

Career Advancement **London City Guide:**

How to Prepare for a Successful Summer in London

The resources in this guide are for informational purposes only. Career Advancement does not endorse or guarantee any of the services described in this document. Students should exercise their own discretion when planning for their internship. If you have questions about this document, feel free to speak with a Career Advancement adviser. You can make an appointment on UChicago Handshake.

Finding Summer Housing

Steps you should take when looking for housing:

1. *Consider finding a roommate.* You may end up spending a good amount of your summer income paying for rent. If you can find classmates, friends, or relatives willing to room with you, this could be your best option for saving some money.
2. *Location is everything.* One strategy is to search for housing that is close to your workplace or near transportation that will get you to work quickly. London has a variety of public transportation options for navigating the expanse of the city.
3. *Decide what is important to you.* Once you've decided on what neighborhoods would be convenient for you, it's always helpful to explore what attractions they have to offer. Whether you love trying new restaurants, shopping, or visiting cultural institutions, find a place that will give you the most time to explore your favorite things.
4. *Politely ask your employer about housing resources.* Your employer may have suggestions for where to live or be able to give you the contact information of other interns who are searching for housing so that you can room together or get advice.

Online Housing Resources

There are a variety of online housing resources that provide short-term housing vacancies including the sites below:

<https://www.airbnb.com/>

<https://london.craigslist.org/>

<https://www.rightmove.co.uk/>

<https://www.spareroom.co.uk/>

<https://www.sublet.com/apartments-for-rent/london>

<https://www.theblueground.com/>

In addition to the links above, Facebook groups are good places to look for short-term housing or roommates.

Student Housing Organizations

Student Housing Organizations are corporations that own large residential buildings and rent out rooms to students. Sometimes the buildings are set up like dormitories with single rooms and collective bathrooms, and other times the rooms are more like studio or one-bedroom apartments. It is important to look and apply for housing as soon as possible. There are pros and cons to living in student housing, just as there are positives and negatives to living in a dorm.

Pros

- Amenities such as security, maintenance, etc.
- Opportunity to meet other students
- Several options ranging from economical setups to ones with more amenities: prices can range between \$2,400 and \$7,500 for the entire summer.

Cons

- Possibility that you'll be matched with a roommate
- There are rules and regulations in most of the places that you will have to abide by

These institutions offer summer housing:

Foundation for International Education:

<https://www.fie.org.uk/>

Most students will live in double, triple, and quad occupancy rooms. Each bedroom is fully furnished. Common kitchens are equipped with cookware, silverware, and dishes. All residences feature common living areas where students can interact. The Foundation House is located on 114 Cromwell Road, London SW7 4ES. Telephone: +1 (800) 856-4358. Email: info@fie.org.uk.

International Students House:

<https://www.ish.org.uk/>

International Students House offers comfortable and safe accommodation in Marylebone Village in central London. This neighborhood is an attractive and welcoming area of London, offering residents a quality of life unrivaled in most major cities. IHS is located on 229 Great Portland Street, London W1W 5PN. Telephone: +440 (207) 631-8300.

Zebra Housing Association:

<https://www.zebrahousing.com/>

Double/single rooms, self-contained studios with kitchens and bathrooms, 1-bedroom apartments, and 2-bedroom apartments available. Some student accommodation has gardens which are shared with other residents. Rent always includes water, heating and broadband. Zebra Housing Association is located on 5-13 Glendower Place, London SW7 3DU. Telephone: +440 (207) 584-2769.

London Neighborhoods

The majority of students with summer internships in London choose to live in different neighborhoods based on their internship location. Here is a list of affordable neighborhoods that could be suitable housing options:

Barnsbury is located north of Central London. Although this neighborhood is considered a suburb, it is home to a variety of local restaurants and coffee shops.

Bermondsey is a district in southeast London. Beyond being home to some of the city's most iconic landmarks, this area of London has a developed food and arts scene.

Brixton is a multi-ethnic district south of the city. This area features an international market, various cinemas, record shops, and even an independent radio station.

Clapham is a lively area of London with a variety of restaurants and shops. This district also hosts a public park with jogging paths and amenities for outdoor activities.

Marylebone is a neighborhood in western London. Not only does this part of the city have multiple Tube stops, but it also offers a mix of restaurants and shops.

Shoreditch is a hipster district in Eastern London that is home to an eclectic dining scene and a variety of coffee shops, antique stores, and one-of-a-kind museums.

Rental Tips and Expectations

Applying for a Rental Unit

Most landlords will ask you to complete a rental application form. The application will typically ask for the following:

- Name, address, and telephone number
- Current and past landlords
- Financial information regarding your ability to pay the rent, like monthly or annual income
- Names of people who will be living in the unit

Cost of Living

A few notes to remember while considering housing costs:

- The average monthly rent for a studio or 1-bedroom apartment ranges from \$819 to \$2,586 per month or \$1,352 to \$6,043 per month for a 2-bedroom or 3-bedroom apartment.
- While researching for apartments to rent, be aware of scammers on rental websites. A common tactic

used by the seller is stating that they will be out of the city for months, limiting their accessibility. According to two students trying to find housing over the summer, “[they] also noticed that a lot of the scam responses were the same, someone leaving the city for 3 to 9 months for a job.”

- Be sure to get in contact (via phone, Zoom, etc.) with your landlord or leaser before agreeing to rent the vacancy. Whenever possible, you should visit the space or do a video tour before signing a lease.

London Transportation

The Underground

This rapid transit system operates in fare zones 1-6, which cover London in expanding concentric circles. The more zones you cross, the more expensive your journey will be.

The Overground

Similar to the Underground, but with the entirety of its lines running above ground level. The Overground has the same pricing system as the one the Underground has.

Docklands Light Railway

Automated rail system that specifically covers the docklands area of London, which is the area directly east and southeast of the central part of the city. Same pricing system as above.

Rail Services

London also has actual railways that connect the city to its outlying suburbs. This system links to London’s three major airports: Heathrow, Gatwick, and Stanstead.

Buses

Fares for a bus ride cost a fixed price of \$1.65 for a single journey. Most people prefer to take the Underground or Overground due to London’s traffic issues.

Taxis and Shared Ride Options

Fares can only be paid in cash or credit card and are based on distance and time using the meter inside the car. You can also

e-hail a taxicab through a mobile app such as Lyft (<https://www.lyft.com/>) or Uber (<https://www.uber.com/>).

Monthly Transportation Cost

- Oyster Smart Card

Card that you can add money to, allowing people to pay as they go. Travelcards, bus and tram passes, and discounts can be added to Oyster Cards. Find out more about this method at <https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/contactless-and-oyster-account>.

London Safety

After living in Chicago for school, you should be well-versed in safety precautions for a big city. However, here are some basic tips you should be reminded of before your internship in London. Using common sense is good advice and you should read the following tips for a quick refresher.

General Safety Tips:

- Always remember that there is safety in numbers. Walk with friends, or take populated routes when going places. Be especially careful at night.
- Plan your route in advance, walk with a purpose, and be alert at all times, especially when talking on a cell phone or using headphones in public.
- Avoid deserted areas such as parks and alleys.
- If you think you are being followed, cross the street, change direction, or go to a public place.
- Never display large amounts of cash or other valuables in public. If you need to organize your wallet, duck into a store or wait until you’re home.
- Don’t keep your wallet in the back pocket of your pants or backpack, and be aware of your wallet or purse in commotions. Pickpockets often employ helpers to create disturbances nearby.

- Use caution when using ATMs and don't carry too much cash around with you. Most places accept credit cards and there are ATMs everywhere. Just make sure you choose one that is in a busy area.
- Avoid empty railway cars. Ride with many people or in the conductor's car if at all possible.

Connect with Alumni

While you're in London this summer, take advantage of the opportunity to connect with another great resource: University of Chicago alumni! Whether you're interested in working in London after graduation, or you wish to find out more about certain career paths, networking with alumni may be one of the most beneficial things you do during your summer. Research alumni who are currently working in London, through the UChicagoWiser Network, an alumni mentoring platform: <https://uchicago.wiser.io/signup> and the online alumni directory: <http://www.uchicagoalumni.org>.