormitories with single rooms and collective bathrooms, and other times the rooms are more like studio or one-bedroom apartments. It is important to look and apply for housing as soon as possible. Many of the applications for the following housing options come out in January or February and housing can fill up quickly. There are both pros and cons to living in Student Housing, just as there are positives and negatives to living in a dorm.

Pros

- Amenities such as security, maintenance, etc.

- Opportunity to meet other students living in the same building
- There are several options ranging from more economical setups to ones with more amenities: prices can range between \$1859 - \$6773 for the entire summer

Cons

- There is a possibility that you'll be matched with a roommate
- There are rules and regulations in most of these places that you'll have to abide by

These institutions offer summer housing:

University Center:

<http://www.chicagosummerhousing.com/>

The University Center provides summer housing to individuals who are in Chicago for educational purposes, internships, co-ops, research, and educational study. The University Center is located in the South Loop, 525 S State St Chicago, IL 60605. Telephone: 877-482-2463; Email: summer@universitycenter.com

The Buckingham:

<http://www.thebuckinghamchicago.com>

Located in downtown Chicago. You will find a “neighborhood life” and be in the mix of shopping, dining, and entertainment. The Buckingham is located in 59 East Van Buren Chicago, IL 60605 Telephone: 312-496-6200

University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC):

<http://www.housing.uic.edu>

University of Illinois at Chicago housing is nestled in the heart of University Village which is home to many restaurants, coffee houses, and shops. Thomas Beckham Hall is located at 1250 South Halsted St., Chicago, IL 60607. Telephone: 312-355-6100; Email: housingintern@uic.edu

School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC):

<https://www.saic.edu/life-at-saic/summer-intern-housing>

SAIC allows student interns from other universities the opportunity to live in their residence hall. SAIC is located on 36 S. Wabash Ave Chicago, IL 60603. Telephone: 800-232-7242 or 312-629-6100; Email: admiss@saic.edu

Loyola University Chicago:

<https://www.luc.edu/conference/housing/summerhousing/residentialhousingoptions/baumharthall/>

Baumhart Hall is located in the heart of the city at Pearson and Wabash. This Hall is located on 26 E. Pearson, Chicago, IL 60611. Telephone: 312-915-6178; Email: Loyolalodging@luc.edu

Chicago Neighborhoods

Many students with summer internships in Chicago choose to live in Hyde Park, but there are a number of students who opt to live in different neighborhoods based on their internship location. Here is a list of affordable neighborhoods that past interns have suggested for housing options:

Bridgeport is located on Chicago's Near North Side and about six miles northwest of Hyde Park. It is also home to the Chicago White Sox and Chinatown.

Pilsen is located west of the South Loop, and is also home to many students interested in arts, culture, and music. This neighborhood is known historically as a predominantly Mexican-American neighborhood, and is now a mix of artists and students.

Uptown is a great budget-friendly neighborhood on the north side of the city. Close in proximity to Lake Michigan and Lincoln Park.

West Town is positioned on Chicago's northwest side, and offers a mix of galleries and museums, independent theater companies, small-scale music venues, and retail boutiques.

Rogers Park is the northernmost neighborhood and might be perfect if you are commuting to a northern suburb. It is considered one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the city.

Rental Tips and Expectations

Applying for a Rental Unit

Most landlords will ask you to complete a rental application form. The application will typically ask for the following information:

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Current and past landlords
- Social Security and driver's license numbers
- Bank account and credit card numbers and addresses
- Financial information regarding your ability to pay the rent (e.g., monthly income)
- Names of people who will be living in the unit

A landlord may ask about information that reflects on your ability to pay the rent; however, federal, state and local laws prohibit landlords from discriminating against classes of

people on arbitrary bases (e.g., race, gender, age, family status).

Cost of Living

A few notes to remember while considering housing costs in Chicago:

- The average monthly rent for a studio or 1-bedroom apartment ranges from \$1,210-\$1,825/\$1,989-\$2,400 for a 2-bedroom apartment.
- Recent Metcalf Interns in the Chicagoland area reported spending a median of \$2400 on rent over the course of the summer.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's [Fair Market Rent tool](#) can help you determine how reasonably priced your rental options are.
- While researching for apartments to rent, be aware of scammers on rental websites (e.g. Craigslist). A common tactic used by the seller is stating that they will be out of the city for months, limiting their accessibility. According to two students trying to find housing over the summer, "We also noticed that a lot of the scam responses were the same, someone leaving the city for 3-9 months for a job."
- Be sure to get in contact (via phone, Skype, etc.) with your landlord or leaser before agreeing to rent the vacancy. Whenever possible, you should visit the space or do a video tour before signing a lease.

Chicago Transportation

Chicago CTA Bus

More than 100 routes are located in the city; buses stop every few blocks. Exact change is required for cash fare. Fares depend on how far you travel, but College students are eligible for reduced fares, so check out their website before you travel.

The 'L'

Not all of Chicago's eight 'L' lines are street-level. They connect the city above ground and underground. The subway trains and the 'L' serve 144 rail stations all over town, making the transportation efficient and affordable.

Metra Commuter Rail

The Metra commuter rail train is fast and connects to the suburbs into downtown. For exact fares and route maps, visit the Metra website at (metrarail.com).

Taxis and Shared Ride Options

Taxis are easy to hail downtown, at the airports and throughout many Chicago neighborhoods. You can also

electronically hail (E-Hail) a taxicab through a mobile app. You can also download the Lyft app (<https://www.lyft.com>) and the Uber mobile app (<https://www.uber.com/>). Fare varies depending on distance and passenger's treatment.

Monthly Transportation Cost

• Ventra 30 Day Pass

A Ventra card is the most convenient way to pay CTA (bus and 'L') fare. You can get a card and register it on the Ventra app to make it easier to add funds, but it is much more convenient (and probably more economical if you're commuting) to pay upfront for an unlimited monthly pass. This 30 day pass costs \$105.

<https://www.transitchicago.com/passes/>

<https://www.ventrachicago.com/>

Chicago Safety

After living in Chicago for school, you should be well-versed in safety precautions for the city. However, here are some basic tips you should be reminded of before your internship in Chicago. Using common sense is good advice and you should also read the following tips for a quick refresher.

General Safety Tips:

- Always remember that there is safety in numbers. Walk with friends, or take populated routes when going places. Be especially careful when walking at night.
- Plan your route in advance, walk with a purpose, and be alert at all times, especially when talking on a cell phone or using headphones.
- Avoid deserted areas such as parks, alleys, and vacant lots.
- If you think you're being followed, cross the street, change direction, or go to a public place.
- Never display large amounts of cash or other valuables in public. If you need to organize your wallet, duck into a store.
- Don't keep your wallet in the back pocket of your pants or backpack, and be aware of your wallet or purse in commotions. Pickpockets often use helpers to create disturbances nearby.
- Use caution when using ATMs and don't carry too much cash around with you. Most places accept credit cards and there are ATMs everywhere. Just make sure you choose one that is in a busy, well-lighted area.

- When Using Public Transportation: On the Metra Rail website, there are customer safety instructions with a variety of safety information for the Metra. Visit <https://metrarail.com/node/4406> to find out more.
- Avoid empty subway cars. Ride with many people or in the conductor's car.

Connect with Alumni

While you're in Chicago this summer, take advantage of the opportunity to connect with another great resource: University of Chicago alumni! Whether you're interested in working in Chicago after graduation, or you wish to find out more about certain career paths, networking with alumni may be one of the most beneficial things you do during your summer. Research alumni who are currently working in Chicago, through the UChicagoWizr Network, an alumni mentoring platform: <https://uchicago.wizr.io/signup> and the online alumni directory: <http://www.uchicagoalumni.org>.



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