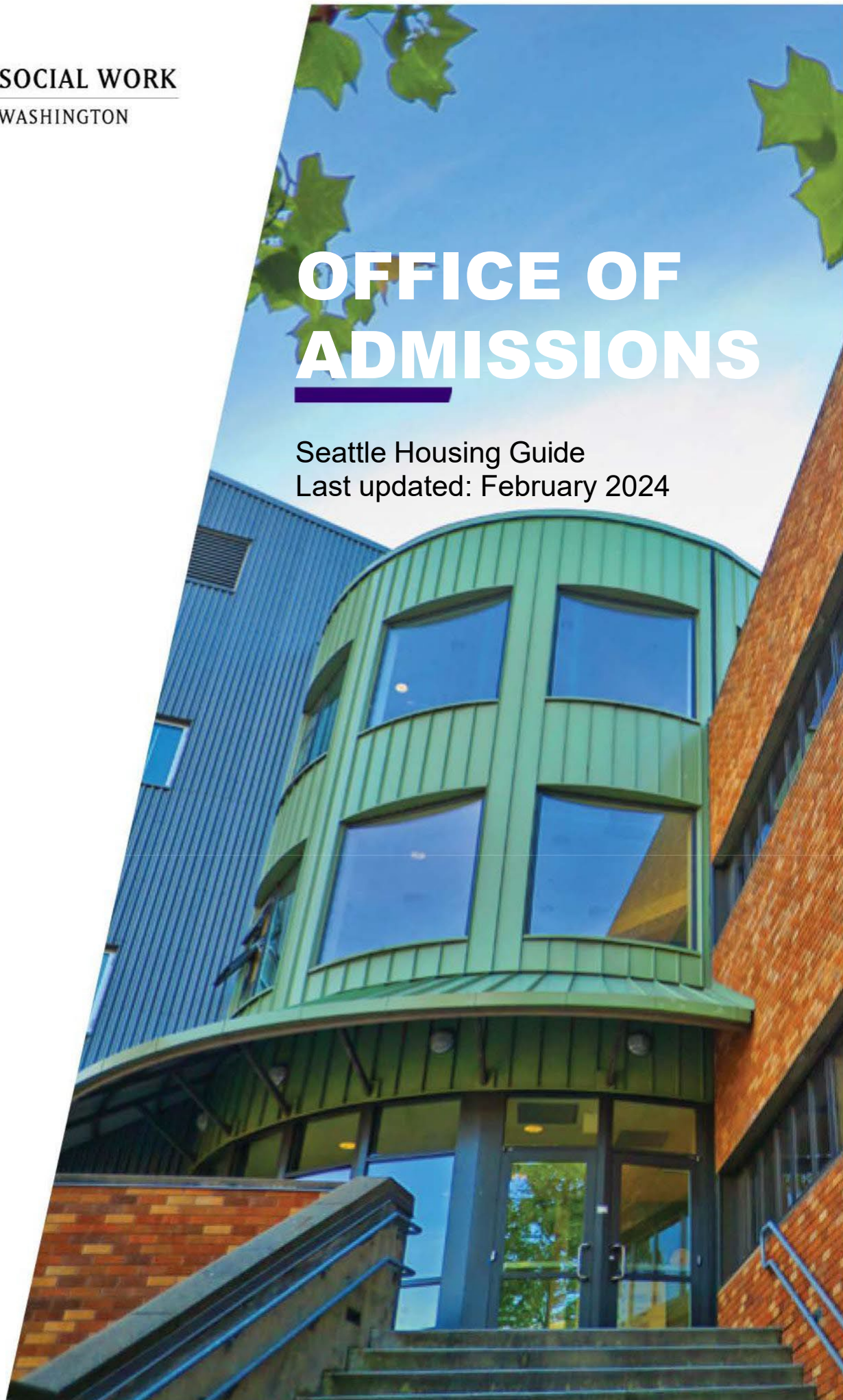


SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF ADMISSIONS

Seattle Housing Guide
Last updated: February 2024



WELCOME

Housing in Seattle tends to be more expensive and a bit more challenging to find than other parts of the Puget Sound. The average price of a studio is approximately \$1600, 1- bedroom is \$2200 and 2-bedroom is \$2800. Those considering Seattle should start their search for housing at least a month before starting classes. Should you decide to split a house or apartment with roommates, you will save a substantial amount of money. Rather than securing housing sight unseen, we encourage you to allow time to research and, if possible, visit the area.

Seattle's public transportation system is undergoing improvements and expansion (such as the Link Rail), making living outside of the area a viable and less expensive option. Note that many apartment managers ask for the first and last month's rent as well as damage or cleaning deposits. Don't be surprised if you must pay for a credit check as it is standard in the Northwest.

Moving to a new area for school can be exhilarating and daunting. Here are some resources for out-of-state students moving to the Seattle area.



CITY OF SEATTLE

Seattle is a lively and cosmopolitan city beautifully set in a dramatic backdrop of water, forests and mountains. In addition to the gorgeous scenery, Seattle is ranked as one of the best places to live in the United States. Seattle is also currently the fastest growing city in the United States. Why do people want to move to Seattle?

Key Benefits of Living in Seattle

- The average unemployment rate in the US is 6.0 percent; Seattle is at 4.8 percent and historically has some of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.
- The U.S. median for future job growth over the next 10 years is 33.5 percent. In Seattle, it's 43.8 percent.
- There is no state income tax.
- Surrounded by several bodies of water, the Seattle area offers many beaches, parks, waterfalls, marinas, mountain views, and stunning scenery. Great outdoors activities - skiing, boating, hiking, biking.
- Seattle experiences less rainfall annually than many cities on the Eastern seaboard.
- The mild, temperate marine climate allows year-round outdoor recreation, including walking, cycling, hiking, skiing, snowboarding, kayaking, rock climbing, motor boating, sailing, triathlon, running, team sports, and swimming.
- The public and private school systems are top-rated, as is the largest educational institution, the University of Washington.
- Seattle has a very high percentage of residents (25+) with a college degree or higher (65.9%). One of the most literate cities in the country.



COST OF LIVING

These sites are great as a general, overall look at how much living in Seattle costs, but it certainly not detailed and exhaustive. You are able to enter in a city to compare costs with:

<https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/in/Seattle>

<https://www.expatistan.com/cost-of-living/seattle>

<http://www.payscale.com/cost-of-living-calculator/Washington-Seattle>

<https://www.nerdwallet.com/cost-of-living-calculator/>

<http://www.bestplaces.net/city/washington/seattle>

Seattle Landlord-Tenant Laws

<https://www.seattle.gov/housing/renters/know-the-law#rentersrightsresponsibilities>

Tenants Union of Washington State

<https://tenantsunion.org/rights>

Questions to ask:

- What utilities does the property use? What is the approximate monthly utility cost?
- Who will have access to keys to the rental unit and how are keys protected? Will locks be changed when the current tenants move out?
- How is maintenance or repair work handled? Does the landlord live on-site or nearby? Is there a property manager?
- What kinds of problems have occurred in the neighborhood or building?

Here are some questions to help you narrow down your housing search:

- Do you want to live alone or with roommates?
- How long or short of a commute would you like to make every day?
- What is the absolute maximum rent you are willing to pay monthly?
- Will you have a car or will you rely solely on public transportation?

These questions will narrow down your housing search and make it much easier to figure out what sort of living situation works best for your needs, budget, and overall goals.

Padmapper is a great tool (<https://www.padmapper.com/>) to use due to the visual map that segments housing based on area and price. As you can see, the city of Seattle proper (downtown, central, north Seattle) are the most expensive areas, whereas Southeast/Southwest Seattle and upper North Seattle are typically cheaper.

NEIGHBORHOODS AROUND UW

Living in Seattle – Getting to know the neighborhoods

Seattle is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own unique character. There are some that are the most popular with grad students and they are: Ballard, Fremont, Wallingford, Green Lake, Capitol Hill, the U District, Ravenna, Central District and Queen Anne. They are just a few of many options in the city.

BALLARD

Ballard is a hip waterfront neighborhood with trendy restaurants, indie shops, bars and craft breweries centered on historic Ballard Avenue. Ships and salmon pass through the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks, or Ballard Locks, also a popular picnic spot. The sandy beach at Golden Gardens Park draws sunbathers and volleyball players and offers mountain views. The Nordic Heritage Museum is a must-do; it displays the area's Scandinavian roots and offers an insight into the heritage of Seattle's Nordic immigrants.

- **Favorites:** Happy Hour at “Percy’s & Co”; first-run movies at the old-timey “Majestic Bay Theater”; ice cream from “Salt and Straw”, fresh produce & flowers at the year-round “Ballard Sunday Farmers Market”; Dinner and sunset views at “Ray’s Café”,
- **Commute:** 30-minute bike ride, Route Map found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98107-01.png> , as well as bus route 44

CAPITOL HILL

Capitol Hill is diverse and fast-paced, with an endless number of bars, eateries, nightclubs, laid-back coffee shops and indie stores. It is also the unofficial center of Seattle's LGBTQ+ community. Volunteer Park, atop the hill in a historic mansion district has walking trails, a plant conservatory, panoramic city views and the art deco Asian Art Museum. It abuts Lake View Cemetery, where the city's founders (and Bruce Lee) are buried.

- **Favorites:** Craft beers at “Optimism Brewing Company.”; swing dancing at “The Century Ballroom”; Tacos at “Tacos Chukis”; Happy Hour with a great view at “The Lookout”; ice cream at “Molly Moon’s.
- **Commute:** 20-minute bike ride, Route Maps found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98115-01.png> And here : <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98115-01.png>, as well as accessibility from the Link light rail and Bus Routes 43 & 49

FREMONT

Fremont is a bohemian neighborhood on the north bank of the canal which features indie shops, hip bars and eclectic eateries. Quirky outdoor sculptures include the gigantic Fremont Troll which you can find lurking under the Aurora Bridge, as well as the towering Fremont Rocket. Cyclists and walkers have easy access to the Burke Gilman Trail – right along the ship canal.

- **Favorites:** Over 60 craft beer taps at “Brouwer’s” pub; the free tasting room at “Theo Chocolate”; lattes at “Fremont Coffee Company”; pet-friendly and American eats at “Norm’s Kitchen & Bar”, Russian potato dumplings at “Pel Meni Dumpling Tzar.”
- **Commute:** 20-minute bike ride, Route Maps found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98103-01.png> and here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98107-01.png>, as well as bus routes 31 & 40

GREEN LAKE

Green Lake is a popular neighborhood in north central Seattle that caters to people who are looking to get outside whether it's to grab dinner or walk around the lake. The most popular outdoor activities revolve around the lake itself and include walking or jogging around the 2.8-mile lake loop, renting kayaks, or stand-up paddle boards.

- **Favorites:** The lake; “Retreat” coffee with a view of the lake; chowder at “Duke’s Seafood & Chowder”; live jazz at “Latona Pub”.
- **Commute:** 15- to 20-minute bike ride, Route Map found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98103-01.png>, as well as bus route 62 & 79

RAVENNA

Ravenna is a quieter residential neighborhood home to the popular University Village shopping mall and

Ravenna Park.

- **Favorites:** “Panda Noodle Bar” in University Village; diner-style sandwiches at “Ravenna Varsity Restaurant” on 65th; settling in with a good book (or paper) at “Third Place Books”

- **Commute:** 35-minute walk; 12-minute bike ride, Route Map found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98115-01.png> as well as bus route [62](#)

THE UNIVERSITY DISTRICT

The University District is an eclectic mix of urban shopping areas, historic homes, casual hangouts, and student life. The “U District” has a youthful (46% of its residents are in their 20s) and relaxed feel, and “The Ave” (University Way) is a popular gathering place, with lots of indie eateries and funky shops. Much of the graduate housing provided through the UW is in the U District, and many of the undergraduates living off campus opt for housing here, an area that is also home to the University’s Greek houses.

- **Favorites:** Biang biang noodles at “Xi’an Noodles”; brunch at “Portage Bay Café”; browsing at the independently run University Bookstore.
- **Commute:** On or adjacent to campus. UW Seattle is located in the U District.

WALLINGFORD

Wallingford is a family-friendly neighborhood on the north shore of Lake Union which features casual pubs, diverse restaurants and student hangout bars (located on 45th Street). On the south end, Wallingford borders the water and boasts popular Gasworks Park a great place to play Frisbee and watch the sunset over the Seattle skyline. The Burke -Gilman cycling and walking trail runs past the park and allows for more outdoor time.

- **Favorites:** “Dick’s” drive-in burgers and \$1 fries; “Chocolati” chocolate café; sorbet and gelato at “Fainting Goat” gelato
- **Commute:** 20- to 35-minute walk; 15-minute bike ride to campus as well as bus route [44](#)

CENTRAL DISTRICT

Central District is east of Capitol Hill, north of I-90 and ends at Lake Washington. It is one of the oldest surviving residential neighborhoods in Seattle with a variety of cultural groups and a strong sense of community. Its home to many diverse restaurants and bars, and well-loved sites like the “Central Cinema” for dine-in movies and an annual Bon Odori Festival that celebrates Japanese culture.

- **Favorites:** “Ezell’s Famous Chicken” for the claimed best local fried chicken in Seattle; “Chuck’s Hop Shop” for hundreds of beer and cider options; Vietnamese noodle bowls at “Reckless Noodle House and Cocktails.”
- **Commute:** 30-minute bike ride to campus; 23-minute bus route via Route [48](#)

QUEEN ANNE

Queen Anne is an older, affluent residential hilly neighborhood just north of the Seattle Center (where the Space Needle and MoPOP are located). With plenty of shops, spectacular views at “Kerry Park,” its proximity to Seattle hotspots, and indie restaurants, like “Bounty Kitchen,” it has lots to offer.

- **Favorites:** “Macrina Bakery” for some incredible baked goods; European style beer and food at “Queen Anne Beerhall”; games and puzzles at “Blue Highway Games”
- **Commute:** 30-minute bike ride to campus, Route Map found here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/files/media/98109-01.png>

If you don’t plan on driving or having a car in Seattle, we urge you to consider neighborhoods within walking or biking distance to the UW or neighborhoods with good bus, train or rail service to campus. Do note that you will have access to the U-Pass program as a UW student which will give you lots of benefits in regards to mass transport for \$84 a quarter. Benefits of the U-PASS include:

- Unlimited rides on [King County Metro](#), [Community Transit](#), [Pierce Transit](#), [Kitsap Transit](#), and [Everett Transit](#) bus services and on [Sound Transit’s](#) buses, [Link light rail](#) and [Sounder commuter trains](#)
- Full-fare coverage on [King County Water Taxis](#) and [Seattle Streetcar](#)
- Discounted [carpool](#) parking
- [Vanpool](#) fare credits
- Low membership rate for [Zipcar](#)
- Unlimited rides on [NightRide](#)
- Discounts and special offers at more than 50 local merchants
- Discounts on bike helmets, lights, pedometers, and more at [Hall Health](#) (Wellness & Gear Garage Rental Center)

ON CAMPUS HOUSING

Here are some other relevant links that you assist you in securing on campus graduate housing:

- **UW Graduate Housing:** <https://hfs.uw.edu/Live/Graduates>
- **Testimonial Video:** https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vVy7_NTtIY8
- **Request Graduate Apartment Tours:** <https://admit.washington.edu/visit/campus-tours/>
- **Virtual Tours:** https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgNkGpnjFWo_XLURuBO8NX_9_GjlsWk5I
- **Rates:** <https://www.ielp.uw.edu/life-at-the-uw/housing/on-campus-housing/>

Apartment Housing Options:

<https://hfs.uw.edu/live-on-campus/graduate-student-apartments>

As a student, you have many choices for on-campus apartments. You can live right next door to campus or just a short bus ride away.

Mercer Court buildings D & E are special in that they are reserved especially for graduate and professional students, whereas other areas that offer grad/professional apartments also house undergrads. Mercer Court apartments also come furnished with full-size beds! Other on-campus graduate apartment buildings include Nordheim Court, Stevens Court, Radford Court, and the Commodore Duchess. Pricing in these apartments varies by number of roommates and which buildings students are in. They are priced anywhere from \$1200- 3800 monthly.

Here is a guide for applying for graduate housing : <https://hfs.uw.edu/live-on-campus/apply-for-housing-grad-students>

Next steps include...

- Completing your Housing and Food Services (HFS) Student Profile
- Reading the 12-Month Housing Agreement: <https://hfs.uw.edu/housing-agreements>
- Exploring your housing options both on and off campus
- Connecting with HFS on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/UWHFS/>
- Meeting other graduate students interested in campus apartments (if you are wanting to choose your own apartment-mates) - The Q Center offers a [Queer Positive Roommate Message Board](#), and UW provides a [roommate finder message board](#), all through Viva Engage, accessible with your UW net ID login.

Apartment Selection

Do you have questions about how apartment selection works? Contact HFS at hfsinfo@uw.edu
<https://www.hfs.washington.edu>



HOUSING RESOURCES

Here are some other relevant links that you assist you in your hunt for affordable housing:

- **UW Graduate On-Campus Housing:** <https://hfs.uw.edu/Live/Graduate-Student-Apartments>
- **UW Graduate Off-Campus Housing:** <https://www.ielp.uw.edu/life-at-the-uw/housing/off-campus-housing/s>

Moreover, if you decide to accept your offer of admission, you will eventually be connected to your cohort via a cohort Facebook page which is a good opportunity to connect with other incoming students and find housing together.

Sites to Find Housing:

My Housing Search is a free resource to help you find a home anywhere in Washington State that fits your needs and budget. Property owners and managers throughout the state can post apartments or homes for rent any time, which means that the list is always current: <https://www.myhousingsearch.com/tenant/WA/index.html?ch=KCHA>
<http://www.seattle.gov/housing/renters/find-housing>
<http://www.dawgdigs.com>
http://www.dailyuw.com/eclipse_services_classifieds/
<http://blantonturner.com/properties.html>

Select List of Apartments near UW Seattle (not exhaustive):

<http://www.prexyseattle.com>
<http://commodoreduchess.com>
<http://murielstlanding.com>
<http://www.cosmopolitanapartments.net>
<http://www.udistrictsquareapartments.com>
<http://www.malloyapts.com>
<https://www.avaloncommunities.com/>
<http://www.udistrictsquareapartments.com>
<http://radfordcourt.com>
<http://thepacificsunrise.com>
<http://www.eastlake2851.com>

Select List of Micro Apartments (Not Exhaustive):

Micro-units meet an important demand in Seattle's rental market, catering to those who are looking for a compact, less expensive housing option within the epicenter of the city. Typical sizes range from 115-250 square feet. Prices range and vary from around \$1000-\$1400 per month. Rooms are not furnished with a kitchen (shared kitchen), but a microwave and small kitchenette usually. More information here:
<http://www.npr.org/2016/07/23/484919328/theyre-small-but-these-big-city-apartments-tout-their-communal-feel>
<http://cubixapartments.com/>
<http://apodment.com/uw-area-apodments/>
<http://yobiseattle.com/faq.html>

MFTE Program

The Multifamily Property Tax Exemption (MFTE) Program provides a tax exemption on new multifamily buildings in exchange for setting aside 20-25% of the homes as income- and rent-restricted. By supporting mixed-income residential development in the urban centers, the MFTE program ensures affordability as the community grows.

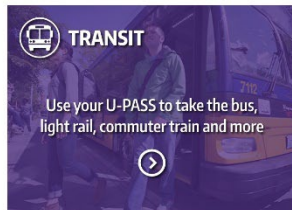
<http://www.seattle.gov/housing/housing-developers/multifamily-tax-exemption>

<http://www.seattle.gov/housing/renters/find-housing>



Downtown Seattle Public Library

Getting to UW



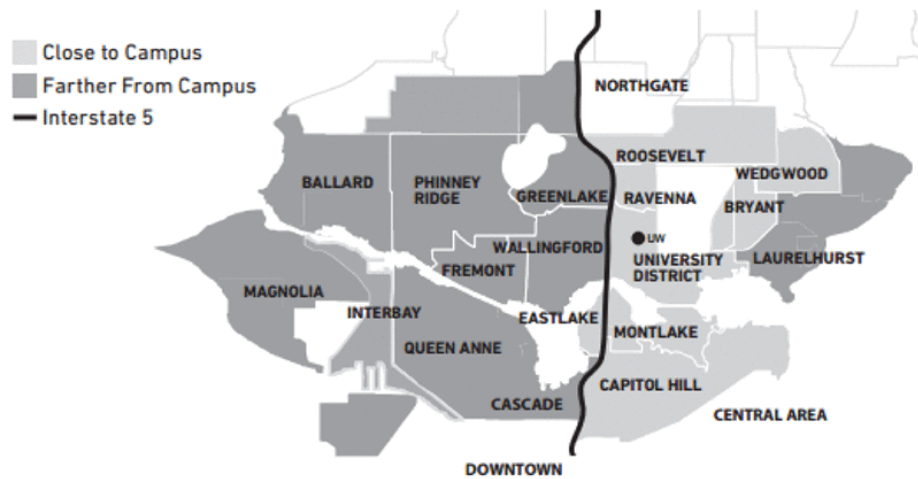
COMMUTING TO UW

Seattle offers many options for commuting in and around the UW- from the bus system, to the light rail, biking trails, ride sharing, driving, or just living in walking distance to the school, we encourage you to explore your transportation options as you explore which areas are the best fit for your needs. Here is some information around commuting to help assist you in your hunt for affordable housing:

<http://www.washington.edu/facilities/transportation/commute-options>

Each quarter students pay the fee for a UPASS, which provides students with unlimited rides on regional buses, commuter trains, light rail and water taxis as well as full fare coverage on vanpools. More information is available here:

<https://transportation.uw.edu/getting-here/transit/u-pass>



TRANSIT TO UW

Seattle offers many options for commuting in and around the UW- from the bus system, to the light rail, biking trails, ride sharing, driving, or just living in walking distance to the school, we encourage you to explore your transportation options as you explore which areas are the best fit for your needs. Here is some information around commuting to help assist you in your hunt for affordable housing:

We suggest looking at the Bus Stops & Light Rail Page provided by UW to see key routes serving campus before choosing where you decide to live. This may help you to understand your commute options and distance from each neighborhood: <https://transportation.uw.edu/maps/bus-stops-light-rail>

Another helpful resource provided by the Puget Sound transit system is One Bus Away, a site which allows you to type in any bus stop, route, or street address and view bus routes as well as link light rail stops in real time in the area to better understand your commute options.

View Bus Routes & stops to campus here: <https://pugetsound.onebusaway.org/#75402>

View Link Light rail path here: <https://pugetsound.onebusaway.org/#1-Line>

If you are planning to bike to campus, UW also has provided maps of various routes from different neighborhoods that are accessible to campus. The Burke-Gilman trail is a biking trail that runs throughout north Seattle and wraps the north end of Lake Washington, which runs through University of Washington and can be a great way to get to campus. More information and route maps available here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/getting-here/bike/routes-resources>


Another option to explore with commuting to campus is ridesharing, whether through Carpooling and receiving a cheaper parking permit, participating in a vanpool (5 or more individuals for free parking), or utilizing zipcar for quick rentals at a reduced rate for UW students, there are many options to explore to make a less expensive commute to campus. More information available here: <https://transportation.uw.edu/getting-here/rideshare>

UW Commuter Calculator:

If you would like to look at a comparison chart of cost/environmental impact of your commute options, you are able to play with estimates from various locations to UW here: <https://sustainability.uw.edu/commuter-calculator>

UW COMMUTER CALCULATOR

How we commute makes a difference. Explore your options.
...brought to you by [UW Transportation Services](#) and [The Campus Sustainability Fund](#)



[learn more...](#)

1. Enter values...

DISTANCE length of your commute to campus **6 miles**

0 miles
0 miles
30 miles
|

FREQUENCY number of days you commute each week **4**

TRANSIT AGENCY which transit agency serves your area

METRO TRANSIT

SOUND TRANSIT

COMMUNITY TRANSIT

KITSAP TRANSIT

PIERCE TRANSIT

EVERETT TRANSIT

DISTANCE ...to your closest bus stop **0.5 miles**

0 miles
0 miles
2 miles
|

STATUS

STUDENT

FACULTY/STAFF with U-PASS

FACULTY/STAFF without U-PASS

MPG gas mileage of your car
5 mpg
50 mpg
|

GAS PRICE what you pay per gallon of gas: \$ **3** . **0** **0**

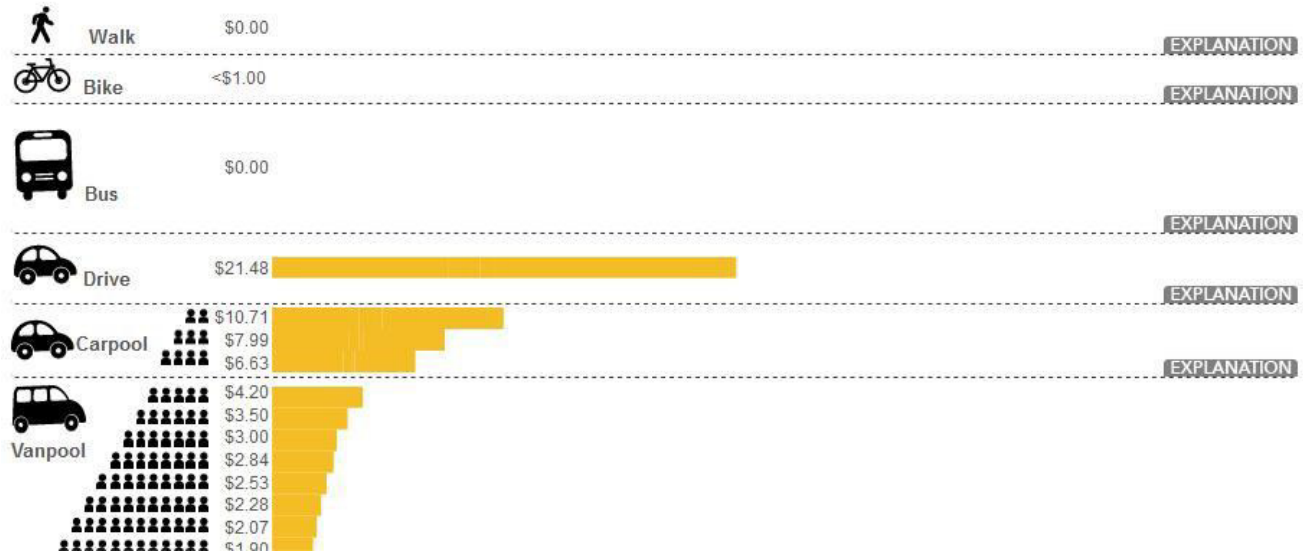
BODY WEIGHT ...to determine calories burned

1 **0** **0** pounds

2. Compare...

- COST
 CO2
 CALORIES

Dollars you'll spend each day depending upon your commute choice



Exploring Seattle



The U District is home to a wide variety of options for entertainment, dining, and casual spots for students to meet up. The UW has compiled a list of popular spots and natural areas near campus that students enjoy checking out:

<https://www.washington.edu/visit/exploring-seattle/>

Visit Seattle is another great resource to find things to do in the city based on your interests:

<https://visitseattle.org/things-to-do/>

For students on a budget, free activities around the city to explore include:

- Pike Place Market
- Waterfront Park/Pier 62
- Olympic Sculpture Park/Myrtle Edwards Park
- International Fountain/Seattle Center
- Discovery Park
- The Center for Wooden Boats/Lake Union Park
- Ye Olde Curiosity Shop
- Pioneer Square
- Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (museum)
- Center on Contemporary Art (CoCA)
- Foster/White Gallery
- Frye Art Museum
- Washington Park Arboretum
- The Ave (U District)/UW Campus
- Gas Works Park
- Archie McPhee (novelty shop)
- Green Lake Park
- Fremont (Center of the World/Lenin Statue/Fremont Troll)
- Ballard Historical District
- Ballard Locks
- Fishermen's Terminal
- Shilshole Marina/Golden Gardens Park

The Seattle City Pass is also a great resource for exploring the Space Needle, Aquarium, Zoo, Museum of Pop and Culture, and other attractions for one fee: <https://www.citypass.com/seattle>