

Question 7: What Are My Housing Options?

- staying in an apartment. When dormitory shortages have occurred some colleges have housed their students in nearby hotels, bought by the college and converted into dorms.

Dorm Facts

When moving into a dorm the following need to be considered:

- there may be specific move-in days in early September based on an alphabetical listing of last names, designed to provide a smooth entry
- you are given a list of what you may and may not bring with you weeks in advance
- directions are given concerning unloading procedures and available parking. In some situations, senior students volunteer or are paid to help you carry in your belongings.
- each dorm room is equipped with a bed, a desk and a closet and set of drawers for each occupant
- customarily, each dormitory will have washers and dryers, lounges with a TV and quiet areas. Some may have more perks such as music practice rooms and a small library.
- each room will usually have an internet connection
- each first-year dormitory will have a leader called a dorm advisor who is a college staff member or a dorm manager in charge of the floor. Students have a voice in their dorm's policies and concerns.
- housing accommodations often include all male, all female buildings, all male or female floors, special international houses, special health focus buildings and facilities which are wheelchair friendly and easily accessible
- dorms are always kept locked. Large buildings generally have a front desk for information and safety purposes.
- dorms are available for married students, usually in the form of apartments
- dorm fees usually include all utilities and internet services.

Am I Assured A Place On Campus?

You need to know that:

- gaining a place on campus is based on supply and demand. Most first-year applicants do get a place but it may not be your first choice of location on campus.
- some colleges assure dorms to students with a particular level of marks
- some colleges give preference to out-of-towners, rather than to locals who want the on-campus experience
- some colleges allow you to name a room mate of preference, while others discourage this
- some colleges choose campus residents through a lottery system
- some colleges are able to offer accommodation to all first year students
- getting exactly what you want will depend on the size of the college, the supply and demand factor, the promptness of submitting your housing application and luck. It is important to promptly answer any housing questionnaires sent by the college and provide truthful information, not what you think they want to hear. Wrong information can lead to you getting an incompatible roommate and an unpleasant dorm experience.

Make sure to get a tour of all the dormitories in which you are interested so that you are not disappointed. If you ignore the information you could end up on the top bunk in some small room with two other roomies at the wrong end of the campus for your program.

Given the choice, always check the square on your college application form which says that you would like information about housing. It does not commit you to living on campus but it does allow you to view all of your options.

College Meal Plans

Fewer colleges offer full sit-down dining room family style meal plans. You are more likely to find a variety of fast food franchises on campus. There are many healthy choice eating offerings as

Question 7: What Are My Housing Options?

well. Students have great variety at their fingertips including:

- pizza bars
- delis
- bakeries
- sushi bars
- grills
- vegetarian menus
- international cuisine
- coffee shops.

Many colleges have full-service restaurants on campus and also provide the opportunity for students to eat at off campus locations using their school meal plan.

Meal plans are many and varied ranging from light, reduced meal plans to extra-large full meal plans. Check with each college to determine the cost. It is important to ascertain whether or not you can add or subtract from your meal plan during the year. It also helps to know if it is transferable to another student. Some students err on the side of caution

by purchasing an extra large plan, only to find themselves later trying to sell, trade, or give food credit to a student who has bought a light plan.

Meal plans may include:

- a little or a lot of flexibility
- a refund or no-refund policy
- an opportunity, or not, to spend on toiletries as well as food items.

Living On Campus

Many colleges require or request that you submit answers to a housing questionnaire. This is usually done online. It is very important to answer the questions truthfully. Your answers are used for no purpose other than to match you up with the most appropriate roommate and get you off to the best possible start.



Kevin wants to stay on campus. He received this questionnaire from the college where he has been accepted. How would you answer these questions?

Sample Dorm Questionnaire For Matching Roommates

Please answer the following questions honestly. Your answers will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of matching you with the most appropriate roommate according to your lifestyle, habits and daily routine preferences. Circle *Y* for *Yes* or *N* for *No* for each of the following questions.

- Y or N I am an early-to-bed and early-to-rise person.
- Y or N I am an extreme night owl and like to sleep in.
- Y or N I like to watch TV or play video games before I go to bed.
- Y or N I would have a hard time dealing with someone whose sleeping patterns were very different from mine.
- Y or N I like to nap during the day.
- Y or N I snore.
- Y or N I would not be able to tolerate someone who snores.
- Y or N I am a light sleeper who needs a lot of sleep.
- Y or N I am a heavy sleeper. Noise won't bother me.
- Y or N I must sleep with a light on.
- Y or N I cannot sleep if there is a light on.
- Y or N I intend to study a lot in my room.