

# Housing Information Packet

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## 1. Neighborhoods of Vancouver

While there are many neighborhoods in what is considered the City of Vancouver. This packet focuses primarily on neighborhoods in the West side near UBC, Downtown, and Eastside.

### University Village

- Apartments and townhomes, some basement suites available
- Walking/Biking distance to campus
- Near dollar store, grocery store and food court
- Approximate rent: 1-bedroom apartment \$1450-1650/month; 2-bedroom apartment \$1900-2350/month; 5-bedroom townhouse \$604/room/month

*Pros-*

- On campus: biking or walking distance, close to restaurants and food

*Cons-*

- Cheaper rent means a significant decline in quality of housing, more expensive in general, no large grocery stores

### Wesbrook Village

- Primarily High-rise apartments
- Biking/Walking distance to campus
- Also accessible by the 33, 41, C18, 25, 480
- Save-On Foods, BCL, restaurants and Pacific Spirit Park
- Average rent: 1-bedroom approx. \$1650/month; 2-bedroom approx. \$2150/month; 3-bedroom approx. \$2600/month
- Save-On Foods, BCL, restaurants and Pacific Spirit Park

*Pros-*

- Near campus- biking and walking distance and amenities- Save On Foods

*Cons-*

- More expensive, less student presence, further from bus access to downtown

## **West Point Grey**

- Primarily Basement suites

*Pros-*

- 5-10 minutes from campus by bus (14, 4, 84, 44 and 99)
- 15-20 minutes by bike
- Safeway at 10<sup>th</sup> and Sasamat
- Restaurants along West 10<sup>th</sup>
- Buses run frequently and late
- 40 minutes to downtown by bus
- Near Spanish Banks Beach

*Cons-*

- Limited options for large groups
- Can be more expensive due to location
- Often unfurnished basement suites

## **Kitsilano**

- Apartments, houses, and basement suites

*Pros-*

- 15-20 minutes by bus to campus (14, 4, 84, 44, 9, 99)
- No Frills at 4<sup>th</sup> & Alma, Safeway at Broadway & Macdonald
- Restaurants and store along West 4<sup>th</sup> and Broadway
- Buses run frequently
- 20-30 minutes to downtown by bus
- Close to beaches (Jericho & Kits)
- Beautiful views

*Cons-*

- Can be more expensive or smaller due to location
- Buses fill quickly during morning commute

## **Dunbar Southlands**

- Basement suites, houses, apartments

*Pros-*

- 10-15 minutes by bus (25, 41, 49, 7 & 99)
- More options for large groups
- Relatively less expensive

- Near Pacific Spirit Regional Park
- Grocery stores along Dunbar
- Stores and restaurants along Dunbar Street

*Cons-*

- 45-60 minutes to downtown
- Buses are less frequent late at night

## **Arbutus Ridge & Kerrisdale**

- Single Family Homes and apartments

*Pros-*

- More options for larger groups
- Relatively less expensive
- 15-30 minutes by bus (25, 33, 41, 49)
- 20-30min to downtown (16)
- Safeway near Arbutus & King Edward

*Cons-*

- Buses are less frequent, especially at night
- Can be a longer commute from Kerrisdale
- Older neighborhood: more families and older people

## **West End & Downtown**

- High rise and apartments

*Pros-*

- Near beaches and harbor
- Center of nightlife and culture
- Stores, restaurants, parks, attractions, festivals and events

*Cons-*

- 35-45 minutes by bus to campus (14, 4, 7 & 99)
- Most expensive area
- Small Apartments and living spaces

## **East Vancouver**

- Basements and Low-rise apartments

*Pros-*

- Unique neighborhoods (Chinatown, Main St, Commercial, Mount Pleasant)
- Relatively less expensive
- Varied options for housing style and living situation
- 10-15 minutes to downtown

- Close to Millennium-line and Expo-line Skytrain
- Cons-*
- 40-60 minutes by bus (99, 4, 14, 84)
  - Some unsafe areas: East Hastings

## Vancouver Suburbs

*Pros-*

- Less expensive rent
- North & West Vancouver near Mountains

*Cons-*

- Long commutes 60-90 minutes by Car or Skytrain & bus

### a. Average Rents

Type of accommodation	Approximate cost per month	Typical Rental Range
Shared accommodation	\$700	\$600-800
Bachelor suite/Studio	\$900	\$800-\$1,000
One-bedroom apartment	\$1,050	\$1,000-\$1,100
Two-bedroom apartment	\$1,500	\$1,400-\$1,600
Three-bedroom apartment	\$2,050	\$1,800-\$2,300

## 2. Terminology

Appl.	Appliances (stove, refrigerator and dishwasher)
Apt.	Apartment
Bdrm. or br.	Bedroom
Bsmt.	Basement suite (self-contained suite below the main floor of the building)
Cable	Extra channels for your television (sometimes included in cost of rent)
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

### 3. Where to look

AMS Rentsline (<http://www.amsrentsline.com/>): this is an automated touch-tone telephone service as well as an online service for finding off-campus housing (Tel: 604-714-4848)

Province (<http://classifieds.theprovince.com/vancouverprovince/rentals>) and Vancouver Sun (<http://classifieds.vancouversun.com/vancouver/rentals>) classifieds: listings for both newspapers are available online as well as in print, and you could also check the classifieds in the Georgia Straight and the Vancouver Courier

Craigslist (<http://vancouver.en.craigslist.ca/search/apa>): this is popular website for housing and other classifieds

Rent BC (<https://renthello.com/North-America/Canada/British-Columbia/Vancouver/>): an easy to use site for rental housing search areas in BC

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (<https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/reho/index.cfm>): a new comprehensive online rental guide, developed by Canada Mortgage & Housing and rental guide

PadMapper (<http://www.padmapper.com/search/apartments/British-Columbia/Vancouver/>): you can use this website to filter rental postings and it shows postings on an easy to use map

ESLRent (<http://www.eslrent.com/>): furnished apartments and shared apartments for rent to international students in downtown Vancouver

Vancouver Apartment Rentals (<http://www.apartmentguide.ca/>): a comprehensive guide to Vancouver's rental apartments

Apartments Canada (<http://apartmentscanada.com/>): internet apartment guide for Canada

Homeurgano (<http://www.homeurbano.ca/en/furnished-accommodations.aspx>) : this is a start-up company that specializes in helping international students finding furnished rooms or apartments. The company sends staff to visit each rental property and takes pictures. There is a "finder's fee," but UBC students (exchange students included) can get a 10% discount when they provide documentation that they are admitted to UBC.

Global Education City (<http://www.studenthotel.ca/>): this company provides fully furnished suits to students for short-term and no lease is required.

Student.com (<https://www.student.com/ca/vancouver/accommodation/university-of-british-columbia>): this company collects leasing information and posts them on their website.

## **4. Things to Consider**

### **Transit**

- Is the place walking distance to regular transit?
- Do you have to transfer to get to campus?
- How frequent and busy are the buses?
- Are you okay with commuting longer distances for cheaper rent?

### **Noise**

- Are your neighbors noisy? (i.e. Are they students, young family, young professionals? Etc.)
- Are you able to make noise at your locations? (i.e. Who lives around you that would complain? Do you like to have people over? Etc.)

### **Weather**

- Every place looks good in the sunshine, try and see the places on a rainy, cold day or picture it in the rain

### **Proximity to grocery stores and restaurants**

- Do you frequently eat out?
- Are you planning on making your meals or eating on campus?
- Do you have access to a car or transit to get to the grocery store

## **Neighborhood dynamic**

- Who lives around you? (other renters? Homeowners? Young families? Older families? Students?)
- Is the neighborhood surrounded by transit or is it largely car based
- Is the neighborhood safe? Would you feel comfortable walking the streets at night?

## **Heating**

- Is it included in utilities?
- In case of a basement suite or split house: who controls the thermostat?

## **Internet and cable**

- Is it included in the cost?
- Does it matter to you what kind of internet you have?

## **In suite laundry**

- Is there a washing machine?
- If not, is there a Laundromat nearby?
- Are you okay with taking your laundry out to get washed?

## **Furnished or unfurnished**

- Be sure to budget for furnishings!
- Do you have a car to transport furniture?

## **Subletting**

- Does your landlord allow for subletting?
- Can you afford not to sublet if not?

## **a. Considerations for each style of Housing**

### **Basement suite**

- Also known as Garden Suite, Ground Level Suite
- Noise from above (i.e. Who lives there? Children, elderly couple, other students?)
- Cold: check for heating and who controls the thermostat
- Lighting: generally have small or few windows; make sure you are okay living

- in a darker place
- Ceiling height

## **Apartment**

- Low-rise or high rise
- Noise from above or below (i.e. restrictions on noise; complaint center or ways to address the issue; etc.)
- Age of apartment: mold, earthquake safety, etc.
- Environment of building: majority students, young people, old people?

## **House**

- Because of high cost, houses are often split (who are you sharing with? Landlord, students, etc.)
- Yard: who is responsible for yard-work?
- Parking
- Laneway House: a small house with access from the laneway, on the same property as the main house but a separate self-standing house.
- Leasing a place vs. renting a room

## **5. What to look for when inspecting**

- 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)