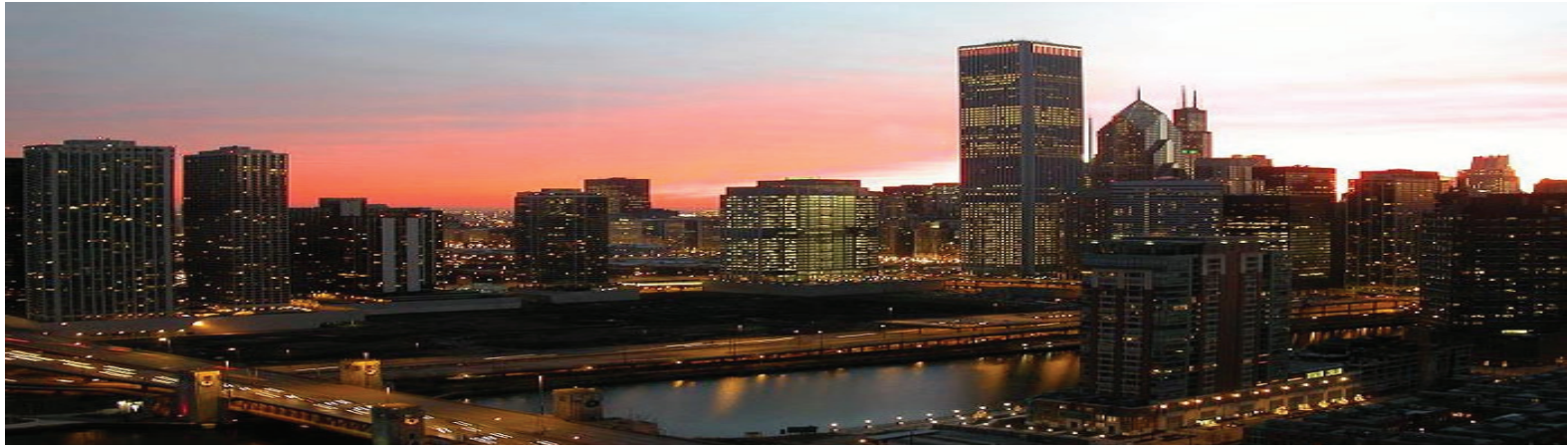


Chicago



Chicago is in many ways the nation's last great city. Chicago really does have it all, with less of the hassle and infrastructural problems of New York and Los Angeles. The city has one of the world's best collections of modern architecture, as well as offering the Art Institute of Chicago and a wide range of excellent museums, sports, and cultural activities. There is an array of jazz and blues clubs, and the rock scene is also thriving. Chicago's restaurants offer the world's best and most diverse dining and cuisine choices. From its famous steakhouses and "Chicago"-style pizza to various ethnic cuisines, Chicago has something for every taste and budget.

HOT SPOTS IN CHICAGO

Magnificent Mile (Michigan Avenue)• Known as the Magnificent Mile, this upscale shopping district is Chicago's version of Fifth Avenue. Tourists hit Niketown and the Sony Gallery, and browsers crowd such department stores as Neiman Marcus, Lord & Taylor, Bloomingdale's and the Nordstrom flagship store. Visit designer boutiques like Gucci, Ermenegildo Zegna and Tiffany & Co.

North Avenue Beach• North Avenue Beach bursts at the seams between Memorial Day and Labor Day. The area offers fishing, beach volleyball, spots to barbecue, a boat-shaped beach house, and some of the best people watching in the city. There's also a roller hockey rink and an open-air fitness center.

Wrigley Field• Wrigley Field is the ivy-covered 1920s stadium of baseball's much-loved Cubs. This remains one of the best places to get a real feel for the game; the club is so traditional that it fought the installation of floodlights until 1988. There are few more pleasant and relaxing ways to spend an afternoon than drinking beer, eating hot dogs, and watching the Cubs.

Signature Room at the 95th• Ninety-five floors up, the view of the cityscape is amazing. The interior is elegant but hotel-like. Service is friendly and efficient. Stop in, have a drink, and look out over Chicago.

Rush & Division/ Lincoln Avenue/ Southport• Obviously, there are bars, clubs, and lounges throughout Chicago; however, these three areas provide a good portion of the action in the Gold Coast, Lincoln Park, and Wrigleyville/Lakeview. The Rush & Division area consists primarily of dance clubs; Lincoln Avenue and Southport feature an array of dance clubs to neighborhood pubs to lounges. You won't have any problem finding something appealing to you.

Any Museum• Art Institute, Shedd Aquarium, Museum of Contemporary Art, Museum of Science and Industry...



TRANSPORTATION

Chicago's public transportation system is among the best in the world. A ride to the downtown area from the airport is only \$2 by "El," and buses and trains stand by 24/7. Whether it's downtown (the "Loop") to work, Wrigley Field, or surrounding suburbs, the Chicago Transit Authority buses, trains (the "El"), and Metra trains can get you there. You can even call the CTA or visit its Web site to get assistance on exact routes and schedules (312.836.7000, www.transitchicago.com). Pick up a CTA system map, available on the Web site and at most subway stations and visitor centers or from the CTA office on the seventh floor of the Merchandise Mart. Riders purchase a transit card (available in all El stations) and add value to it. One ride costs \$2; another ride within two hours costs just 30¢. If you plan to be on the move, passes good for one (\$5), two (\$9), three (\$12) or five (\$18) days of unlimited rides might be a good idea. They're available at O'Hare, Midway, and Amtrak subway stations.

El• Getting around Chicago is simple and quick, thanks to buses and the "El," a system of elevated trains operated 24 hours a day by the Chicago Transit Authority. Rapid transit trains run every 5 to 15 minutes during the day and every 15 to 60 minutes all night. Lines are color-coded and denoted by route rather than destination.

Bus• Buses are also very convenient and run throughout Chicago every 5 to 15 minutes during rush hours and every 8 to 20 minutes at most other times.

Metra• Metra is the commuter rail system serving northeast Illinois. Trains run frequently during rush hour and about every hour during off-peak times. Metra also offers several frequent rider discount programs.

River Bus• A River Bus (April-Oct; \$2; 312.337.1446) operates on the river during rush hour in summer, running from the Michigan Avenue Bridge to Union Station in 8 minutes. It's a nice relaxing ride to/from work or just for fun.

Rental Cars• There are a variety of rental car agencies (all the major ones) in and around Chicago.

Taxi• Chicago's taxis are more reasonable than those of many other major U.S. cities. Charges are \$1.90 at the drop of the flag, \$1.20 per mile, and 50¢ for each additional passenger. Cabs can be hailed anytime in the Loop and other central neighborhoods; otherwise call Yellow (312.829.4222) or Checker taxis (312.243.2537).

Foot• Chicago is an easy city to negotiate: Streets form a grid and numbering is consistent, beginning at State and Madison streets. State Street is at zero east and west and Madison at zero north and south. Lake Michigan serves as a clear point of reference for getting your bearings - the lake is always to the east of the urban grid. The Chicago River, which cuts through the heart of downtown Chicago to Lake Michigan, separates the business district from the shopping and entertainment areas of the North Side.

RENTING

General• Most apartments are rented by rental corporations (who own a high-rise or group of buildings), or individuals (who own one or two individual apartments). If looking in the Gold Coast/Near North area, the best resource is typically a Realtor (fee for service – usually first month's rent). If looking in other neighborhoods (Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Bucktown, etc.), the Chicago Reader and Craig's List are the best resources. In addition, many times individual landlords in these areas do not list their apartments, but rather rely solely on a for rent sign. Therefore, great places in these areas can often be found by simply selecting a neighborhood, driving through its streets, and recording the information on these signs.

Other fees/Deposits• Usually first month's and last month's rent are due upon signing the lease.

Advice• Be sure to talk to current tenants to see how helpful/reasonable the landlord is. If they seem unsatisfied, you may want to look elsewhere. If larger building, find out if there is a property manager or if the landlord addresses problems. If the landlord manages the property, find out how willing he/she has been to fix problems in the past. Finally, ask whether there will be any major construction projects or improvements to the property going on while you live there.

Renter's Insurance• Renter's insurance usually runs between \$100-\$200 a year to insure your apartment and belongings for a year. There are numerous insurance agencies offering rental insurance around Chicago.

AREAS IN AND AROUND CHICAGO

Near North/ Gold Coast

Who lives there: Young professionals and wealthy couples

Distance to downtown: 5 minutes

Means of transportation: Taxis, buses and Brown and Red line of El

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$900 – \$1,500 per person per month

Typical building: High rise

Pros: Close to downtown, trendy area, convenient to shopping and night life

Cons: Expensive, lack of free parking

Bucktown/ Wicker Park

Who lives there: Young professionals, art crowd

Distance to downtown: 20-minute El or taxi ride

Means of transportation: Taxis, Blue and Green line of El

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$600 - \$1,000 per person

Typical building: Three-story brownstone

Pros: Trendy alternative area, eclectic restaurants, neighborhood has lots of character

Cons: Farther from downtown, some unsafe areas undergoing improvement, limited parking

Lincoln Park

Who lives there: Young professionals, college students, and wealthy families

Distance to downtown: 20-minute El ride, 25 to 30-minute bus ride

Means of transportation: Taxis, buses and Brown and Red line of El

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$700 - \$1,000 per person

Typical building: Three-story brownstone

Pros: Close to downtown and lake, lots of young people, safe area, full night life, nice neighborhood

Cons: Can be expensive

Old Town

Who lives there: Families and young professionals

Distance to downtown: 10-minute El ride, 15-minute bus or taxi ride

Means of transportation: Taxis, buses and Brown and Red line of El

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$700-\$1,000 per person per month

Typical Building: Three-story brownstone

Pros: Close to city and lake, convenient to take El, safe, nice area, neighborhood has lots of character

Cons: Difficult/expensive parking

Lakeview/ Wrigleyville

Who lives there: Families, young professionals

Distance to downtown: 30-minute El ride, 40-minute bus ride

Means of transportation: Taxis, buses and Brown and Red line of El

Average price of two-bedroom apt: \$600 - \$1,000 per person

Typical building: Three-story brownstone and high rises

Pros: Close to lake, Wrigley Field (Cubs baseball), night life

Cons: Farther away from downtown, parking can be difficult/expensive near lake

USEFUL CHICAGO LINKS

- <http://www.uvaclubs.com/chicago/> - U.Va. Club of Chicago
- <http://www.spacefinder.chicagoreader.com/cgi-bin/spacefind.cgi> – Best resource for finding apartments in Chicago
- <http://www.chicago.craigslist.org/> - Apartment and sublets, community resources, job posting, personal ads, items for sale
- <http://www.apartmentpeople.com/> - Free apartment finding service (mostly Lakeview listings)
- <http://www.apartments-in-chicago.com> - Free apartment finding service
- <http://www.chicagotraveler.com> - Hotels, restaurants, nightlife, events, concerts, maps, etc.
- <http://www.metromix.chicagotribune.com> – Entertainment Web site. Can find information on a variety of restaurants, bars/clubs, shows, sporting events, apartments, and much more.

*City Sheets were created by members of the McIntire Young Alumni Council (MYAC). MYAC and the Alumni Association are working together to keep them updated with the most current information. The information on these sheets is based on online research, information from tourism offices and local newspapers, and, most significantly, from the authors' personal experiences. All costs, fares, and rental prices are approximate estimates for 2009.