Cultural Daily

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Top Affordable Neighborhoods in Boston for Students

Our Friends · Tuesday, November 10th, 2026

Boston offers students a wide range of off-campus housing options, but rent and commute times vary across neighborhoods. Allston, Brighton, Mission Hill, Roxbury, Dorchester, Jamaica Plain and East Boston are popular areas to consider. This guide compares their rental costs, university access and local amenities to help students find a cheap area to live.

1. Mission Hill

Mission Hill is an affordable neighborhood for renting **apartments near Northeastern University** and the Longwood Medical Area and offers many shared apartments and multi-bedroom houses. The neighborhood has access to the Orange Line, Green Line E branch and several bus routes. Monthly rent in Mission Hill ranges from $ 2,500 to $ 4,500. Rents are slightly higher than in some of Boston's other affordable neighborhoods, but the location offers shorter commutes to Northeastern University and the Longwood Medical Area.

Things to Do in Mission Hill

Brigham Circle is one of the neighborhood's main commercial areas. Students can find restaurants, cafés, convenience stores and everyday services around Huntington Avenue. One Brigham Circle is a local shopping center with retail and service businesses.

For outdoor space, Kevin W. Fitzgerald Park provides a place to relax, exercise or meet friends. Huntington Avenue also connects Mission Hill with the Longwood Medical Area and Northeastern University, making it convenient for students who spend much of their day on campus.

2. Allston

Allston is a popular choice for students looking for lower rents near Boston University and Harvard University. The neighborhood has a range of **affordable student housing in Boston**, including shared houses and larger apartment buildings. Located west of Boston University's Charles River Campus, Allston also has frequent MBTA bus and Green Line services.

Monthly rent in Allston typically ranges from $2,850 to $3,600. Housing options include traditional triple-deckers, shared houses and larger apartment buildings. Rental prices and property conditions vary from one street to another, so arrange a viewing and check the unit's condition before signing a lease.

Things to Do in Allston

Harvard Avenue and Brighton Avenue are two of Allston's main commercial streets. Students can find casual restaurants, cafés, supermarkets, and independent shops along both roads. Novo Marketplace on Brighton Avenue is a food hall option for trying different food vendors in one place. Packard's Corner is another convenient area for everyday shopping and dining.

Allston also has a lively music scene, with local venues and bars attracting students throughout the week. Commonwealth Avenue provides a direct route toward Boston University, while the Green Line B branch connects the neighborhood with other parts of Boston.



Photo: Max Vakhtbovych via Pexels

3. Brighton

Brighton is a relatively affordable neighborhood for students renting near Boston University and Boston College. The area has a mix of apartment buildings and shared houses, with Green Line stops providing connections to both campuses and downtown Boston.

Monthly rent in Brighton typically ranges from $2,600 to $3,200. Rental options include older apartment buildings and newer developments. Compare the condition of each property, the utilities included in the rent and the commute to campus before signing a lease.

Things to Do in Brighton

Brighton Center is a major local shopping and dining area, with restaurants, cafés, grocery stores and everyday services along Washington Street and nearby roads. Washington Square offers another cluster of local businesses and restaurants, as well as access to the Green Line C branch. Students who enjoy outdoor activities can visit Chestnut Hill Reservoir for walking, running and views across the water.

4. Roxbury

Roxbury is one of Boston's more affordable neighborhoods for students, particularly those attending Northeastern University and Roxbury Community College. Its location provides access to downtown Boston, with Orange Line and Silver Line stations and local bus routes serving the area.

The monthly rent in Roxbury typically ranges from $2,300 to $3,100. Rental options include apartments and shared houses, but prices and property conditions vary by address. Check the location, building condition and commute to campus before signing a lease.

Things to Do in Roxbury

Nubian Square is one of Roxbury's main commercial and cultural centers. The area has restaurants, local shops, community services, and bus connections to other parts of Boston. Students can also explore the neighborhood's cultural institutions and historic sites.

Fort Hill offers historic architecture and a residential atmosphere, while Franklin Park provides extensive green space for walking, running and outdoor activities. Franklin Park Zoo is also located within the park, making it a popular weekend destination.

5. Dorchester

Dorchester is one of Boston's more affordable neighborhoods for students, particularly those attending the University of Massachusetts Boston. The Red Line, commuter rail and local bus routes connect different parts of the neighborhood with UMass Boston and other areas of the city.

Monthly rent in Dorchester typically ranges from $2,300 to $2,800. As Dorchester covers a large area, you should check the property's distance from the nearest transit stop and your campus before choosing a rental.

Things to Do in Dorchester

Fields Corner has plenty of restaurants, cafés, grocery stores and local shops for everyday needs. Dorchester Avenue is another popular spot for dining and shopping. For outdoor activities, students can visit Savin Hill Beach or walk and cycle along the Neponset River Greenway. Near UMass Boston, Columbia Point offers waterfront paths and access to the JFK Presidential Library and Museum.

6. Hyde Park

Hyde Park is one of Boston's more affordable neighborhoods for students who are willing to commute farther to campus. Monthly rents are generally lower than in central Boston, making it a good option for students looking to keep housing costs down.

Monthly rent in Hyde Park typically ranges from $2,700 to $3,880. Rental options include apartments and houses, with commuter rail and bus services connecting the neighborhood to other parts of Boston.

Things to Do in Hyde Park

Cleary Square is Hyde Park's main commercial area, with restaurants, cafés, shops and everyday services along Hyde Park Avenue. Logan Square also has supermarkets and retail stores for daily shopping.

For outdoor activities, Stony Brook Reservation has wooded trails and ponds for walking and hiking. The Neponset River Reservation offers more paths and green space, giving students places to get outside close to home.

7. East Boston

East Boston is one of the more affordable neighborhoods for students who want to live outside central Boston, with Blue Line connections to downtown and other MBTA services. It is particularly useful for students who study or work in central Boston and want to compare rental prices outside the most student-heavy neighborhoods. Monthly rent in East Boston typically ranges from 2,500 to 3,000. This is lower than the rent ranges in Allston, Mission Hill and several other popular student neighborhoods.

Things to Do in East Boston

Maverick Square and Central Square are two of East Boston's main local centers. Both have restaurants, grocery stores, cafés, and everyday services. Students can also explore the neighborhood's waterfront spaces, including Piers Park, which has harbor views and walking paths.

The East Boston Harborwalk provides a route along the waterfront, while Bremen Street Community Park offers open space and walking paths near the airport and Blue Line. These outdoor areas are useful for students who want somewhere to walk, exercise or take a break from studying.

Tips for Renting Student Housing in Boston

Findingaffordable student housing in Boston takes more than comparing monthly rent. Your commute, utility bills, lease terms, and upfront costs all affect your housing budget. Keep these tips in mind when looking for an apartment:

- Compare the total cost: Check whether rent includes heat, electricity, water and internet. Ask about extra fees and how utility bills are split between roommates. The monthly rent alone does not show how much you will actually spend.
- Consider sharing an apartment: Renting a two-bedroom or larger apartment with roommates can reduce your share of the rent. Before signing, agree on how to divide rent, utilities, and the security deposit, and make sure everyone understands their responsibilities.
- Check the commute and start early: Use the MBTA trip planner to compare travel times from each apartment to campus. Start your search several months before the fall semester, when demand is high, so you have enough time to compare neighborhoods, arrange viewings and find a convenient location.
- Prepare your application documents: Landlords and property managers commonly ask for photo ID, proof of enrollment, proof of income or funds, and rental references. International students without a US credit history or rental history should ask about alternative documents and guarantor requirements before applying.
- Review the lease and upfront costs: Check the lease dates, payment schedule, security deposit,

broker fees (if applicable), utility responsibilities and early termination terms. Confirm the total amount due before signing or transferring money, and make sure the lease covers your intended stay in Boston.

- Choose a reliable rental platform: Use established rental platforms to compare listings and check property details before booking. uhomes.com features verified student housing in Boston, with photos, videos and room information, as well as free support from consultants throughout the booking process. You can arrange an in-person or live video viewing through the website to verify the property before booking and reduce the risk of rental scams.

Conclusion

The right Boston neighborhood depends on where you study, how much you plan to spend on rent and how far you are willing to commute. Compare the average rents in the table with the actual commute and amenities around each property before narrowing down your options. At uhomes.com, international students can find verified rental listings that do not require a US-based guarantor or prior US rental history. Explore more affordable Boston student housing on the platform to find an apartment that fits your budget and university location.

Photo: Abdullah Almutairi via Pexels

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