Welcome to the University of South Carolina, City of Columbia and surrounding community. Living off campus is an exciting opportunity, and you will get to have an experience different than students living on campus. Please review this guide for information on locating rental housing and what life will be like living off campus.

The Columbia area is a great place to live. We encourage you to get to know your neighbors who might be USC students, faculty or staff. You also might be living among families with children, alumni, and community leaders. Please understand that your neighbors might not appreciate loud noise and disruptions. Get to know them and find out what is acceptable and unacceptable. Understand that as a resident of a community, you are expected to hold yourself to standards that align with the University of South Carolina and the Carolinian Creed. You also are expected to represent the university, your place of residence, in your neighborhood, the city and surrounding areas.

This guide was created to help with the transition to living off-campus as a student at the University of South Carolina and to help you better understand your rights and responsibilities as a tenant and member of the greater Columbia community. Do research on local ordinances that pertain to where you live. Carolina students may live within the city limits, in Richland County, Cayce, West Columbia, Lexington or other areas. The jurisdictions have different ordinances pertaining to occupancy, trash pick-up, pets and more. You are responsible for learning these ordinances and following them.

The University of South Carolina’s Office of Off-Campus Student Services is here to help you have the best experience possible. Please take advantage of all we have to offer. Stay connected to campus by getting involved. This connection to USC will help you feel more engaged with the campus community and help you be successful both in and out of the classroom.

Welcome to Columbia, and go Gamecocks!
The Off-Campus Housing Locator is a USC student-only free search engine and message board to help you find rental housing, roommates and subleasing information. Visit www.offcampushousing.sc.edu.

Student Lounges can be enjoyed as a home away from home. It serves as a great place to hang out with friends, study, watch television, play board games or use one of our computers between classes. The lounge is located in the Lower Level of the West Wing in the Russell House University Union.

Housing Fairs are offered each semester on Greene Street to provide students with the opportunity to speak with property management companies and apartment complex representatives.

Student Services Webinar Series are an interactive opportunity for parents and students to learn about various topics related to living off campus. Check our website for more information on upcoming webinars and how to register, as well as how to view recordings of past presentations.

Our community ambassadors are a group of current off-campus students in a peer leadership role for the office who provide support services and education to off-campus students in an effort to improve their off-campus experience.
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GO BIG AND GO HOME.

Copper Beech gives you some of the biggest living space around and a lifestyle to match.

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Volleyball Court • Basketball Court
Fitness Center • Game Room • Clubhouse

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Columbia, SC 29201
(803) 255-0170
copperbeechUSC.com
Facebook CopperBeechUSC
Twitter @CBeechColumbia
TYPES OF HOUSING

Finding the right housing fit can be challenging. Consider these options when you are determining what type of housing option best fits your needs.

HOUSING TIP

The City of Columbia instituted an ordinance stating no more than three unrelated occupants can reside in a single unit rental. This ordinance applies no matter how many bedrooms are in the unit. Apartment complexes are excluded from this ordinance.

Apartment Complex

A community of apartment units or townhomes that is typically owned and managed by a private company.

Single Unit Rental

Property Management Owned

A property that is independently owned but managed by a company. All transactions are made with the property management company rather than the individual owner.

Single Unit Rental

Independently Owned

A property that is owned by an individual and is rented by that individual, also known as a landlord. Landlords in Columbia are not required to have a permit or register in order to rent property.
COST OF LIVING

Off-campus rental amounts will vary greatly and will depend on the number of roommates and amenities provided. Living off campus is very affordable, especially if you share costs with roommates. You should contact properties and landlords to get the costs as Off-Campus Student Services does not provide information on rental amounts for specific properties.

On-Campus vs Off-Campus

**AVERAGE SEMESTER RENT**

- **On-Campus:** $3,815 (4BR/2BA)
- **Off-Campus:** $519 (4BR/2BA)

**FURNISHED**

- On-Campus: Furnished
- Off-Campus: Furnished with TV

**UTILITIES INCLUDED**

- On-Campus: Utilities included
- Off-Campus: Utilities included with cap

**MEAL PLAN PER SEMESTER**

- On-Campus: $712-1,916
- Off-Campus: Costs vary

**LEASE LENGTH**

- On-Campus: 9 MONTHS
- Off-Campus: 12 MONTHS

**COMMUNITY LAUNDRY**

- On-Campus: Included
- Off-Campus: Washer & Dryer In Unit

**APPLICATION FEE**

- On-Campus: $150
- Off-Campus: $125

When researching housing options, you need to consider not only the rent amount but also what is included and what additional costs you will incur each month. Keep in mind that rent might not be the only thing you have to pay. You may have to make separate payments for utilities (electricity, water, cable and Internet).

---

**Student Loans and Financial Aid**

Students are allowed to use some financial aid to pay rent, bills and other expenses associated with living off campus. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships to find out if aid packages allow this. If you have financial aid remaining after tuition is paid, you will receive an overage check. This money can be used to cover living costs. Be prepared to cover the first month’s expenses out of pocket as there is no guarantee that overage checks will be received in time. Keep in mind that some scholarships may only allow you to use them toward tuition. For more information, call Student Financial Aid and Scholarships at 803.777.8134.
STADIUM SUITES

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Private Bedrooms & Bathrooms + Furnished Apartments + Private Storage Closets
Full-Sized Washer and Dryer + Electricity Included with Generous Cap + Cable TV
High-Speed Internet + Trash Removal + 24 Hour Maintenance + Gated Community
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Basketball Court + Tanning Bed + Fitness Center

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Columbia, SC 29201
803.779.3280
scssuites.com

StadiumSuites
@StadiumSuites
MONEY MATTERS

WHAT DOES IT COST TO LIVE OFF CAMPUS?

When you move off campus, budgeting your money becomes crucial because you will have bills to pay. Making sure you set enough money aside to pay rent, utilities, cable and Internet is vital for a successful off-campus living experience. Here are some things you should take into consideration before determining where you will live:

- Will you be able to afford rent for the duration of your lease?
- What is included in your rent? Are cable and Internet included, or do you have to pay extra?
- Does your rent include a utilities cap? If so, can you afford to pay for utilities if you exceed your cap?
- How long is your commute to campus from your desired place of residency? Can you afford to pay for gas?
- Does your off-campus community provide a shuttle to and from campus?
- What will food, school supplies and books cost? And how do those factor in to your other living costs?
- Will your residence be furnished, or will you have to purchase furniture? If the apartment/house is furnished, is there a fee associated with it?

WHAT SHOULD MY BUDGET LOOK LIKE?

Your budget should reflect your values and will be personal and unique to you. No one else can tell you how to spend your money — those decisions are yours alone. A budget helps you be intentional about where you spend your funds, and this ensures you do not accidentally spend too much money on less important items.

“Moving off-campus is an exciting and important step. Understanding your personal finances is the first step in making financially-responsible decisions!”

WHAT ARE THE PARTS OF A BUDGET?

INCOME

Income includes any source of money you have coming in. This can be paid from work, an allowance, gifts or loans. Your income is not just a paycheck — think outside the box!

EXPENSES

Monthly Fixed - necessary monthly expenses that do not change in amount

Monthly Variable - necessary monthly expenses that vary in amount

Periodic - necessary expenses that occur on an irregular basis with varying amounts

Discretionary - expenses that are wants, not needs; “fun” or “extra” expenses

BUDGET

The actual budget is the combination of the total income and total expenses. It is usually categorized and balanced. It details the monthly spending patterns and is used to configure future spending plans.
## SAMPLE BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Current Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Earnings #1</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Earnings #2</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allowance</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tax Refunds</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable Expenses</th>
<th>Current Spending/Projected Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas/Transportation</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Bill</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Variable Expenses:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fixed Expenses</th>
<th>Current Spending/Projected Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Payment</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet/Cable Bill</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fixed Expenses:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Periodic Expenses</th>
<th>Current Spending/Projected Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor Visits</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car Repair</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Periodic Expenses:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discretionary Expenses</th>
<th>Current Spending/Projected Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social (Meals out, movies)</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charity</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc.</td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Discretionary Expenses:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses:</strong></td>
<td>$ _____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Totals**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Spending/Projected Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Income:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Expenses:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Review this budget with a professional! Contact the Financial Literacy Program located on the Mezzanine Level of Thomas Cooper Library for a private consultation, or visit [www.sc.edu/success](http://www.sc.edu/success) for more information.
Relationships with roommates are similar to any other relationship—they have their ups and downs. Some relationships fit perfectly and others need extra attention. Take the time to establish clear expectations and maintain open lines of communication to ensure harmony.

**FINDING A ROOMMATE**

When picking a roommate, it is important to find someone you can see yourself getting along with and someone you feel comfortable sharing an apartment or house with. You should ask your prospective roommate questions about his/her cleanliness, apartment and house preferences, price range and personal habits prior to agreeing to live together. Ideally, your future roommate will be someone who has similar preferences and interests as you do.

**ROOMMATE MATCHING** Many apartment complexes offer roommate matching. See our amenities chart [P.36] to see which apartments offer roommate matching and contact them to get more information about their roommate matching process.

**QUICK TIPS FOR ROOMMATE SUCCESS**

1. **Be honest and upfront with conflicts.** One of the most important things when living with a roommate is that you should talk about your conflicts in a respectful and honest way.

2. **Cleanliness.** Make sure to talk to your roommate about both of your cleaning habits (i.e. cleanliness expectations), tidiness of common space and kitchen responsibilities.

3. **Splitting living costs.** You should discuss who will take the responsibility of utility bills and also how you and your roommates will split unit cleaning supplies, joint groceries and furnishings.

4. **Study and sleeping habits.** Are you a morning person living with a night owl? Talk about sleeping patterns to ensure a balanced lifestyle among all roommates.

5. **Guest policy.** Perhaps one of the biggest issues between roommates is due to a lack of a guest policy. You and your roommate(s) should find common ground regarding guests and should always be considerate when having guests at your residence.

6. **Sign a roommate contract.** An informal verbal agreement related to expectations might seem adequate but creating a written agreement can prevent unnecessary problems and conflicts.
Life is better in a cottage.

Roommate Contract

Rent
Due before: __________  Paid by: __________

Utilities/Cable/Internet
Due before: __________  Paid by: __________

Hygiene/Cleanliness


Personal Property Boundaries


Guest Visitation Expectations


Behavior


Pets


Noise Level

Temperature

Miscellaneous

Cleaning Schedule
M
T
W
TH
F
SAT
SUN

Signatures

________________________________________  ________________________________________
HELPFUL TERMS

Lease: A lease is a contract and legally-binding document. Once a tenant (the person renting) signs a lease, he/she is committed to all the terms of that lease, including being responsible for all finances and money owed for the entire term of the lease, even if there are extenuating circumstances beyond their control. Be sure to understand what you are signing. Even if the apartment complex requires a guarantor, the lease is binding with only the student’s signature. Lease terms vary, but most leases will come with a full year (12 months) term. It is very rare to find a lease in Columbia for the academic year only.

Individual Lease: An individual lease is when each tenant has a separate lease and pays individual rent payments. In most cases, each tenant needs their own guarantor on their lease. Tenants are responsible for their assigned individual bedroom, so there is a limit to one person per bedroom. However, each tenant has shared joint responsibility for the common spaces.

Group Lease: All tenants are on one lease and make one payment. All tenants are equally responsible and liable for the property. Multiple tenants may choose to share a bedroom to reduce costs. At least one guarantor is responsible for the entire property including payment and damages. Typically, utilities are not included, and therefore it is up to the tenant to obtain the services and put them in their name. Landlords cannot assign roommates in a group lease.

Sublease: If you are considering studying abroad or living elsewhere for the summer months, you are still responsible for your lease. Many students find a living arrangement that allows subleasing or the ability to transfer a lease. In a sublease, you’ll find another tenant to rent your room or apartment for the period of time you’ll be absent. Students can use the Off-Campus Student Services message boards (offcampushousing.sc.edu) to find students to take over their lease.

Security Deposit: A security deposit is a variable amount of money paid to the landlord to ensure that rent will be paid and all terms of the lease will be met. Security deposit amounts vary and may be as much as a full month’s rent. Usually a portion, if not all, of the deposit is refundable after you fulfill the terms of your lease. At the end of your lease, the landlord cannot withhold your security deposit for normal wear and tear. This typically includes minor painting and carpet cleaning. If the landlord does withhold any or all of your security deposit, he or she is required to provide you with an itemized list of charges.

Guarantor: A guarantor is someone who signs the lease along with the tenant. Typically full-time students are required to have a guarantor (also referred to as a co-signer). In most cases, a guarantor must earn three times the monthly rent to be approved. As the guarantor, this means the co-signer agrees to have the landlord check his/her credit and guarantee the tenant complies with the rental agreement and rental payment. The tenants’ failure to pay rent may impact the guarantor’s credit score.

HELPFUL TIP

When you move into your rental unit, document the entire property through time-stamped pictures and videos and by filling out a record of the condition of the property. Before you return a condition of property form, make sure to make a copy for your records. If a landlord does not provide you with a condition checklist, make a list to give to the landlord.

Application Fee: Some complexes ask for an application fee before leasing the property. This is typically a one-time nonrefundable fee.
**WANT A PET?**

Puppies are cute, but all animals require time and financial commitments. If you are considering getting a pet, please be sure that you have the resources necessary to take care of it.

---

**Renter's Insurance:** Renter’s insurance is a policy that protects your apartment and property from theft and damage. Students are encouraged to obtain renter’s insurance when renting a property because typically a landlord’s insurance policy will not pay for losses of your own personal property. Since property losses are typically unexpected, the insurance serves as a means of protection. Students may be covered under their parent’s homeowner or renter’s insurance policy.

**Eviction:** Eviction is when the landlord decides to terminate the lease agreement. The landlord has the right to terminate the lease if a tenant damages property, fails to pay rent, violates terms of the lease or commits a crime.

**Utilities:** Utilities include payment for the services of water, sewage, trash, electricity, cable and Internet. Some utilities are included in the rent while others must be purchased separately. Check with your landlord to understand what utilities, if any, are included in your rental agreement.

**Pet Policy:** Most landlords have some type of pet policy in place for the unit. Check with your landlord to see if pets are allowed on the premises. A fee is typically associated with a pet, and most of the time, it is a one-time fee. Make sure to ask your landlord about weight limits and breed restrictions.
STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES

Q&A WITH ADAM PROTHEOE

This is general information. It is not legal advice and does not create an attorney/client relationship. Most rules have exceptions and your case may be one. When in doubt, call Student Legal Services at (803) 777-6611.

Adam Protheroe
Student Legal Services
Russell House West Wing, 044A
(803) 777-6611

Q: What is Student Legal Services (SLS)?
A: SLS is a partnership between USC and South Carolina Legal Services that makes legal assistance available to USC students in certain kinds of cases. We provide legal advice and assist with resolving conflicts, and we are able to accept a limited number of cases for representation in court where this is needed. This service is paid for using student activity fees, and there is no additional fee for the attorney’s time. We can help with landlord-tenant disputes and other housing issues, consumer issues (like debt collection, consumer contracts, car sales, etc.), probate law (wills, powers of attorney, etc.), domestic relations (divorce, child custody, etc.) and employment law. There are some issues we can’t assist with including criminal cases, disputes with USC, student conduct issues and disputes between students.

Q: Why should a lawyer look at my lease?
A: A lease is a binding contract, and once you sign it, is very difficult, if not impossible, to get out of it. There are some basic concepts in landlord/tenant law that every tenant should know, but every lease is slightly different and there are some things about your lease that you may want to pay more attention to based on your specific situation. A lawyer can help answer your questions (both those you know you have and those you may not have thought of). Knowing what you’re getting into before you sign or knowing what your rights are before you take action can make quite a bit of difference in your experience.

Q: Who is typically a guarantor?
A: A guarantor agrees to be “on the hook” for any rent or other charges that come due during your lease. Usually this is a parent or guardian, though it doesn’t necessarily have to be. It is common for landlords to require that the guarantor have monthly income equal to at least three times your monthly rent.

Q: How do I get a security deposit back?
A: You should ask for it in writing at the end of your lease and give a forwarding address where you want it to be sent. You are entitled to have your deposit back after 1) your lease ends, 2) you move out, and 3) you ask your landlord for it and tell them where it should be sent. Once these three things happen, your landlord has 30 days to return your deposit minus any deductions they are allowed to take. They can deduct for things like unpaid rent, damage to the property, cleaning charges, etc. They should not charge more than the actual and reasonable cost for these things. If your landlord does deduct anything from your deposit, they should give you an itemized list of these deductions and return any money that is left over after these deductions. If a landlord doesn’t do these things, there can be some significant legal penalties.
Q: Where can I obtain renter’s insurance? What should it cover?
A: Most major insurance companies offer renter’s insurance. One thing to consider is that you might get a “multi-policy” discount if you get your renter’s insurance from an insurance company that you already have another kind of policy with (e.g., car insurance). Renter’s insurance usually covers things like the cost of replacing your personal property if it is lost or damaged due to theft, fire, etc. Your landlord may have insurance, but it probably only covers the building and won’t reimburse you if your property is damaged or lost. Renter’s insurance also may cover liability you may have if someone is accidentally injured in your home. Policies vary and you should read yours carefully to understand what it does and does not cover.

Q: What do I do if my landlord is not making repairs to my unit?
A: Don’t stop paying rent (at least not without talking to a lawyer first)! If the problems with the unit are serious and are a danger to health and safety, then you may have the right to terminate your lease. But, you have to give your landlord a 14-day written notice first. This notice has to tell the landlord what’s wrong, give them 14 days to fix it and tell them that if it’s not fixed in that time then you will terminate your lease. You also can file a lawsuit in magistrate’s court asking the judge to require your landlord to make repairs.

Q: Help, I need to get out of my lease!
A: Call us. Sometimes this can be done but only under specific circumstances and in a certain way.
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sand volleyball court + yoga/pilates studio with TV’s

Amenities & utilities included are subject to change. See office for details.
UNDERSTANDING UTILITIES AND AMENITIES

MAKE SURE TO ASK YOUR LANDLORD WHAT UTILITIES, IF ANY, AND AMENITIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE LEASE.

Furnished Unit: A furnished unit means the apartment or landlord provides furniture for the tenants but the type of furniture provided may vary. Furnished apartments are convenient and less stressful for students who may be moving quite often throughout their time in college.

Unfurnished Unit: An unfurnished unit does not provide furniture for tenants. Purchasing furniture may create a higher cost when moving in, but it may be a good investment for students.

Utility Cap: An apartment community may offer a bill limit that is included in the rental amount on some of their utility services. Students are strongly encouraged to research how often they may exceed the utility cap and what the policy is for exceeding the cap.

Specific Vendor Requirement: An apartment community or landlord may require the use of a certain company for specific utility services.

Roommate Matching: Some apartment communities provide roommate matching to fill units.

Shuttle: Some apartment communities provide shuttles that travel to and from campus for students. Keep in mind that shuttles are not guaranteed and could have maintenance issues that put them out of commission.

Pet-friendly: Pet fees can vary with landlords and apartment communities. The two most common forms are a one-time nonrefundable fee or a monthly fee in addition to rent. Students also should consider if the community is a suitable environment to care for their pet (i.e. a place to take the dog out and/or walking path).

Walking Distance: Fortunately for USC students, we have quite a few apartment communities that are within walking distance to campus. We encourage students to consider their class schedules, length of time on campus and weather conditions when looking into living arrangements.
SAFETY TIPS OF MOPEDS AND SCOOTERS

1. They are subject to the same traffic laws as cars and can only be driven on the street.

2. Mopeds and scooters should not be driven on a sidewalk. You can receive a ticket from USC Police and City of Columbia Police.

3. It is illegal to exceed 25 MPH on a moped.

4. Only one person can ride a moped at any time.

5. Any person under the age of 21 is required to wear a helmet while operating a moped or scooter.

VEHICLE

Many students prefer to bring their personal vehicle to campus each day. When driving to campus, try to carpool with others, if you can, to save on gas and parking costs. All vehicles that will use the University of South Carolina reserved spaces and lots should be registered with Vehicle Management and Parking Services. There are numerous lots around the area where a full-year pass to park is $90. However, students also may choose to buy a garage parking pass. Garage and reserved spaces are reserved 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Garage passes range from $340-380 per semester. For more information about parking passes, visit the Vehicle Management and Parking Services website at www.sc.edu/vmps/park.html#zones

CAROLINA SHUTTLE SERVICES

Students are encouraged to park in lots outside of central campus and use the shuttle to ride into central campus. Carolina Shuttle services typically run Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:45 p.m. The evening shuttles run from 5:30 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. Some exceptions to this operation are during summer, reading days and holidays. Learn more about the various shuttle routes and lines at www.sc.edu/vmps/shuttle.html

SAFETY TIPS OF MOPEDS AND SCOOTERS

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5. Any person under the age of 21 is required to wear a helmet while operating a moped or scooter.

OTHER FORMS OF TRANSPORTATION

Bicycle: Cyclists should always ride with the flow of traffic in the street.

Motorized, two-wheeled vehicles are becoming more common on campus and some different laws and safety guidelines exist for these vehicles. Mopeds and motorcycles should be registered with Vehicle Management and Parking Services and should park in the designated moped/scooter spaces.

Moped: A moped has an engine less than 50 CC and is identified with a moped tag.

Scooter: If a two-wheeled vehicle has an engine greater than 50 CC, it is considered a scooter/motorcycle. They also will have a motorcycle license plate.

The COMET: The COMET is a new transit system throughout the Midlands. There are numerous routes throughout Columbia. For more information about fares and route schedules, visit www.catchthecomet.org
Where history meets modern amenities and active lifestyles.

**Property Amenities**

- The Mills Cafe with free WiFi
- Active social calendar
- BBQ areas with grills
- Large pool with WiFi-enabled deck
- Pub-style billiards with seating
- Fully-equipped fitness centers
- Complimentary fitness classes
- Tennis, sand volleyball, and indoor/outdoor basketball courts
- 24-hr controlled building access
- Evening courtesy guards
- High-efficiency, individually controlled A/C and heat
- Cable and high-speed Internet available
- On-site parking available

**Apartment Features**

- Modern kitchens: granite countertops, breakfast bar, GE stainless steel appliances*
- Generous floorplans
- Hardwood floors
- In-unit washer & dryer
- High-efficiency, individually controlled A/C and heat
- Oversized windows with custom solar shades*
- USB/Duplex outlets*

*612 Whaley only apartment features

- **1-bedrooms starting at $995**
- **2-bedrooms starting at $1695**

---

Visit the Leasing Office Today.

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• Furnished Apartments Available
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Walk to Campus
PREPARING FOR YOUR MOVE

2 months in advance
- Create a folder for important documents.
- Purchase renter’s insurance. See page 14 of this Living Guide for more information.
- Make arrangements with a moving service/truck, if necessary.

1 month in advance
- Get packing supplies (boxes, tape, labels, etc.).
- Schedule utility connections.
- Fill out a change of address form online or at a local post office (usps.com).

2 weeks in advance
- Make a checklist of all of the items you are moving to ensure you don’t forget anything.
- Make sure to secure friends to help you move.
- Update your local address with USC on Self-Service Carolina.

1 week
- Pack your essential items in an easily accessible bag.
- Confirm the exact time and date of your move with your landlord.
- You might want to purchase cleaning supplies to thoroughly clean your unit before unpacking everything.

Move-in Day
- Meet your landlord and get your keys.
- Take time-stamped pictures of the unit before you move anything into the unit.
- Introduce yourself to your neighbors.

Do you need these?
- Moving blankets
- Dollies
- Pick-up truck
- Box cutters
BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR

As a student at the University of South Carolina, you are expected to be a role model in and out of the classroom. Here are a few tips on how to be a good neighbor and enhance your off-campus experience:

1. Get to know your neighbors. Introduce yourself when you move in.
2. Maintain your unit. Make sure that you address disposing of trash properly, lawn care and parking with your roommates.
3. Be respectful of your neighbor’s property.
4. Encourage neighbors to call you first with problems (i.e. noise, litter, parking).

TIPS FOR RESPONSIBLE PARTY HOSTING

1. Develop a clean-up plan for after the party.
2. Inform your neighbors about the party.
3. Know your noise limit. Review your local noise policies and ordinances. A good rule of thumb is that if you are attracting guests because they could “hear” your party before they could see it, then your party is violating the noise ordinance.
4. If possible, lock private doors such as bedrooms. You may consider hiding important valuables since thefts can occur at open parties.
5. Keep the party under control by maintaining guests inside your unit. Keep a guest list at the entry door to protect yourself from any unwanted guests.
LIVING IN COLUMBIA

THINGS TO DO

Columbia has a number of events and locations to keep you busy all year. Here’s just a sampling of what the city has to offer:

WEEKLY

Soda City Market – Columbia’s own street market, held every Saturday on the 1500 block of Main St. Come get some local goodies from artisans, farmers, local retailers, and more! Year-round

MONTHLY

First Thursdays on Main – Head to Main St. on the first Thursday of the month to sample the work of local artists, merchants, and food fare. Year-round

ANNUAL

SC Pride Festival – SC Pride is South Carolina’s longest running Pride event. Come out for a day of fun, celebrating the state’s LGBTQ community! September

Greek Festival – Celebrate Greek culture at the Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church. A whole weekend of Greek food, festivities and artisans awaits! September

South Carolina State Fair – One of South Carolina’s biggest events, the fair brings two weeks of food, rides, exhibits, and music to Columbia every fall. Be on the lookout for College Day, when students get in for free! October

Vista Lights – Kick off the holiday season in Downtown Columbia with an evening of festive celebration. Take in the tree-lighting and some performances, or get a start on your holiday shopping, all in one place! November

Crafty Feast – Want to check out the work of area indie artisans and craftsmen? Maybe pick up some of their work for yourself or that special someone? Crafty Feast is the place to be! December

Famously Hot New Year – Ring in the New Year, Columbia style! Main St. hosts the city’s New Year’s bash, complete with ice skating, music and, of course, fireworks! December

Artista Vista – Columbia’s oldest art gallery crawl, hosted every spring in the Vista. Come out to sample local artists work and enjoy music and other entertainment all around the district. April

Indie Grits – Check out some of the best Southern media around at The Nickelodeon, Columbia’s only independent movie theater. April

Rosewood Crawfish Festival – Start summer early with a day of food and music in Columbia’s college-friendly Rosewood neighborhood. May

ATTRACTIONS

Riverbanks Zoo & Garden – Home to more than 2,000 animals, Columbia’s own Riverbanks is recognized as one of the top four zoos in the country on Tripadvisor.com. 500 Wildlife Pkwy.

Columbia Museum of Art – You don’t need to travel far to find a world-class European and American art collection. 1515 Main Street

Outdoors – The Columbia area is home to three rivers (Congaree, Saluda, Broad), two national parks (Congaree and Sesquicentennial), and Lake Murray, all of which provide endless things to do year-round.
Hub At Columbia

It’s Different Up Here!

www.HubatColumbia.com
(803) 369-8274
leasing@hubatcolumbia.com
CREATING A SAFE COMMUNITY AT CAROLINA

Remember that whether you are on or off campus, you are always a representative of the University of South Carolina and are held to the same standard as students living on campus. All incidents that occur off campus may be reported to the university by the police, a landlord, business owner and/or neighbors. Please take a few minutes to review the University of South Carolina Student Code of Conduct, which can be found at www.housing.sc.edu/osc/coc.html.

GENERAL SAFETY

Taking into account the safety around you is important. Your safety is not guaranteed when living in an apartment complex or house. The university offers services to students to check crime statistics around the area. More information can be found at www.housing.sc.edu/osc/coc.html

We also encourage you to seek safety information from your property management representatives about your complex. In addition, here are a few reminders and suggestions for practicing good safety procedures.

- Keep windows and doors locked at all times.
- Make sure smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and alarm systems are in good working order.
- Ensure that you have and use a peephole in your front door to identify visitors.
- Only let maintenance workers in when your landlord or property manager has notified you that they will be coming.
- Remove valuables in your vehicle and keep your car doors locked at all times. In addition, attempt to park in well-lit areas.
- Have your personal items and possessions registered with the USC Police Department. If they are stolen, this will make them easier to identify.
- Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood and/or apartment complex. Make note of entrances and exits.
- Don’t walk alone after dark.
- If attacked or approached by someone suspicious, contact the police immediately by calling 911.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Phone Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Columbia</td>
<td>803-545-3500 (general) 803-252-2911 (dispatch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richland County</td>
<td>803-576-3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington County</td>
<td>803-785-8320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Columbia</td>
<td>803-794-0721</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cayce Public Safety</td>
<td>803-794-0456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USC Police</td>
<td>803-777-8400 (general) 803-777-4215 (dispatch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If an emergency</td>
<td>dial 911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SEXUAL ASSAULT

If you or someone you know has been the victim of sexual assault or relationship violence, the University of South Carolina has resources available 24/7 to help.

1. Contact the police. Call the USC Police Department at 803-777-4215 or 911.

2. See professional help. Call the Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention and Prevention office at 803-777-8248.

3. Get medical attention. Go to the Palmetto Richland Emergency Room at 5 Richland Medical Park Dr., Columbia, SC 29203.

If you or someone you know has experienced sexual assault, harassment or relationship violence, report it so that the appropriate officials can respond. The report form can be found at www.sa.sc.edu/shs/savip/report. The university’s procedures ensure prompt, fair and impartial investigation by trained professionals committed to protecting students from further harm.

According to the University of South Carolina, consent is permitting, approving or agreeing to comply with an act. Elements of consent include:

A. Both individuals are physically free and capable to act.
B. Someone who is incapacitated cannot consent.
C. Both individuals are fully conscious.
D. Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
E. Both are clear about their intent to engage in sexual activities and their desire to do so is willing.
F. Silence or an absence of resistance does not in and of itself constitute consent.
G. Coercion, force or threat of either cancels consent.
H. Past consent of sexual activities does not imply ongoing future consent.

From: www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf108.pdf

FIRE SAFETY

To prevent fires:
- Cook in approved areas or kitchens and use laboratory-tested appliances. Stay nearby while appliances are on. Clean up grease and appliances as soon as possible.
- Don’t overload outlets. Match your appliance power requirements to the circuit power.
- Replace damaged wires.
- If you smoke, don’t smoke in bed or near flammable materials. Use large ashtrays and be sure ashes, matches and cigarette ends are cold before you throw them away.

If there’s a fire:
- If you discover or suspect a fire, sound the building fire alarm. If there is no alarm in the building, warn the other occupants by knocking on doors and shouting as you leave.
- If you get caught in smoke, get down and crawl. Cleaner, cooler air will be near the floor.
- Before opening any doors, feel the metal knob. If it is hot, don’t open the door.
- Go to the nearest exit or stairway.
- Close as many doors as possible as you leave. This helps to confine the fire.
- Call 911. Give as much information as possible to emergency dispatcher.

For more information, visit USC Fire and Safety at www.sc.edu/ehs/firesafety.htm.

BREAKS & VACATIONS

While students are away on university breaks and vacations, criminals are more likely to search for properties to rob knowing that students will be away. They will look for empty houses or apartments and vehicles.

Break Checklist:
- Make sure doors and windows to your unit are locked and secured. The most common unsecured windows are in the kitchen and bathroom.
- Set your thermostat to a neutral temperature.
- Unplug all appliances.
- Lock all of your belongings.
- Don’t leave valuables within view of windows of your unit or in your car.
- If you have an extra key outside of the unit, make sure to remove it before leaving for an extended period of time.
- Try to make your house look occupied while you are away by placing timers to turn lamps on and off in different rooms at different times.
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• Granite kitchen counters
• Washer & dryer in each unit
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• Walk to campus and Greek Village in minutes
• State-of-the-art fitness center
• Clubhouse with big screen tvs, & poker table
• Group study areas
• 24 hr computer lab w/pc & printer
• Elevator

• On-site 24 hr maintenance
• Parking garage with direct-building access available
• Secure access common hallways
• State-of-the-art movie theater
• Resort-style pool

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708 PULASKI STREET 803 799-2900
Christopher Galloway  
Major: Environmental Science  
Hometown: Sumter, SC  
Q: What advice do you have for incoming spring transfer students?  
A: Transferring mid-semester to USC was an interesting change for me. But with that change, I figured many things out. If you are a transfer student in the spring semester, familiarize yourself with campus as soon as possible. Don’t let the mid-year change distract you from continuing to do well in school. Inform yourself about all of the different opportunities and benefits that USC provides to students. Make yourself at home!

Chardonnay Ismail  
Major: Public Relations/Spanish  
Hometown: Columbia, SC  
Q: What are some tips you have for students living at home throughout their college career?  
A: Living at home can be difficult, especially if you live 30+ minutes away from campus like I do. It’s essential to maintain communication with your parents/guardians. Let them know what you’re doing on campus and when you’ll be home. It is harder to have the typical college experience, but it’s not impossible. My biggest advice is to not let living at home deter you from getting involved on campus and doing what you want to do. Regardless of where you live, you are a part of the Carolina family. Make the most out of your years here!

Elizabeth Eggebrecht  
Major: Nursing  
Hometown: Charlotte, NC  
Q: What is some advice that you would give to students moving off-campus for the first time?  
A: A lease is a legal document, so make sure to read and fully understand what you are signing before you commit. Leasing can be individual or group; if you are signing a group lease, take into account the dependability of your roommates to have their payments in on time. If utilities are included, be aware of the cap or if they are unlimited. Apartment complexes offer amenities that are not always guaranteed, so ask questions about reliability of these services. Remember to be your own advocate. If you are having problems with your apartment community, reach out to the resources that we have on campus such as Student Legal Services. The biggest key to a smooth transition to off-campus living is being informed.
**Jasmine Hoveyda**
Major: Advertising
Hometown: Irmo, SC

**Q:** What is some advice you have for students commuting to and from campus?

**A:** First, wake up with enough time to get through traffic and find parking. The 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. traffic always will be a hassle in Columbia no matter what interstate or roads you take. Know an alternate route to campus, just in case. Check traffic reports and train schedules! You will need at least 30 minutes during busy parking time to find a spot. Always try to keep spare change to pay for meters and extra cash to pay for garage tickets.

---

**Emily Seeger**
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Murrells Inlet, SC

**Q:** How do you stay involved on campus while living off campus?

**A:** It can be tough at times. When people live off campus, sometimes they don’t want to go back to campus after they’re done with classes for the day. With my experiences, I started getting involved when I lived in my residence hall. I decided to continue being involved when I moved into a student living community because it was something that I loved to do. There were some days where I would just want to stay home after a long day of classes, but I was committed to my student involvements so I would go back to campus. With my current living situation, I don’t live close enough to go home in between classes and meetings, so I spend a lot of my free time hanging out in the Off-Campus Student Lounge.

---

**Jon McClinton**
Major: Theatre
Hometown: Orlando, FL

**Q:** What advice do you have for a non-traditional student living off-campus?

**A:** The one thing that I think a non-traditional student needs to remember is that they are still students. We may be a little (or a lot) older than the average student or have families to take care of, but we should take advantage of the same services as other students. You don’t have to do anything alone. You can use Student Legal Services, join organizations or just relax in the Off-Campus Student Lounge. This is all yours because you are a Gamecock!

---

**Hope Young**
Major: Psychology
Hometown: Murrells Inlet, SC

**Q:** What are some of your best study tips for living off campus?

**A:** Use your down time wisely when you’re on campus. Having an hour or two between classes is a great opportunity to get some studying done. Check out local coffee shops (free WiFi), read on the Horseshoe or study in the Off-Campus Student Lounge. Also, don’t feel like you have to live on-campus to use USC’s resources. Take advantage of Supplemental Instruction sessions, plan an appointment with a tutor or stop by the Writing Center if you need help. Study as much as you can while you’re on campus so that you can relax and have fun at home!

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**Jasmine Hoveyda**
Major: Advertising
Hometown: Irmo, SC

**Q:** What is some advice you have for students commuting to and from campus?

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**Stadium Suites**

“I’ve lived in several student housing communities on and off campus, but none of them were as great as Stadium Suites. The rooms are very spacious, with your own private bathroom, and the apartments come furnished and even include a washer and dryer. Everyone even gets their own storage inside their apartment. They also have different events for the community throughout the year that really make you feel welcome and appreciated as a resident. I wouldn’t want to stay anywhere else!”

**The Retreat**

“I have loved my years at The Retreat. To me, it is the best of both worlds—college living but with a privacy of your own cottage. The courtyards are always filled with college students enjoying outdoor activities. The Retreat also has many amenities available to residents including a sand volleyball court, tanning bed, gyms and a movie theatre. The resort style pools are out of this world. The staff goes out of their way to make you feel like you are at home. You are not just a tenant; you are a part of The Retreat family.”

**Garnet Riverwalk**

“I have enjoyed living at Garnet Riverwalk the past three years. The best parts include the location, cleanliness of the property, having a great sense of community and the helpful office staff. Being located right on the river makes this community so desirable. The shuttle to campus is convenient and reliable. The property is always kept clean and makes me proud to have guests visit. The biggest advantage of student housing is the sense of community; I feel at home thanks to the office and maintenance staff. Having a safe, convenient property has been amazing. ”

**University Oaks**

“I could not be happier with my decision to live at University Oaks. The community staff is friendly and promote activities that bring the residents out of their apartments and make it easy to meet other residents or students. Being a college student, budgeting is my top priority and was another reason why I chose University Oaks. The apartments are very spacious, maintenance free and give off a relaxing vibe. Even the grounds around the apartment buildings are great. It’s a gated complex that is maintained each day and almost makes it feel like a little bit of paradise. ”

**The Hub**

“I chose to live in The Hub year because I was looking for a change. The layout of The Hub is much more spacious than what I am used to, and my room will already be fully furnished. The location of The Hub is also a big plus. It’s located in Downtown Columbia so it’s only a few blocks from central campus, which is an easy walk to class. The leasing process at The Hub was made easy, and almost effortless, thanks to the helpful staff. My roommates and I arrived with no clue of what we were looking for, and we left with a brand new place to call home.”

**Copper Beech**

“I have lived at Copper Beech for the past three years, and the experience has been awesome. The units are affordable, the staff is amazing and the location is convenient. What I appreciate most about the staff is that they serve as apartment managers but also are concerned with the satisfaction of residents. Considering the large amount of people this facility accommodates, the maintenance staff does an excellent job of tending to the needs of tenants in a timely manner. Fun events and promotions are often held, which help facilitate a community-oriented atmosphere for students. My overall experience at Copper Beech Town Homes has been wonderful, and I look forward to embarking on my fourth year as a resident.”

**Aspyre**

“Aspyre has been a great place to live. Being so close to campus makes it very convenient. I’ve lived here for three years, and everyone that works here has been nothing but accommodating. I have recommended Aspyre to many of my college friends! Living here has made my college experience that much more enjoyable!”

**Greene Crossing**

“I just signed my lease at Greene Crossing, and I am so excited! I will be able to walk to all my classes, and I can walk to the Greek Village every day for lunch. The staff at Greene Crossing are so nice, and they took their time to explain everything that comes with the apartment. I love that it is brand new with stainless steel appliances, granite countertops and a walk-in closet in my room with my own bathroom. There are so many amenities, but I think the pool deck will be awesome and a great place to hang out with my friends. August can’t come soon enough for me to move into my new home!”

Disclaimer: Testimonials were obtained from properties that are members of our Partners in Off-Campus Living Program. Each property obtained the testimonial and submitted it to Off-Campus Student Services from a current leaseholder.
RESOURCES

ON-CAMPUS

Counseling Center
803-777-5223
sa.sc.edu/shs/chdc

Department of Student Life
803-777-6688
sa.sc.edu/stlife

International Student Services
803-777-7461
ip.sc.edu

Off-Campus Student Services
803-777-3366
sa.sc.edu/ocss

Parking Services
803-777-5160
sc.edu/vmps

Student Athletic Tickets
803-777-7461
sa.sc.edu/stlife/studenttickets

Student Conduct
803-777-4333
housing.sc.edu/osc

Financial Aid and Scholarships
803-777-8134
sc.edu/financialaid

Student Health Services
803-777-3175
sa.sc.edu/shs

Student Legal Services
803-777-6611
sa.sc.edu/stlife/student-legal-services

Student Success Center
803-777-1000
sa.sc.edu/ssc

Transfer/Veteran Services
803-777-1000
sa.sc.edu/ssc/tsspsupport

University Police
803-777-4215
les.sc.edu

OFF-CAMPUS

Transportation and Tourism

Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA)
803-255-7100
catchthecomet.org

Columbia Visitors Bureau
800-264-4884
www.columbiavb.com

Columbia DMV
803-869-5000
bit.ly/1AuzEYv

City of Columbia
803-545-3300
www.columbiasc.net/utilities-engineering

City of Columbia

Animal Control
803-776-PETS
www.columbiasc.net/animal-services

Fire Department
803-545-3700
columbiafire.richland.net

Parking Operations
803-545-4015
www.columbiasc.net/parking

Police Department
803-545-3500
www.columbiapd.net

Richland County

Animal Care
803-576-2461
animalcare.richlandonline.com

Residential Inspections
803-576-2189
bit.ly/1zXo8SP

Sheriff’s Department
803-576-3500
www.rcsd.net

Solid Waste and Recycling
803-929-6000
bit.ly/1MzMyk6

Voter Registration
803-576-2240
bit.ly/1TRfEjE

Utilities

South Carolina Electric and Gas (SCE&G)
800-251-7234
www.sceg.com

Aspyre..................................803-400-1570
www.iaspyre.com

Cayce Cove.........................803-739-0899
www.pointewestapts.com

The Club at Carolina...............803-779-5888
http://bit.ly/1yYG4Rx

Copper Beech.......................803-255-0170
www.cbeech.com/columbia

Garnet River Walk..................803-939-9209
www.garnetriverwalk.com

Greene Crossing...............803-799-2900
www.greeneecrossing.com

The Hub.........................803-369-8274
www.hubatcolumbia.com

The Lofts..........................803-254-7801
www.the loft satusc.com

The Mills..........................803-677-3705
http://bit.ly/1AhB8Ey

The Retreat.........................803-733-5800
www.retreatcolumbia.com

Riverside.........................803-772-2200
www.riversidecolumbia.com

Stadium Suites.....................803-400-8669
www.scsuites.com

University Oaks....................803-252-2634
www.uoaks.com

Woodlands..........................803-779-4888
www.woodlandsofcolumbia.com

www.iaspyre.com
www.pointewestapts.com
www.cbeech.com/columbia
www.greenecrossing.com
www.hubatcolumbia.com
www.the loft satusc.com
www.garnetriverwalk.com
www.garnetriverwalk.com
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<th>ELECTRICITY INCLUDED (CAP PER PERSON)</th>
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**For information purposes only. Amenities are subject to change and should be verified with each property. Inclusion on this list does not indicate a referral or approval by the University of South Carolina.**