As you no doubt know, once the decision to attend a graduate program is made, the next big consideration for most incoming graduate students is finding comfortable, convenient and affordable housing.

We have put together a list of some housing resources to assist you. But first of all, you should know some very basic information:

- **Graduate students here do not live on campus or in dormitories.** Although Washington University does have dormitories, they are occupied by students beginning their college experience, not by students who are here to pursue advanced studies.

- There is a **plentiful supply of apartments** in the general vicinity of the campus.

- **If possible** (and we know it is not always so), we recommend that you **come to St. Louis in middle to late June** to research housing options first-hand. If you are able to do this, you will probably be able to find and secure housing which will be ready for you when you return in August.

- **If you cannot** visit St. Louis this summer until sometime in August, **do not panic**. There will still be housing options available. For students coming from outside the U.S., the University’s Office of International Students and Scholars will have an intern available in August who will assist new students with housing matters.

- **There is some information available online** that can provide some basic assistance as you begin your housing search. You can visit the Apartment Referral Service website (http://ars.wustl.edu) for general guidance about housing opportunities in our area. A link on the ARS website is also provided for Quadrangle Housing, the management company that offers university-owned properties. Be aware of these online resources, but **also consider the following:**

  - Although we know it is possible to secure housing through online resources without ever seeing it first-hand and in person, we do not necessarily advise this. We know that this has worked out for some students, and if you are willing to take a risk, it is your decision, but please, be aware that there are risks. As convenient as online resources are, they really are not a substitute for actually being in a space or seeing what the street in your neighborhood looks like, much less whether you will feel comfortable or safe in that situation. Remember that a rental contract is a legally binding arrangement – i.e., not to be taken lightly.

  - Familiarize yourself with the neighborhoods of St. Louis as much as possible **before** you look for properties. As City of St. Louis lost 2/3 of its population since WWII, available apartments are plentiful and you may be able to negotiate landlords down in price or request additional amenities. Websites such as [http://www.zilpy.com](http://www.zilpy.com) allow you to look at recent rates for comparable properties and amenities. Additionally you can view crime reports for various neighborhoods at the St. Louis Police Department site: [http://www.slmpd.org/](http://www.slmpd.org/).
...Resources for your housing search…

1) Apartment Referral Service (ARS)
The ARS, a Washington University service, is located at 700 Rosedale Avenue (St. Louis MO 63112) which is Washington University’s North Campus Building. (A locator map is included on their website.) This office is a clearinghouse for apartment and rental information, possessing a broad-based collection of well-organized information, including street maps of popular areas and statistical information about crime in various neighborhoods. We recommend that you visit the ARS office or website as soon as you have arrived in St. Louis – especially if you do not know St. Louis very well. Also, if you call them (314-935-5092), they will be happy to send or fax information to you. They can also be reached by email: ars@wustl.edu. Their website is http://ars.wustl.edu. Note: The ARS gives information but not advice. You will still have to look at properties and determine where you want to live.

2) Quadrangle Housing– properties owned by Washington University.
Most of the rental properties handled by Quadrangle are conveniently located close to campus. For information, go to their website, which you can access from the Apartment Referral Service web address above. We suggest you check out what the University owns, but remember that these rental units are not the only resource available to graduate students. There are many other private rental properties owned by both large companies such as Front Door (http://www.frontdoorstl.com/) and Red Brick (http://redbrickstl.com/) as well as numerous properties rented by individual owners throughout the neighboring communities.

3) Housing - A Guide for Students and Prospective Students.
This is a narrative description of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus which has proved valuable to students in the past – it follows on pages 4-7 of this set of information. The narrative was written by students and gives an excellent overview of advantages and disadvantages of different areas that are usually populated by students.

4) Miscellaneous non-university resources or ideas
You might be familiar with Craigslist: a centralized network of online urban communities, featuring free classified advertisements (with jobs, internships, housing, for sale/barter/wanted, services, community, gigs and resumes categories). The St. Louis website is http://stlouis.craigslist.org/. More ideas… check out the classified advertising sections of local newspapers (St. Louis Post Dispatch http://www.stltoday.com/), Riverfront Times http://www.riverfronttimes.com/). The information there may be very basic, and it helps to have a sense of where the properties are in relation to the Washington University campus, but it could be a start… And if you are in town, driving or walking through neighborhoods surrounding the campus can be useful. Look for signs that indicate properties available for rent.

5) Roommate/Housing Survey
In an effort to assist you with finding potential roommates who are studying architecture, we have included a survey for you to complete. If you want to take part in this, please complete the survey and send it back to us immediately! All surveys must be received by June 1. If we know of any current students who may be seeking roommates we will circulate surveys received from new students to them as well. On June 1 we will copy all of the surveys that are returned and mail the complete set of surveys to all who have returned their survey to us. Each of the recipients of the completed surveys may then contact people on the list as prospective roommates. If individuals (not necessary incoming grads) let us know of apartment opportunities during the summer, we can also connect you with them.

6) Short-term summer housing – while you are looking for permanent housing.
Apartment Referral Service now offers short term housing (1 night up to 5 month stay). The rates are as follows: $49/night, $300-$350/week (7 night minimum stay), $850/month (3 week minimum stay). If interested, contact Lynnette Williamson, Apartment Referral Service Short-term Housing Liaison (314-935-5092 / Lynnette@wustl.edu).

The following is a link to some hotel possibilities that you might also consider if you need a room in St. Louis this summer for just a very short stay: http://admissions.wustl.edu/visit/Pages/hotels.aspx
This material was written by graduate architecture students to help prospective graduate students in their search for housing.

Arrangements & Resources

Typically graduate students and Cooperative Program students live off campus. It is usually helpful and recommended when possible to arrive in St. Louis around the end of June or the beginning of July to look for housing. (Any sooner – you’ll have to rent for the summer. Any later – available choices are likely to be more limited). If you know somebody in the area, try to stay with them and/or get as much information from them as possible. In addition, there are plenty of hotels in the immediate area, which although more expensive, may be of help for a short trip.

One resource to check out when looking for an apartment (especially if you want to know what’s available before you arrive in town) is the University’s Apartment Referral Service (314-935-5092). Their website is http://ars.wustl.edu. They will give you a list of apartments that they know to be available with the pertinent information (rent, utilities, availability, etc.), but they cannot make suggestions or even make recommendations. They do keep a listing of people looking for roommates. They will send you maps of the local neighborhoods via fax or email. They also maintain information about crime in nearby neighborhoods, and they monitor some of the local landlords. If nothing else, it will give you an idea of what’s out there.

Additionally, the university has acquired many apartment buildings off campus for student use. Be sure to inquire about the availability of these apartments, managed by Quadrangle Housing (314-935-9511 and website via the ARS website above). While the university-owned properties are in great demand and satisfy the needs of a number of students, remember that there are also many other viable options available for those who seek housing from independent rental companies.

As is true in most cities, one other good way to find an apartment is by looking in the local paper, which in St. Louis is the The Post-Dispatch. Another good way is to just drive around the area you would like to live in and get phone numbers off reality signs. Be aware, however, that some realtors are not entirely honest. Unfortunately, many realtors take their time get back to you; so keep telephoning! Useful free publications include a local apartment guide, The Riverfront Times, and West End Word (all available at local newsstands). You might also try to contact other incoming graduate students who are willing to share an apartment with you or returning grads who would like to sublet their apartment while they’re on a semester abroad. Kathleen O’Donnell may know if anyone has expressed interest in finding a roommate or subletting for a semester.

It is also a very good idea to be specific with your landlord as to what you want in your lease. Ask if you can rent for only nine months; this saves you paying for the summer. You will not usually get it but it can’t hurt to ask. Ask for permission upfront to sublet your apartment in the summer. Ask if your landlord will let you go month to month after the first year. Again, this saves you paying for the summer after graduation. Check what types of utilities are provided. Beware of electric heat; it will be expensive in the winter.

Check on the parking situation: some landlords will indicate that there is parking, but that does not mean that you are the only one who will park there. The cities of St. Louis, Clayton, and U. City all close streets for cleaning at least once and up to four times a month. This makes the parking situation even more intense and the fines for not moving your car can add up quickly.

The Neighborhoods

There are several areas close to campus where graduate students tend to live. All are very different from each other, but within two to three miles of Givens. If you don’t own a car, you’ll want to be especially careful by choosing an apartment that’s close to campus and is safe from which to walk or bike. Occupancy regulations in most of the county municipalities will limit the number of unrelated persons who are allowed to live in one dwelling. You must obtain an occupancy permit at the city in which you live, before moving in. Failure to obtain a permit can result in a fine or court costs for both the tenant and the landlord. Ask your landlord about residency permits; they may offer to obtain one for you. You should invest in renter’s insurance to protect your belongings from theft. Be sure to check to see if your coverage will include items left at school.
The Loop
This is the strip of stores and restaurants in University City along Delmar, just to the north of campus. A convenient pathway cuts through private neighborhoods between campus and the Loop, shaving minutes off the commute. It’s about a 10 to 15-minute walk from campus, but don’t plan to walk alone at night. It can be a fun area to be in. This area is very active, always inundated by students and young locals. There are several popular bars and cafes, as well as a used-book store and a seasonal market. The rents are moderate (less than the DeMun area), but the buildings are not always in the best condition; look around for a good one.
The area south of Delmar (towards school) is a safer area. Kingsbury and Washington Avenues are good bets. Singles start at $450, and two bedrooms around $650. Generally, the further north you get of Delmar, the more unsafe it becomes; this is definitely not an area to live and walk alone. Living with several roommates and a car is a necessity here. Although students can live cheaply north of Delmar, this is still an area in transition.

Skinker (East of…)
The area closest to Givens is along Pershing, Waterman, and McPherson avenues, immediately east of Skinker Blvd. (northeast of Givens). This area is relatively safe and is comparable to south of the Loop. However, occasionally, cars parked in the area have been vandalized and apartments broken into. The rents can be somewhat expensive for what you get, but bargains are available. The buildings vary in condition, and the good ones go first. A lot of architecture students live here because it is extremely close and convenient. Wash U has purchased many of the buildings in this area over the past few years. The university buildings are managed by Quadrangle Housing, and can often be identified by their red doors. In general, be sure to carefully check out the apartments and neighborhoods in person in this area before you agree to anything.
A bit further east is the deBaliviere area, just north of Lindell, a slightly more upscale location that has a fairly plentiful supply of apartments and condos. This area draws student occupants from both the Danforth campus (where Architecture and most other departments are located) as well as the Medical School campus. Many of the apartments have undergone renovations, and are therefore more likely to be modernized and more expensive than in some other areas.

Demun
This neighborhood is just south of Givens Hall, west of Skinker in both Clayton and the city, and is within walking distance of campus. It is a very safe and quiet neighborhood to live in. A number of students and faculty live in this area because it’s quiet and close to school and Forest Park. There is a 24-hour laundromat, a coffee house and several restaurants. Schnuck’s supermarket on Clayton Road is within walking distance. Most of the apartments are in older brick buildings, often 3 to 6 unit structures. The apartments have character – wood floors, higher ceilings, etc., but if you want carpeting, elevators, or a washer/dryer, you should look elsewhere. Parking is on the street, with some garage parking space available. These apartments are usually fairly large, so you can fit everything you own in them. The rent is a bit high. One-bedrooms start around $800, two-bedrooms at $900, and three-bedrooms at $1,100.
Apartments tend to rent quickly here, so look early. You can obtain the names and numbers of property owners by driving around and looking for signs in yards.

DeBaliviere
DeBaliviere (pronounced “De-BALL-liver”) is part of the Central West End of St. Louis, which is close to Forest Park, and has a lot of cafes, restaurants, and small shops. This area has a MetroLink stop, but no grocery stores. The DeBaliviere neighborhood is about a mile east of Givens, just north of the park. It is too far to walk to Givens; the University shuttle has three stops. Apartments are renovated, more “upscale” than most neighborhoods, and slightly more expensive. There is some on-street parking and plenty of garage space (which you would pay for). There are a lot of one-bedroom apartments in this neighborhood.
The area is safe, but just north on Delmar is an area in transition, which can be dangerous at night. Pantheon/DeBaliviere Place, and Rodemerer-Cristal own most of the buildings in this area. On the eastern edge of DeBaliviere, near Union & Kingshighway, there are some high-rise apartment buildings. These places are also on the shuttle route, and a lot of law and medical students live here. If you’re looking for a studio, this is the area to go. You’ll find the rent higher, but the accommodations and the amenities are better.
Studios start around $600 and one bedroom go anywhere from $700 and up, and two bedrooms are often $800 and $1,000. The three best buildings in this area are the Westmoreland on the Park, The Congress, and The Senate; nearby is the Embassy and several others. It’s less safe as you go north, but the area is improving. Students who have lived here in the past have had a few problems. This is one of the safer areas near campus.

Central West End (“CWE”)
This elegant old area is for some reason considered “trendy” by locals, but don’t expect Greenwich Village. It is, however, one of the few pedestrian oriented areas in the entire region outside of shopping malls, and has a
moderately diverse population. Stretching some eight blocks (bisecting Forest Parkway and Lindell Ave), Euclid Street is filled with shops, cafes, galleries, and great restaurants. The area has many apartments, some of reasonable prices, others quite costly. Buildings vary considerably in condition and in likelihood of burglary, so be sure to explore several options and ask questions before you commit.

The grocery store in the area is Straub’s (302 N. Kingshighway). Since the area is two miles from campus (located just northeast of Forest Park), a car or frequent use of the Metro train is a near-necessity. Many of the residents in this area are affiliated with the medical complex. (So, here’s an opportunity to hang out with some doctors instead of architects!) Another transportation option is to bicycle through the park to school (which is safe during the day, but slightly less so at night.)

Moorlands

Approximately 1.5 miles from Givens, this is a very nice, safe and more expensive neighborhood. Located in Clayton just east of Hanley and north of Clayton Rd., it is a well-maintained area where a lot of young professionals live. One-bedrooms (there are very few of these) are $750 and up, with 2-bedrooms starting at over $850. These are usually nice apartments and this is one of the safest and quietest areas near campus.

Richmond Heights

South of Clayton Road and west of Big Bend Blvd., near I-40/64, this area has two-and three-bedroom flats and some houses (you might get a yard here). It is a mix of young singles, young families and some older homeowners and is generally safe though not without problems. A lot of people have dogs here; it is convenient to grocery stores, but not as ‘upscale’ as the Moorlands. It is 2 miles from campus – you’ll need a car. There are few one-bedrooms and they are small, but fairly inexpensive, starting around $700. Two bedrooms start at $850.

Dogtown

This area is located just south of Forest Park (south of I-64) and east of Skinker; it is 2 to 3 miles from campus. It has a strong community atmosphere with a very active neighborhood watch program. They have had some scattered problems with safety in the past, so look for a secure building and be smart about walking at night. This area has several reasonably priced and colorful restaurants and bars. Rents can be slightly less than Richmond Heights, with a range of low-rise building types.

Other Areas

Some students chose to live in other areas, either in the City or further out in the County. Soulard and Tower Grove/South Grand are possible areas for those who don’t mind being several miles from campus. Having a car is essential if you choose to live there, but rents can be quite low. Carefully check out security issues with local residents, however, and do not rent anything you haven’t visited.

In the St. Louis County there are many apartment complexes that have relatively low rents (comparable to U City) and amenities like swimming pools and exercise facilities, as well as lots of parking. Brentwood and Creve Coeur along Olive Blvd. are popular areas. Be prepared for traffic jams and 20 to 30 minute commutes, however, as well as disdain from classmates and some faculty.

Alternatives

Another option, instead of living in an apartment, is to live in the carriage house or attic of one of the many large, privately owned houses in the city. Instead of paying rent, you usually work for the family anywhere between 30-40 hours a month. This arrangement can save you a lot of money but you must answer to the owners of the house. Usually it is a great deal, unfortunately there are very few opportunities of this kind available and they are difficult to find. We generally see one to two postings for these opportunities per year, so be sure to watch the bulletin boards on campus and call as soon as you see the notice. You can also check with the Apartment Referral Service (314-935-5092) to see if they’ve heard of any openings.

It is also possible for grad students to ‘watch’ someone’s house- usually a professor on sabbatical. This usually involves the upkeep of the house and sometimes a reduced rent (sometimes no rent, although you can’t count on this when you need to find something). If you are interested in this possibility, again, contact the Apartment Referral Service and check the local newspapers; but keep in mind that these are remote possibilities.