

New England Conservatory

Off Campus Housing

Apartment hunting in Boston is challenging! The Boston housing market is tight, so you should start looking as early as possible. It is also expensive! So prepare yourself for sticker shock. It is not advisable to wait until late July/August to find a place.

NEC Roommate/Apartment Finder:

The Office of Student Life maintains a **Roommate/Apartment Finder** from May-August where you can find other students looking for roommates/apartments or both. Check the Web: www.newenglandconservatory.edu/studentHousing/ link to off campus housing

Apartment Hunting Tips:

Realtors

Boston is full of Realty Agencies. It is recommended to use several. Give yourself several days to look for an apartment to get a feel for how far your money will go. Only you can decide how much you are willing to pay per month. Tell the realtor what you are willing to pay less \$50 - \$200 dollars. Most will show you places that are just above your "price range".

Most apartments are shown by several realtors. They are competing with each other to fill the apartments. If you feel uncomfortable with a realtor, trust your gut and go elsewhere. When you are looking at apartments, if you don't like the place, building or neighborhood, feel free to tell your realtor, it won't hurt their feelings, and it may help you get what you want.

Never give cash to hold an apartment. Make payments using a check, and make sure that if you hand over paper, you get a lease and/or receipt in return. Many landlords require a co-signer and/or credit check which will cost \$30-\$50. The realty agency will often take care of this as well. Ask plenty of questions. Remember, you are the customer and your realtor is there to *serve* and *help* you. The agency will make anywhere from \$500 to \$1500+ when you sign a lease. If there is no fee, the landlord is paying them the fee.

Where to Look

Before you begin try to have a clear sense of what you are looking for. The neighborhoods within walking distance are Symphony, South End, Fenway, Back Bay. If you don't mind a bit of a commute, your choices are greater and your rent cheaper. You could try Jamaica Plain, Forest Hills, Malden, (Orange Line T Accessible); Mission Hill (Orange/ Green E/ or Short Bus ride); Cambridge, Somerville, South Boston (Red Line); Brighton, Allston, (Green B Line), or Brookline (Green C or D Lines).

Some students have had success finding roommates and apartments on www.craigslist.org as well as furniture to furnish their apartment. You may also have luck looking at independent college housing establishments who may offer 9-10 month stays.

Leasing & What to Look For

Most places do not rent for the academic year so expect to sign a lease for a full year; also, expect them to hold you to it. Many landlords do not permit subletting. Make sure the apartment has everything you need & want and is free of things that you do not want, such as mice, cockroaches, trash in the foyer, etc. The building should look well maintained. Do not settle for dirty or dingy apartments. You will not necessarily pay more for new paint and good management. What you will pay for is size and location.

Commuting

Parking is rough near NEC. Most students do not bring their cars to Boston their first year. Drivers here are brutal, parking is worse. Fortunately public transportation is pretty great, and Boston is extremely walk-able. You'll find yourself with new legs after being here for a month. If you look at places that will require a commute, try the commute yourself before you sign and keep in mind that Boston is much busier when colleges are in session. Generally NEC students prefer the Orange Line to the Green Lines (trolley). The Green Line has 4 branches: B, C, D, E. The B, C & E Green Lines are above ground and stop more frequently; The B line is crowded with BU students always; The C & D lines are especially busy during rush hours; The D Line does not run as frequently but once you're on it is fairly fast; The E line runs out past Mission Hill and is above ground. NEC is closest to the Mass. Ave T Stop on the Orange Line (2 blocks), the Symphony Stop on the Green E Line (1 block), or the Hynes/Convention Center stop on the Green B, C, & D Lines (half mile)

Word to the Wise

Put everything in writing. Make sure all pertinent information is on the lease. For example, if your landlord agrees to paint or clean your apartment, include that on the lease. Do not leave anything to memory. Expect to pay a hefty amount when you sign the lease: Typically first & last month's rent, and security (up to 1 mo. rent) is required. In addition, you may have to pay a realtor's fee, which can also be up to a month's rent.

Temporary Lodging

If you need an inexpensive place to stay in Boston, you can check out the YMCA at (617) 536-7800, or the Youth Hostel at (617) 536-1027. Both are located close to the Conservatory. They will fill up for late August / early September, so reserve early.

Other Resources: *Please note: All of the resources listed are not endorsed by NEC.*

Check out www.bostonlanguage.com/esl/housing.htm & www.umb.edu/students/housing/shorttermhousing.html

Check out our website www.newenglandconservatory.edu/studentHousing/

Contact the Student Life Office if you need assistance at (617) 585-1295, or by e-mail at studentlife@newenglandconservatory.edu

Best of luck in your search!