

Career Advancement **San Francisco City Guide**

How to Prepare for a Successful Summer in the Bay Area

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San Francisco Housing

It comes as no surprise that San Francisco has a lot to offer when it comes to the technology, arts, and culture. This city also offers a variety of opportunities for UChicago students who are seeking internships and full-time jobs.

The type of housing you're looking for, your budget, and your connections in San Francisco 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.
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 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://sfbay.craigslist.org/>
<https://www.airbnb.com/locations/san-francisco>
<http://www.apartments.com/>
<https://hotpads.com/>
<https://www.homestay.com/united-states/san-francisco>
<https://www.roommates.com>
<https://www.amsires.com>
<https://www.trinitysf.com/>

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
- Potentially more affordable than finding a private apartment: prices typically range from \$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:

The Monroe:

<http://monroeresidenceclub.com/rates.html>

Located amidst the parks and mansions of tree-filled Pacific Heights, The Monroe is located at 1870 Sacramento Street.

Telephone: (415) 474-6200; Email: reservations@monroeresidenceclub.com

Columbus Residence:

<http://columbusresidence.com/>

Located in a historic building in Jackson Square and adjacent to multiple public transportation options. Located at 112 Columbus Avenue. Telephone: 415-500-4950; reservations@columbusresidence.com

Vantaggio Suites Cosmos

<https://vantaggiosuites.com/>

Vantaggio Suites Cosmos has three different locations in the Bay area. Inquiry forms can be found on their website.

San Francisco Neighborhoods

Here is a list of neighborhoods that past interns have suggested for housing options:

Richmond/Sunset are neighborhoods separated by Golden Gate Park and extending west to the Pacific Ocean. They are predominated by rows of rental units. Two-story homes partitioned into apartments and flats are common in the Richmond, which runs the avenues north of the park. The Sunset runs south of the park and is similar to the Richmond, except with more hills. The atmosphere is suburban and community oriented with excellent proximity to Golden Gate Park.

Cole Valley/Haight is located below Golden Gate Park's Panhandle. Most rentals in the area consist of large Victorians, many of which have been restored. The Lower Haight has recently experienced a renaissance and is a haven for the young arts crowd. The atmosphere is laid back and casual with a 1960s countercultural vibe.

Twin Peaks is located at the upper end of Market Street, the highest point in the city. You will find a residential area with modern buildings and condominiums.

Diamond Heights is located southwest of Twin Peaks, offering a similar residential neighborhood. Diamond Heights has a convenient shopping center. Parking is fairly easy in both neighborhoods, and many buildings offer garages and carports.

Civic Center is most closely associated with City Hall, Louise M Davies Symphony Hall, and the War Memorial Opera House. The area centers around Van Ness Avenue, Market Street and City Hall and includes a variety of rental housing.

The Castro is located at the upper end of Market Street; it is the main home of the city's LGBTQ community, as well as many young professionals. A variety of restored Victorian and

modern housing options fill the neighborhood and surround the busy Castro Street shopping and night life district.

Noe Valley is located in the valley on the east side of Twin Peaks and south of the Castro. Noe Valley is a highly sought after area to live. The community atmosphere and renovated Victorians attract families, young professionals, and students.

Mission District is located south of Highway 101 and Market Street, the Mission is one of San Francisco's oldest neighborhoods. Local attractions include taquerias, painted wall murals, Mexican bakeries, colorful variety stores, the original Levi Strauss factory, and the historic Mission Dolores.

South of Market (SOMA) is located south of the Financial District and Market Street. Many modern apartment complexes line the area immediately south of the Financial District; however, rents tend to be on the high end of the scale. The atmosphere is a blend of the new professional and industrial change.

Potrero Hill is located in the southeastern corner of the city. Potrero Hill is filled with families and singles living in restored Victorians, stucco homes, adobe-style houses, and modern apartment complexes.

Pacific Heights and Presidio is perched above the Marina and the Presidio, this majestic area incorporates Laurel Heights and Presidio heights, which fronts the former Presidio Army Base. Fillmore Street is the area's shopping district, along with upper Sacramento Street.

Cow Hollow/Marina occupies the northern tip of the city. The Marina district is generally a quiet neighborhood. The Marina is a popular area among young professionals and lifelong residents. Rental prices are on the upper end of the scale, and apartments are available in charming older buildings or in modern facilities.

Nob Hill is filled with many of the city's most elegant apartment buildings, along with most of the luxurious hotels in San Francisco. Downtown, North Beach, Fisherman's Wharf, and Chinatown are all within walking distance. Not surprisingly, rental prices tend to be higher here compared to the average San Francisco rent price. The atmosphere is trendy, touristy, and colorful.

Russian Hill is a primarily residential area known for its wonderful Bay views and gardened cul-de-sacs. Russian Hill is considered prime property, and the rents will reflect this fact. Nearby Polk Gulch incorporates two miles of boutiques, restaurants, nightspots, and coffeehouses.



Telegraph Hill is filled with maze-like streets that offer views of the East Bay, Fisherman’s Wharf, Downtown, and even Twin Peaks. Chinatown and North Beach are located at the foot of the hill. At the top of Filbert Street is the famed Coit Tower.

North Beach is a historically Italian neighborhood partitioned by awning-lined streets and centered on Columbus Avenue between Broadway and Lombard streets. Rental units run the gamut here, from old apartment buildings to single-family homes and renovated flats. Nestled between Chinatown and Fisherman’s Wharf, North Beach is known for Italian cafes, coffee-houses, saloons, trendy boutiques, Washington Square Park, and Sts. Peter and Paul Cathedral.

South Beach/China Basin is one of the city’s most popular residential areas for young professionals and arose at the southern end of the Embarcadero and the western edge of SoMa. Apartment complexes and boat marinas squeeze together between the foot of the Oakland Bay Bridge and the San Francisco Giants’ waterfront baseball stadium, AT&T Park.

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 cost in the Bay area:

- San Francisco is one of the most expensive cities in the U.S.; the average monthly rent for a studio or 1 bedroom apartment ranges between \$2,500 and \$4,500.

- Recent Metcalf Interns in San Francisco reported spending a median of \$3755 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.

San Francisco Public Transportation

BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit)

BART is the primary regional transit operator in the Bay Area. This train network connects San Francisco with the Peninsula and East Bay cities and both San Francisco and Oakland airports. Fares are based on distance traveled and can be calculated online. Trains run from 4:00 AM – Midnight, Monday through Friday and 6 AM to midnight on Saturdays, and 8:00 AM to midnight on Sundays. For more information, call BART at 415-989-2278; www.bart.gov.

Muni

Muni operates San Francisco’s buses, subways, streetcars, and the historic cable cars. The Muni is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. The daily fee for the bus/rail is \$2.25 while cable car rides are \$7. There are monthly passes available at \$73 (for Muni) and \$86 (for Muni and BART). Wheelchair access varies per route, but all Metro (underground) stations are fully accessible. You can call Muni for route information at 415-673-6864 or visit their website to view system maps at <https://www.sfmta.com/muni>.



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AC Transit

AC Transit buses connect San Francisco with East Bay Cities in Alameda and west Contra Costa counties including Oakland on Berkeley. AC Transit buses depart daily from Transbay Terminal located at First and Mission Streets.
<https://www.actransit.org/>.

Caltrain

Caltrain provides rail service daily between San Francisco and San Jose. Trains are scheduled to accommodate commute travel. Fares vary with distance traveled.
<https://www.caltrain.com>

Golden Gate Bus Transit

The Golden Gate Bus Transit serves San Francisco and North Bay communities, including, Sausalito, Mill Valley and points as far north as Santa Rosa.
<https://www.goldengate.org/bus/schedules-maps/>.

Golden Gate Ferry Service

The Ferry Service provides daily service between the San Francisco Ferry Building and terminals in Larkspur and Sausalito. Ferries are wheelchair accessible.
<https://www.goldengate.org/>.

Bay Area Transit

The Bay Area transit maintains a web page outlining all of the above public transportation options with links to each site at <http://www.511.org>.

Monthly Transportation Cost

- **Clipper Card**

A Clipper card can be used on all of the above transportation services (except the Golden Gate Bus Transit). A joint Muni and BART monthly pass (the transportation services most used for travel within San Francisco) costs \$98.

<https://www.sfmta.com/fares/monthly-adult>
<https://www.clippercard.com/ClipperWeb/index.htmls>

San Francisco Safety

After living in the city of Chicago, you should be well-versed in safety precautions for urban environments. However, here

Connect with Alumni

While you're in San Francisco this summer, take advantage of the opportunity to connect with another great resource: University of Chicago alumni! Whether you're interested in working in the bay area 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 San Francisco, through the UChicagoWISR Network, an alumni mentoring platform: <https://uchicago.wisr.io/signup> and the online alumni directory: <http://www.uchicagoalumni.org>.

are some basic tips you should be reminded of before your internship in San Francisco. 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 valuables or large amounts of cash 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 Bay Area Transit Authority's website there are customer safety instructions with a variety of safety information for the Metro. Visit: <https://www.wmata.com/rider-guide/safety/> to find out more.
- Avoid empty subway cars. Ride with many people or in the conductor's car.



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