

University of British Columbia – Vancouver

Go Global Housing Information Packet

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1. [More campus housing](#)

Demand to live in residence at UBC greatly exceeds the number of vacancies. Many students will need to apply for alternate accommodation. These housing options are located on campus, but not operated by Student Housing and Hospitality Services.

| Property | Details |
|--|--|
| Westpoint | Luxury rental apartments located in the heart of UBC. **If available, furnished ground floor units can be rented from September or January until the end of April. |
| Greenwood Commons | 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom rental apartments. **Leases available for full-year exchange students only. (No four-month leases are available.) |
| University MarketPlace | Rental apartments. |
| Axis | 15-storey rental high-rise. Available to students, faculty, campus staff and employees of businesses located on campus. **Leases available for full-year exchange students only. (No four-month leases are available.) |
| MBA House | Graduate student housing for singles and couples. **Please note that priority is given to UBC degree-seeking MBA student, graduate students, and Sauder School of Business students. |

Things to note:

- On campus and close to restaurants and food
- Given the location, rent is relatively more expensive than off campus
- One grocery store on campus (Save-on Foods)

Religious community on-campus housing

| Property | Details |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Carey Centre | Short- and long-term student accommodation throughout the year. Carey Centre provides Christian students with a “community of spiritual growth and discipleship.” |
| St. Andrew’s Hall | 93 suites including studios, one bedrooms, four bedrooms, and townhouses. Students only. St. Andrew’s Hall provides Christian students with a residential community: “We seek to be the kind of community here on campus where the “fruits of the Spirit” are visible as recorded by Paul in Galatians 5: 22 – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” |

2. [Off-campus housing](#)

Neighborhoods of Vancouver

Neighborhood cultures, living costs, and transit routes are important factors when looking for housing. UBC is served by 13 bus routes with connections to destinations throughout Metro Vancouver. All full-time students receive a reasonably priced [TransLink U-Pass](#) that provides unlimited travel on bus, SkyTrain and SeaBus. The cost of the pass is included in university fees.



West Point Grey

- Basement suites, apartments, laneway houses, and whole houses for groups of roommates
- Closest Neighborhood to UBC
- 5-10 minutes to campus by bus (14, 4, 9, 84, 44, 99)
- 15-20 minutes to campus by bike
- Restaurants along West 10th
- Some groceries at “Top 10 Produce” on 10th and Sasamat
- 35-40 minutes to downtown by bus

Things to note:

- Near campus
- Buses run frequently and late
- Near Spanish Banks Beach
- More expensive
- Buses are often crowded and/or full
- Often unfurnished basement suites

Kitsilano

- Apartments, houses, and basement suites
- “Kits” is one Vancouver’s most trendy neighborhoods
- 15-20 minutes to campus by bus (14, 4, 84, 44, 9, 99)
- No Frills (grocery store) at West 4th & Alma and Safeway (grocery store) at Broadway & Macdonald
- Restaurants, shops, and a vibrant nightlife along West 4th and along Broadway
- 20-30 minutes to downtown by bus

Things to note:

- Buses run frequently
- Close to beaches (Jericho Beach & Kitsilano Beach)
- Beautiful views
- Because “Kits” is a highly desirable neighborhood, finding housing can be difficult and rent is high
- Buses fill quickly during morning commute

Dunbar Southlands

- Basement suites, houses, apartments
- 20-25 minutes to campus by bus (25, 41, 49, 7, 99)
- Several grocery stores and a trendy commercial area with shops and restaurants along Dunbar Street
- 30-35 minutes to downtown by bus

Things to note:

- Groups of roommates often find Dunbar is a good option as rent for an entire home here tends to be more affordable for students
- Relatively less expensive
- Near Pacific Spirit Regional Park
- Dunbar is quiet and more spread out than Kitsilano, which means housing is sometimes further from a major bus route
- Buses to Dunbar do not usually run late at night

Arbutus Ridge & Kerrisdale

- Many single-family homes and apartments
- 15-30 minutes to campus by bus (25, 33, 41, 49)
- 20-30 minutes to downtown by bus (16)
- Safeway (grocery store) near Arbutus & King Edward

Things to note:

- More options for larger groups

- Family-oriented neighborhood
- Relatively less expensive
- Buses are less frequent, especially at night
- Can be a longer commute from Kerrisdale

West End & Downtown

- High-rise apartments
- the core of Vancouver—home to vibrant beaches, trails in Vancouver’s iconic Stanley Park, restaurants, nightlife and diverse lifestyles
- Neighborhoods include Yaletown, Gastown, and The West End
- 35-45 minutes by bus to campus (14, 4, 7, 99)

Things to note:

- Near beaches and harbor
- Center of nightlife and culture
- Stores, restaurants, parks, attractions, festivals and events
- Most expensive area
- Small apartments and living spaces

East Vancouver

- Basement suites and low-rise apartments
- “East Van” is a popular choice for students because of its unique, affordable neighborhoods: Chinatown, Main Street, Commercial Drive and Mount Pleasant
- 45-60 minutes to campus by bus (99, 4, 14, 84)
- 10-15 minutes to downtown by bus

Things to note:

- Relatively less expensive
- Varied options for housing style and living situation
- Close to Millennium-line and Expo-line Skytrain
- Buses are crowded at all times
- Some unsafe areas: East Hastings

Vancouver Suburbs

- There are many affordable cities surrounding Vancouver, including Burnaby, Richmond and New Westminister
- Many UBC students who have families in these areas commute to UBC to save money
- 60-90 minutes to campus by car or Skytrain & bus

Things to note:

- Less expensive rent
- North & West Vancouver near mountains
- Long commutes

3. Things to Consider

When looking for a place to live, think about what is most important to you.

Transit

Most UBC students who live off-campus take transit every day.

- Is the place in walking distance to regular transit?
- Will you need to take more than one bus to get to campus?
- How frequent and busy/crowded are the buses?
- Is cheaper rent worth a longer commute?

Noise & Neighborhood Dynamic

No one deserves to have an uncomfortable living situation.

- Is your neighborhood safe?
- Are you okay with noise from other students, young families with children, or busy traffic?
- Do you think your new neighbors will be okay with noise coming from your place?

Weather

Vancouver is warm in the summer but tends to be rainy, cloudy, and cold in the winter/fall/spring.

- Do you mind biking or walking to campus or other places around Vancouver during inclement weather?
- Every place looks good in the sunshine, try and see the places on a rainy, cold day or picture it in the rain.

Food

- Do you prefer cooking or eating out?
- Do you have easy access to a car or transit to get to the grocery store?

Utilities: Heat, Internet, and Cable

- Is the cost of utilities included in the rent price?
- In case of a basement suite or split house: who controls the thermostat?
- Does internet quality matter to you?

Laundry

- Is there a washing machine? Is there a dryer?
- Where is the closest laundromat?

Furnished or unfurnished

- How much furniture will you need?
- How will you get new furniture into the place? Do you need a truck rental?
- Furnished apartments often make sense for students looking for short-term housing.

Sublets

- If you need to, discuss it with your landlord

4. Housing Styles

Basement suite

Also known as a garden suite/ground-level suite

- Lots of noise from above, especially if children live upstairs
- Usually below-ground and cold
- Few windows or natural light sources
- Sometimes have low ceilings

Apartments

Low-rise (2-4 stories) and high-rise (many stories)

- Noise can come from above or below
- Earthquake safety
- Vancouver has many old apartment buildings with insect conditions and mold

House

Can be split into multiple units

- Is there a yard and who is responsible for upkeep?
- Do you need parking?
- Leasing a full house or separate unit within a house is different than renting a room

5. Costs

Rents vary greatly depending on apartment location, age and condition. For example, it is generally more expensive to rent in a condominium building than an apartment building, and locations close to UBC are typically more expensive than elsewhere in Greater Vancouver. Keep in mind, these are only general guidelines for cost.

| Housing Type | Rental Average |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Shared with roommates | \$1,096 |
| Bachelor/studio | \$1,411 |
| One bedroom | \$1,828 |
| Two bedroom | \$2,393 |
| Three bedroom | \$2,979 |

Rental averages from [CMHC Urban Rental Market Survey Data, October 2019](#).

Additional costs might include:

- Utilities (e.g., heat, water, electricity)
- Internet, Cable TV
- Security deposit (one-time cost)
- Pet deposit (one-time cost)
- Apartment furnishings
- Laundry, parking, food and entertainment
- Tenant insurance (BCAA is one option)
- Vehicle transportation, such as parking, car insurance and gas

6. How to avoid rental scams

It is very important that you are aware of [how to avoid rental scams](#).

Red Flags and Tips

- **Is the price too good to be true?**
Check rental rates in the same area. Often fraudsters will try to entice their victims with low prices to elicit multiple victims.
- **Are they just communicating with you via email?**
Fraudsters will not want to meet their victims in person or via Skype to avoid being recognized and investigated by police.
- **Are they asking for cash only or a cash security deposit?**
Cash is untraceable and can be used immediately.

- **Are they asking for money to be wired?**
Once money is wired, it is extremely difficult to cancel the transaction. Also, money transfers are difficult to trace.
- **Have you seen the place and walked around with the property manager or owner?**
Never rent a place that you have not been inside and walked around.
- **Are they asking for personal information such as a SIN, bank account, credit card numbers?**
That information is not required to rent a place.
- **Are they the landowner or property manager?**
Only the landowner and property manager have the authority to rent out a place (there are exceptions to this rule however, it is rare).
- **Ask the neighbours about the landowner and history of the property.**
Neighbours are a great source of information regarding the owner and property. They can often confirm who the owner or property manager is.

Sample scam scenarios

1. "Scam reply" sent to potential renter:

Hello

Thanks for your email and interest in the property. I personally own the property and also want you to know that it was due to my transfer that made me and my wife to leave the property and also want to give it out for rent and looking for a responsible person that can take very good care of it as we are not after the money for the rent but want it to be clean at all time and the person that will rent it to take it as if it were its own. So for now, We are here in , United State in our new house and also with the keys and documents of the house, we try to look for an agent that we can give this documents before we left but could not see and we are as well as don't want our property to be used any how in our absence that is why we took it along with us. I and my wife came over to United State for a missionary work, so i hope you will promise us to take very good care of the house. kindly get back to me on how you could take care of our house or perhaps experience you have in renting home. The rent fee is included all the utilities , no extra fee for parking, and you can rent it unfurnished.. there are sporting equipment..I am looking forward to hear from you ASAP so that i can forward you an application form to fill out and discuss on how to get the property for rent.

Thanks.

2. Someone posing as a landlord requested that a student pay one month's rent (\$600) and a bond (\$400) via wire transfer. Unfortunately, the student did. Then the "landlord's solicitor" sent the following email to the student:

ATTN: Student Name,

My name is Derrick Abram, an accountant and practicing attorney for almost three decades, has represented clients before state and local courts, federal and state administrative agencies as well as in multi-state arbitration matters. I'm currently and has represented clients before the Internal Revenue Service Examination and Collection Divisions, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, Internal Revenue Service District Counsel Office, Netherlands Attorney's General Office for three federal districts, American Department of Justice Tax Division, Vancouver Department of Taxation and Finance, Quebec Board of Tax Appeals, Quebec Attorneys General Office. I have represented various Fortune 500 business executives, medical and legal professionals, religious leaders, entrepreneurs, regional certified public accounting firms, entrepreneurs and commercial and residential real estate developers.

I'm the solicitor of Mr James Hills. I received copy of a lease agreement and copy of payment receipt you made to me which comprises of first month rent and security deposit. I submitted the lease agreement to Vancouver Housing Council for notarization and endorsement, but the lease agreement was returned unnotarized because the lease agreement is not in-line with Vancouver rental law codes. The Vancouver rental law code under Article 7: Landlord and Tenant, Section, Section 221: Rent/Security deposit stated thus;

1.1 No landlord shall collect more than 100% equivalent amount of first month's and last month's rent from Canadian citizen or resident permit card holder prospective tenant and first and last month's rent must be paid by Non-Vancouver citizen or resident permit card holder and one thousand dollars as security deposit from Non-Canadian/International prospective tenants for a property of one bedroom apartment below.

1.2 No landlord shall hold unto the security deposit beyond last day of the lease agreement, but it can be converted to house rent if it's suitable and agree by the both parties.

(The clause that applies to you is highlighted in blue and bold.)

Base on this, you still have outstanding payment of one month's rent of 600\$ and 600\$ to meet up wit the official required security deposit, making total amount of 1200\$ to pay to meet up the official/legal require security deposit from Non-Canadian citizen or residence. This comes to be due to the fact that the building is affiliated to the Vancouver Municipal council, and Government must be aware of all tenants that occupy the every of the apartments in the building. I was asked to resubmit your file along with the payment receipt of additional required 1200\$ to complete the official required security deposit.

Though, your landlord (Mr James Hills) is really reluctant to have me send this message to

you, because he doesn't want anything that will cause discomfort to you, because the fault is from his end but we don't have choice than to let you know in order to fashion way out to solve this issue on ground ASAP, because you can't occupy or move into the property without having the lease agreement notarize and endorsed by the Vancouver housing council and we must have your data registered with them, doing anything contrary to this will render you as illegal occupant of the property. But I think I have delivered on my own responsibility, so you should just try to get in touch with your landlord and discuss best way to solve this issue, so we can get going.

Thank you!

Best Regard

Derrick Abram
(SAC, LAC, EPAC)
LAW OFFICES OF Derrick Abram

7. Where to look

There are many ways to search for an apartment in Vancouver—from websites to notice boards. Before you begin your search, make sure you review the “Things to consider” (above).

At UBC:

- [UBC Student Housing Forum](#): Your place to connect with other UBC students about subletting a room on-campus.
- AMS Nest bulletin board (at the entrance next to Honour Roll sushi)
- Graduate Student Society, Thea Koerner House, main floor foyer

Arranged student housing/residences:

(These are provided as a resource to students. UBC does not endorse these accommodations.)

1. [Global Education City](#)
Furnished student residences around Vancouver. Their rates include all the water and electricity costs, Wi-Fi, and weekly housekeeping service. Students only need to supply their food and toiletries.
2. [Cypress Accommodations](#)
Offers student accommodations in fully furnished apartments and residences downtown and around Vancouver. Their closest accommodations to UBC includes a shared student house in Kerrisdale (Laburnum Street) and a shared student house in Oakridge (Fremlin Street). Homestays are also available.
3. [ESLRent.com](#)

Furnished apartments and shared apartments for rent to international students in downtown Vancouver. All apartments include furniture, dishes, blankets, telephone, heat, and electricity.

4. [HI Vancouver Jericho Beach Hostel](#)

Shared accommodation offering spaces in single-gender and mixed-gender dormitories, secured by keycard access, on a month-to-month basis for about \$400/month. The hostel includes an open-concept kitchen, TV lounge, laundry facilities, and wifi in communal areas. Walking distance to all buses along 4th avenue (84, 4, and 44 to UBC) and on-site parking available.

Facebook Groups:

(These groups are provided as a resource to students. UBC does not endorse these groups or their rental listings.)

5. [UBC students looking for roommates, housing rental/sublet](#)

6. [UBC Roommates and Housing](#)

7. [UBC Roommates Group](#)

Online room and/or apartment listings:

(These sites are provided as a resource to students. UBC does not endorse these sites or their rental listings.)

8. [UV Rentsline](#)

Online apartment rental listings in Vancouver.

9. [Craigslist](#)

Online apartment rental listings for rooms and/or apartments in Vancouver.

10. [Renthello](#)

Online apartment rental listings in Vancouver.

11. [PadMapper](#)

Online apartment rental listings in Vancouver.

12. [Airbnb](#)

Online apartment rental listings for rooms and/or apartments in Vancouver.

13. [Rentseeker.ca](#)

Online apartment rental listings in Vancouver.

14. [Student.com](#)

This website collects and posts student rental listings.

15. Search4StudentHousing.com
Unfurnished and furnished apartment rental listings available around UBC.
16. Roommates Vancouver
Browse the latest roommate listings near UBC with rents \$1000 per month and under. (Click on the listing to view the full description with photos and to reply to the listing.)

Websites in Chinese where students can find room and/or apartment listings:
(These sites are provided as a resource to students. UBC does not endorse these sites or their rental listings.)

17. <http://g.58.com/j-glvanancouver/glchuzu/> (Simplified Chinese)
18. <http://www.vansky.com/info/index.html> (Simplified Chinese/Traditional Chinese)
19. <http://www.vanpeople.com/c/list/42.html> (Simplified Chinese/Traditional Chinese)
20. <http://www.westca.com/House/rent/> (English/Simplified Chinese/Traditional Chinese)

Other Resources:

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

A comprehensive online rental guide, developed by Canada Mortgage & Housing.

8. Terminology

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Appl. | Appliances (stove, refrigerator and dishwasher) |
| Apt. | Apartment |
| Bdrm. or | Bedroom |
| Bsmt. | Basement suite (self-contained suite below the main floor of the |
| Cable | Extra channels for your television (sometimes included in cost of |
| F. | Prefer female occupant |
| F&S | Fridge and stove only, no other appliances |
| Hydro | Electricity |
| Hot plate | Heating element for cooking, but no stove or oven |
| Gas | Natural gas (heating) |
| Incl. util. | Price includes cost of utilities (heat, hot water) |

| | |
|-----------|--|
| M. | Prefer male occupant |
| N/D | Non-drinkers (of alcohol) only |
| N/P | No pets allowed |
| N/S | Non-smokers only |
| Prkg. | Parking available |
| Pvt. Ent. | Private entrance |
| R&B or RB | Room and board (cooked meals are included in cost) |
| Refs. | References required |
| Ste. | Suite (self-contained set of rooms) |
| W/D | Washer and dryer |
| W/W | Wall-to-wall carpeting |

9. When you find a potential place

Inspection

Make sure that you're getting all you were promised. Before signing a lease, inspect the unit (or have someone you trust inspect it for you).

- Do the appliances work? Check inside the fridge and turn on the stove
- How loud is traffic noise when the windows are open?
- Are there locks on all doors?
- Do the shower and taps work? Turn each one on.
- Do the walls require new paint? If so, ask the landlord to paint before you move in.
- Is the carpet clean? Ask the landlord if the carpet will be cleaned before you move in.
- What does the rent include?
- Will you have to pay extra for heat, electricity, cable, laundry facilities, storage, or parking?
- Is smoking allowed?
- Is the place pet-friendly?
- Can you paint the walls?
- Are you allowed to hang things on the walls?

Water damage (yellow stains on the walls and ceiling), mouse droppings, and cockroaches are very bad signs (avoid renting suites that have these problems and be sure to alert your landlord to these issues if they come up after you have moved in)

Deposit and documentation

- Get details of your rental agreement in writing.
- Take photos to document any existing damage or repairs needed before you move in. If the landlord says something will be repaired or cleaned before you move in, write this down in the agreement.
- Make sure both you and your landlord have a copy of all the agreements you have signed. If you make any changes to the documents, both you and your landlord should initial next to each change.
- Prove that you paid. Pay by cheque or money order, or get a receipt if you pay in cash.

Furnishings

If you rent an unfurnished apartment, you'll need a bed, desk, sofa, kitchen table, and chairs. Try the following places for good deals:

- Salvation Army Thrift Stores
- Value Village
- Craigslist
- Garage and yard sales
- Flyers posted in the Nest (Student Union Building)

Set up utilities

Most tenants need to contact BC Hydro to set up electricity and a communications company for TV, phone, and Internet service.

- Electricity—[BC Hydro](#)
- TV, Internet, home phone, mobile phone options: [Shaw](#), [Telus](#), [Bell](#), [Rogers](#) or [Novus](#).

Get tenant insurance

We advise that you insure your belongings against theft, fire, and other damage. You may choose to insure your belongings with any private insurance company or [BCAA](#).

Know your rights

Review information on renting in Canada, leases, tenants' rights, and dealing with landlords.

- [Canada Mortgage & Housing rental guide](#)
- [Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre](#)
- [Residential Tenancy Office](#)
- [UBC International Student Advising](#)

Short-term accommodation

A few options while you search for a place.

Visitor Campus Housing:

- [UBC Rooms & Suites](#)
- [Student Housing Forums](#)

Off-campus Housing:

- [Centre for Digital Media](#)
- [YWCA Hotel](#)
- [APT Living](#)
- [Menno Simons Centre](#)
- [Hostel International Jericho Beach](#)
- [Hostel International Vancouver Downtown](#)

Short-term storage

A few options if you arrive early and/or if you want to travel before or after your rental is available.

- [Alluster Storage](#)
- [Storagehotel](#)
- [Kitsilano Mini Storage](#)