

HOUSING GUIDE

BIOLOGY DEPARTMENT
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA CHAPEL HILL



Hello and welcome to the Biology Department at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill! We are so delighted that you have chosen to join our department to begin your journey toward your PhD. While we are confident that you chose UNC and our department out of academic considerations, we are also inviting you to make Chapel Hill and the surrounding area your home.

This document is to provide you with housing information with recommendations by current Biology graduate students. The housing options listed in this document are by no means an exhaustive list, but it does provide a good overview of what is available.

We hope you will find this guide helpful in what can sometimes be an overwhelming process.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **HOUSING OPTIONS**
- **COST OF LIVING**
- **RESOURCES**

HOUSING OPTIONS

There are many housing options in the Triangle area. While the majority of students live in Chapel Hill and Carrboro, the surrounding areas, such as Durham, Raleigh, and Hillsborough also provide wonderful and affordable places to live.



Baity Hill Graduate and Family Housing (On Campus)

Baity Hill Graduate and Family Housing provides on-campus housing for graduate students and student families. Provides options for furnished or unfurnished apartments. For 2 bedroom apartments, rent is charged per room: in an unfurnished apartment, rent is between \$605 and \$638; in a furnished apartment, rent is between \$670 and \$700. Utilities are included in rent. Laundry facilities in each building. On plenty of bus routes, and very easy to walk or bike to campus (approximately 1 mile). Basketball courts, playground, picnic area with grills. Onsite parking is available, but for an additional fee. Coffee shops and restaurants are not as accessible as they would be in Carrboro and its not close to a grocery store. [Link](#) to website.

Shadowood Apartments (Chapel Hill)

Shadowood is located approximately 2 miles from campus and is in close proximity to 3 bus routes (bus comes by every 15 minutes or so). Nice pool area, community is quiet, decent management, and pet friendly. Other residents are mostly graduate and professional students. When splitting a 2 bedroom, rent + utilities is around \$800 for one person. [Link](#) to website

Laurel Ridge (Chapel Hill)

Reasonably priced, good location (close to both Carrboro and campus). Offers 1-3 bedroom options. Two bedroom rent is between \$955-\$1100. Not within walking distance to a grocery store, so would need to use a car, bike or ride the bus. There is a pool, sand volleyball court, tennis courts, playground, and fenced-in dog park. *One student reported that their townhome had incessant roach issues that did not get resolved, although maintenance was very responsive and they believe other townhomes did not have the same issue. [Link](#) to website.





University Commons (Chapel Hill)

Condominiums, each until owned by individual landlords. On the J and D bus routes (about 15 minutes to campus by bus). Quiet neighborhood/community, in-unit washer/dryer, each room as its own bathroom. Each room is rented out individually. Plenty of parking. \$450/month, not including utilities (is cheap compared to other complexes). Small kitchen for 4 people. No pets allowed. *One student commented that some of the units are used as a halfway home for recovering addicts, and there were times they had uncomfortable experiences with neighbors (hearing loud noises and yelling through walls, being harassed and catcalled outside their front door, etc.). Others either did not report this, or were not bothered by this. [Link](#) to website.

Poplar Place (Carrboro)

Located in Carrboro about 4 miles from campus. There is a park and ride across the street, so campus is easily accessible. For a two bedroom, rent is approximately \$950 and utilities range from \$110-\$150. Pet friendly (one time fee applied), quiet, nice light, good amenities, and pool. There are not a lot of nearby routes for walking/running. Older furnishings and it has been reported by a student that the walls are thin. [Link](#) to website.

Ashbrook Apartments (Carrboro)

Convenient to multiple bus routes. Reasonably large apartments and are easy to share with roommate. Quiet (very few, if any, undergrads) and recently renovated. 2 miles from campus. Tennis courts, pool, grills and picnic area, and on-site dog park. Washer/dryer included. Friendly management and quick repairs. Please call complex for current pricing. [Link](#) to website.

Chateau Apartments (Carrboro)

This apartment complex consists of single apartments (800 sq feet) and is situated in a quiet neighborhood, close (about 1 mile) to a shopping plaza which includes a grocery store. It is a 10 minute drive to campus and is accessible to two bus lines. If you prefer to ride your bike to campus, it is approximately a 20-30 minute ride and there are bike paths all the way to campus. The management team and maintenance staff are very friendly and responsive. The complex is a bit older and the apartments are a bit out of date in terms of design. Rent is \$785 and utilities are approximately \$110. [Link](#) to website

Ridgehaven Townhomes (Carrboro)

Approximately 1.5 miles from campus and located at the end of a bus route. One student reported they pay \$465 for rent and have 3 other roommates, while another student lives by themselves and pays \$1075 for rent. Free parking, safe area, quiet, plenty of space and access to nearby running trails. Demographic for the neighborhood is mostly families and graduate students. Will need to drive to grocery store.



Weaver Street Market, Carrboro

Autumn Woods (Carrboro)

Located in Carrboro and accessible to a few bus stops, so getting to campus isn't an issue. Awesome leasing staff, is a bit of an older complex, but one of the best in terms of furnishings. Close to grocery store, has a pool and 24/7 hour gym. Very nice place, but just a little expensive (\$1100-\$1700 rent for 2 bedrooms). Mostly young families and graduate students. [Link](#) to website.

Rock Creek Apartments (Carrboro)

Amenities include pool, 24/7 gym, tennis court, onsite laundry facilities, and it is pet friendly. Apartments are a bit on the older side if living in non-renovated apartment. Location is good and management is very responsive. There is access to a bus line and can be a bit far to walk to campus or to a grocery store, but biking is probably okay. Rent is approximately \$900-\$1000 for a 1 bedroom and \$960-\$1140 for a 2 bedroom. [Link](#) to website.

Other complexes where current students live (and generally have good things to say about):

- [Blu on Farrington](#)
- [Sunstone Apartments](#)
- [86 North Apartments](#)
- [The Lodge at Southpoint](#)

**Complexes current students
DO NOT recommend**

- Glen Lennox
- Shephard Lane
- Stratford Apartments
- University Gardens
- Carolina Realty (realty company)

Cost of Living

Current students have estimated that the current break-even, living wage for this area is a stipend of \$26,000; see below for a listing of estimates of essential monthly expenses for the area.

	Living alone	Living with roommate(s)
Rent + Utilities + Phone/Internet	\$1,197 (average)	\$793 (average)
Food/groceries	\$200-\$400	\$200-\$400
Transportation (insurance, gas, maintenance)	\$100-\$200	\$100-\$200
Miscellaneous (medical, clothing, entertainment, etc.)	\$100-\$200	\$100-\$200
Monthly expense estimated range	\$1,597-\$1,997	\$1,193-\$1,593

These estimates can vary widely depending on your living situation. Summer funding varies—please speak with your prospective advisor for more information. You are also encouraged to talk to current graduate students about their experience.

Resources

Searching for Housing and Roommates

There are many websites that can assist you in finding a place to live, whether that is within an apartment complex, in a townhome or single family house, and in Chapel Hill/Carrboro or other surrounding areas. In addition to contacting individual complexes, below is a listing of such websites that current students have used to find housing as well as roommates.

- [Apartments.com](#)
- [Craigslist](#)
- [Zillow](#)
- [UNC Housing Facebook](#) (can lean more towards undergrads)
- [Off-Campus Housing](#) (there is also a tab for finding roommates)
- [Chapel Hill Rentals](#)

Public Transportation

Figure out how you intend to commute to campus before signing a lease. Living further away from campus is feasible because of the great public bus system. Chapel Hill Transit is free and serves all areas of Chapel Hill and Carrboro. GoTriangle services the Triangle Area (Wake, Durham, and Orange counties). Patrons of GoTriangle must pay a fare and/or purchase passes in order to use this service. Parking on campus is an option, but can be limited and pricey. You can find more information at the following websites:

[Chapel Hill Transit](#)

[GoTriangle](#)

[UNC Parking and Transportation](#)

Exploring the Area

While we no doubt believe one reason you chose to join our department was academically motivated, we are also inviting you to make Chapel Hill and North Carolina your home. The surrounding area and the state provide a plethora of indoor and outdoor activities to suit everyone's interests. After a long day of work in the lab and/or classes, it's always refreshing to walk up to Franklin Street to find a place to enjoy some food and drink. Because of the predominant student presence, the social and cultural life reflects the tastes of those students. There are numerous inexpensive and fun eateries in downtown Chapel Hill and the surrounding area. Several places feature live music, and located in Carrboro are two popular independent music venues: Cat's Cradle and Local 506. Also located in downtown Chapel Hill are the Morehead Planetarium and the Ackland Art Museum. The ArtsCenter, also in Carrboro, showcases local companies or national touring groups in a 350-seat theater. The PlayMakers Repertory Company is a full-season theater group right in Chapel Hill with exciting performances. Durham Performing Arts Center, Coastal Credit Union at Walnut Creek, and Koka Booth Amphitheater are a few venues in the area that host top name performers and several festivals. Just outside town is the N.C. Botanical Garden with extensive walking paths, and Duke Forest is a large area in Durham with lots of trails. There are many local farmer's and flea markets, including a large farmer's market on Saturday mornings in Carrboro.

The college spectator sports here are world-class. Student tickets are available for our exciting UNC Tar Heel men's basketball and football games. Admission to most other games, such as men's and women's soccer, women's basketball, lacrosse, and baseball, is free to students. Down the road the Durham Bulls provide great baseball entertainment on warm summer nights. The Carolina Hurricanes are a professional hockey team that play at their new stadium only 20 minutes from Chapel Hill. Local biking clubs provide strenuous activity as they explore the surrounding countryside. In short, it is likely that whatever your tastes and life-style, you will be able to find stimulating activities that are accessible in Chapel Hill.

And when it's time to hit the road for a trip, you are only three hours by car from the North Carolina coast with its lovely and historic beaches, including Kitty Hawk, the site of the first heavier-than-air plane flight in the world. You are also only three hours east of the majestic Smoky Mountains, part of the Appalachian range. Smoky Mountain National Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway in the western part of the state offer truly stunning views of some of the oldest mountains in the world. And the large metropolitan areas of Atlanta, Georgia, and Washington, DC are only 4-5 hours by car. Raleigh Durham International Airport is ever-expanding to accommodate more travelers, and it is easy to fly almost anywhere from here. Chapel Hill has a moderate climate, with mild winters (snow is rare) and warm summers.

We are delighted to welcome you to our department and University this fall and we hope you find this guide helpful. Please visit the following websites for more information about all our area has to offer.

[Chapel Hill](#)
[Durham](#)
[Raleigh](#)



This guide is not intended to provide an exhaustive list or be an endorsement of any complexes. You are encouraged to look outside the housing options listed in this guide in order to fit your needs. You can also reach out to other graduate students in your lab, or please feel free to contact Kenlyn Merritt (kenlyn@email.unc.edu), the Graduate Student Services Manager for the Biology Department, with any questions.