

# FINDING HOUSING ON EXCHANGE

A guide for Queen's students  
taking part in Exchange



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Finding housing abroad is one of the first ways you will start to experience your host destination's culture(s) and will give you a great insight into local attitudes, priorities, politics, values, and more.

We know however that finding housing can be stressful. For example, there may be unfamiliar terms and laws, different communication styles, or language issues. Consequently, finding housing at partner universities can be challenging. This guide is designed to help navigate your housing search abroad and supplement house-hunting tips you may already be aware of.

## **Booking accommodation early**

Some partners will encourage you to obtain housing early. Typically, our partners will have firsthand knowledge of the situation on the ground and so we encourage you to listen to their advice.

We know however that not everyone is in the position to be able to make financial commitments months ahead of time and are only able to do so closer to departure.

When deciding whether or not to book housing early, you need to be realistic about what you want versus what you can afford or what is available if you do not book housing early.

If you are not able to book housing early, don't despair! For example, living further out from a city centre may not be what you had envisaged, but rent may be cheaper.



# CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR HOUSING SEARCH

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We hope these tips will help you in your housing search at your host university. Your safety is of paramount importance. If at any time during your housing search you feel unsafe, trust your instincts and seek assistance.



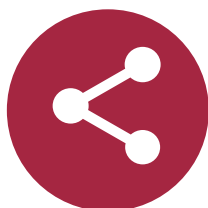
## 01 — Host University

Connect with your host university. Many partners have on-campus accommodation. This may not always be the cheapest option, but can be less stressful than finding housing yourself. If you are looking for private accommodation many of our partners have dedicated offices or staff who can advise you on your housing search (e.g., average rent, local legislation).



## 02 — Your Peers

Try and connect with a student on exchange/who has previously been on exchange in the same city (you can contact your Faculty international office who will reach out to students on your behalf).



## 03 — Social Media and Housing Websites

See if there are any groups you can join or housing websites that share accommodation listings. You might also be able to find information on Facebook, Instagram, Reddit, Discord, etc. The popularity of social platforms may vary by country. These can also be great places to connect with individuals looking for housemates.

Remember - if it seems too good to be true it probably is. You can ask to verify someone's identity - e.g., landlord, potential roommates - and be careful to whom you provide personal information.



#### **04 — Know Your Budget**

Before you start looking for places to rent, know your budget and what works for you financially. Rent and utilities may be more or less on average than Kingston depending on location. Don't forget to factor in other expenses as well such as travel, laundry, internet, cell phone, etc.



#### **05 — Temporary Accommodation**

Depending on your comfort level/risk tolerance you may wish to look for temporary accommodation when first arriving, which will enable you to see longer-term accommodation in person. You can also access more local resources such as newspapers which may carry rental listings.



#### **06 — Consider Homestay**

Homestays are popular in some destinations. They can come with added benefits such as the ability to develop your language skills on a daily basis.



#### **07 — Location, Location, Location**

Always check the location of your potential renting options to have an understanding of the distance from the campus, local grocery stores, convenience stores, pharmacies, and access to public transportation.



#### **08 — Journey Planners**

When you are researching accommodation use a journey planner (e.g., Google Maps) to see for yourself where the housing is and how long it will take you to the university. Accommodation listings may provide an estimate, but these are usually very generous! You can also research how good the public transit system is at the same time.





## 09 — Equity-deserving Groups

Depending on the laws and attitudes of the host destination, students holding one or more and intersecting identities that have typically been targeted for oppression may experience additional and varying challenges in finding housing. For example, persons protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code may not be legally protected in the host destination. Our [Identity Abroad](#) resources contain some considerations that may be useful when thinking about housing.

Your host university may be able to assist in navigating the local housing market, in addition to connecting you with student groups that can provide local guidance. Some travel guides such as Let's Go, Lonely Planet or Time Out have extensive budget travel sections that offer insights into life in a place beyond the tourist hotspots. These descriptions may offer first hints at which quarters are nice to live in, where students usually live, which districts you may wish to avoid and which places are very expensive.



## 10 — Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

Familiarise yourself with the local tenancy laws to know what landlords can and can't do, and what your responsibilities are (e.g., do you need to buy liability insurance). If in doubt, contact your host university. Remember, laws may be different compared to Kingston.





## 11 — Know How to Avoid Scams

International students are often targeted. Be familiar with housing scams and how to spot them:

- [Housing Fraud](#) (Queen's University, Off-Campus Living Advisor)
- [How to Avoid Being Scammed](#) (Queen's University, International Centre)
- [Housing Scams and How to Spot Them](#) (University of Toronto, Student Life)

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