

Deciding Where to Live – Things to Consider

Version 8

Published 9/30/2024 by [Nadezda Tsygankova](#) Last updated 9/30/2024 2:34 PM by [Nadezda Tsygankova](#)

When looking for a place to live, think about your needs, your preferences and your values. There are many things you may wish to consider when evaluating where to live.

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Location

Seneca campuses are located throughout the Greater Toronto area and are accessible by [public transit](#).

[View Seneca campus map.](#)

Living on Your Own or With Roommates

If you decide to live in a shared house or apartment, you will need to carefully consider what type of people you are comfortable living with.

- Make sure your expectations align and that your lifestyles are compatible
- Determine how important responsibilities will be shared
- Sign a [roommate agreement](#)

Types of Housing for Rent

Basement suite

- There may be noise from above
- Usually below-ground
- Limited natural light due to little or no windows

Apartments and Condominiums — low-rise and high-rise

- Choose from low-rise (four floors or less), mid-rise (between five to 12 floors) or high-rise (13 floors or more) buildings
- Units come in several different configurations such as a bachelor (no dedicated bedroom) or with one or more bedrooms
- Consider whether the building has an elevator(s) and if it meets accessibility needs
- Consider whether the building has on-site security

House — entire house or a unit within a house

- Leasing an entire house or a unit within a house is different than renting a room
- Consider which spaces are private versus shared with the owner and/or other tenants
- Consider who is responsible for general maintenance

Homestay

- When you choose a homestay, you become a member of the family you live with and a part of the community you live in. [Learn more about homestay.](#)

Getting Around and Public Transit

To study or work at Seneca, you have to get here first. [Public transit](#) is a great option for all

Seneca campuses. When looking for off-campus housing consider:

- Is it within walking distance to **public transit**?
- How long will it take you to travel to campus using public transit?
- Will you need to take more than one bus? Note: Bus transfers adds time to your commute and can be frustrating if you miss a connection.
- How frequently do buses run and how busy are the bus routes?
- Is cheaper rent worth a longer commute?

Remember, Seneca's **Campus Shuttle** provides transportation between four campuses.

Noise and Daily Habits

You want to ensure you choose a neighbourhood and living situation that fits your needs and complements your lifestyle:

- Are you okay with noise from other students, young families with children, or busy traffic?
- Consider your own habits and noise. Do you think your new neighbours will be okay with noise coming from your place?

Weather

Canada has four seasons throughout the year: winter, spring, summer and fall.

Winter officially runs from Dec. 21 to March 19. During this time, the days are short, and it can get very cold and snowy. It is possible that we get snow as early as November.

- Do you mind biking or walking to campus or other places around Toronto during inclement weather?
- Is it worth more expensive rent to live within minutes of transit and amenities?
- Will your landlord be responsible for snow removal?

Amenities and Utilities

Dining habits

- Do you prefer cooking or eating out?
- Is there a grocery store located in close proximity? If not, do you have access to a car or transit to get to the grocery store?

Furniture

- How much furniture will you need?
- How will you move in new furniture?
- Furnished apartments often make sense for students looking for short-term housing

Laundry:

- Most apartment buildings have shared laundry rooms with pay-for-use washers and dryers
- Basement suites and houses may or may not have a washer/dryer
- Where is the closest laundromat?

Utilities refer to heat, internet and cable:

- Can you control your own thermostat?
- Does internet quality matter to you?
- What utilities are included in your lease?

Costs

Rents vary greatly depending on location within the Greater Toronto Area, age, and housing types.

The following chart provides an estimate:

Unit Size	Average Monthly Market Rent
Bachelor apartment	\$1,225
One bedroom apartment	\$1,446

Source: [City of Toronto Average Market Rentals](#)

You may need to consider additional costs such as:

- utilities
- renters insurance
- internet
- security deposit
- laundry
- parking and/or public transit

Before you Move In

1. Inspection

Make sure that you're getting all you were promised. Before signing a lease, inspect the unit (or have someone you trust inspect it for you).

2. Deposit and documentation

- Obtain a copy of your rental agreement. If any other terms are discussed, get them in writing.
- Take photos to document any existing damage or repairs needed before you move in.
- Obtain proof of payment. Pay by cheque or money order, or get a receipt if you pay in cash.

3. Set up utilities

Most tenants need to set up electricity, TV, internet and other utilities independently. [View the Life in Canada video](#) for an introduction to living in Canada and resources to help you get settled.