

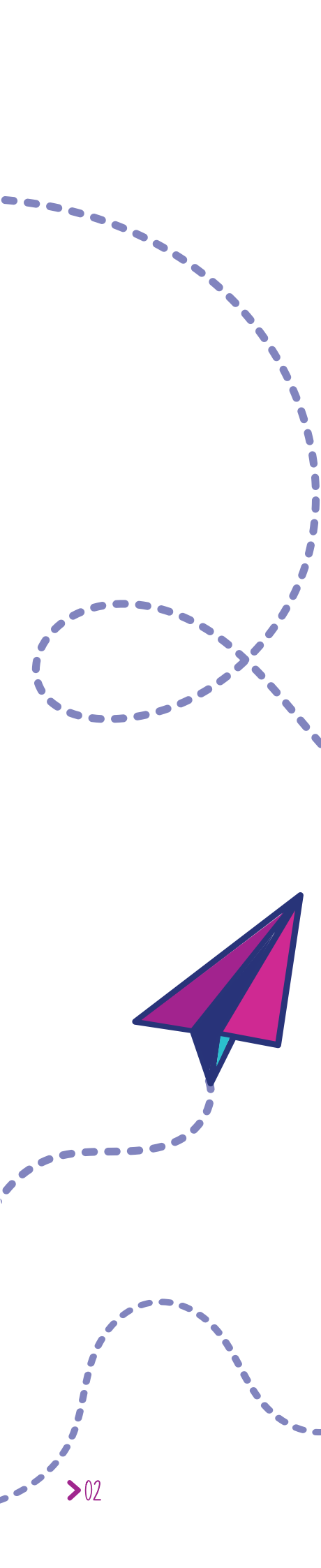
# The Ultimate Guide to Student Accommodation





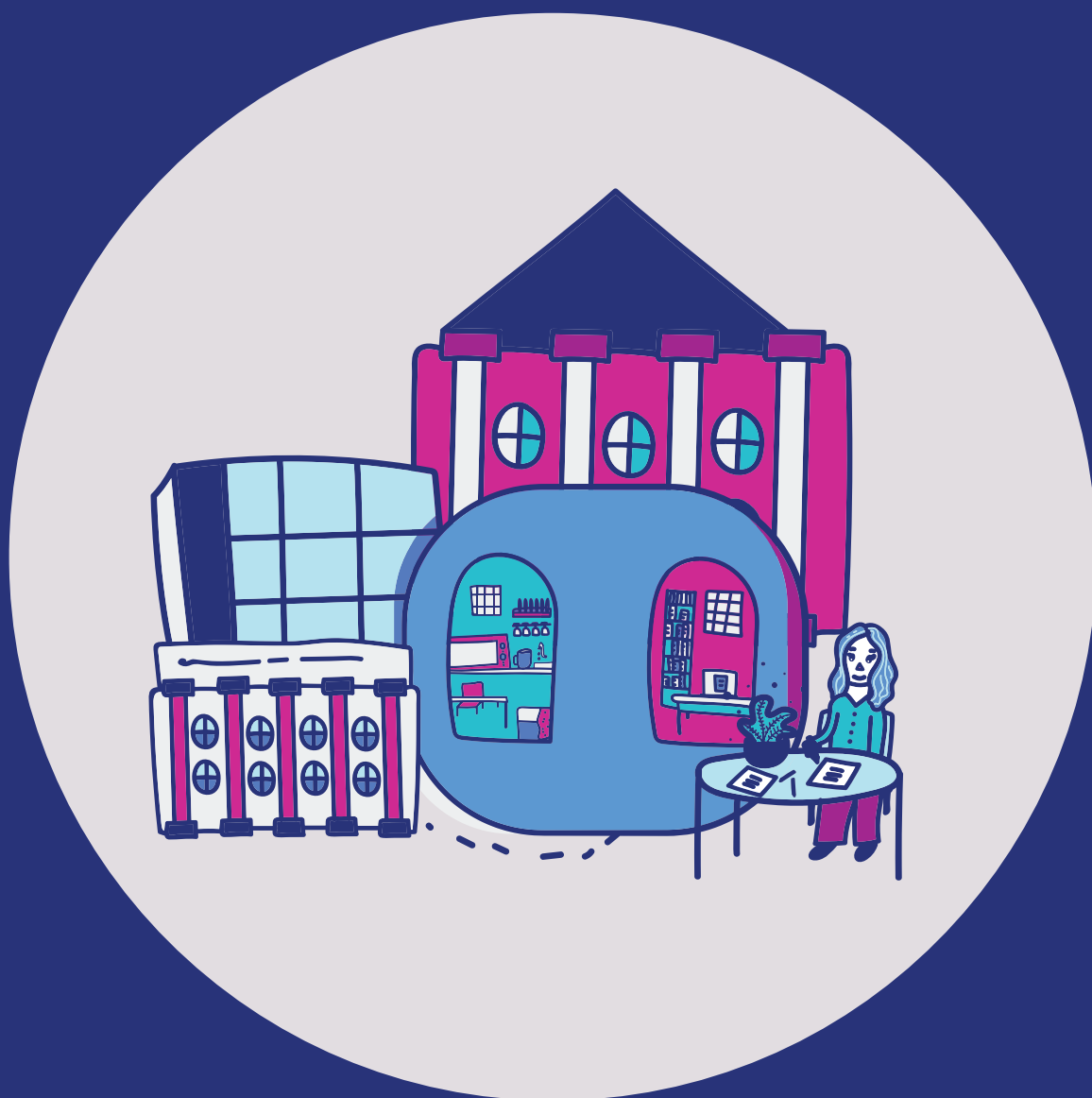
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Here's the scenario: you've made the decision to travel and pursue your education abroad, congratulations! You're now in the process of familiarising yourself with everything you need to know before making that decision a reality. You check for universities, visa requirements, and everything in between. You've now landed at the student accommodation part of your research, and you are not sure where to start. Leave this part up to us!

Student accommodation, especially for an international student in a totally foreign country, can be a scary concept. This is why we, at Casita, have come up with a comprehensive guide to get you acquainted with the whole process from start to finish. So, prepare all the questions you might have regarding student accommodation and let's see how many of them we answer in this ultimate guide to student accommodation!





# What is Student Accommodation?

Student accommodation is basically the student's home throughout their study period. Student accommodation is specifically equipped and tailored to the student's overall needs and priorities. Most often, student accommodation options are located in close proximity to a university or institution or generally located in a student neighbourhood.

Student accommodation options come in different types with options both on and off campus. Here are some of the most prominent types of student accommodation for you to consider when starting your booking process.

## Types of Student Accommodation

1

**On Campus Accommodation**

2

**Off Campus Accommodation**

2.1

Private

2.2

Co-living

2.3

**(PBSA)** Purpose built Student Accommodation

3

**Other Types**

3.1

Homestays

# On-Campus Accommodation

This type of student accommodation is typically found on-campus and is managed by the university or institution you're enrolled in. On-campus accommodation provides students with housing throughout the semester and comes with several pros and cons, let's explore some of them!

## > Pros

### **Location:**

Living in on-campus student accommodation puts you right next to your classes and administrative buildings, making your commute almost non-existent.

### **Facilities:**

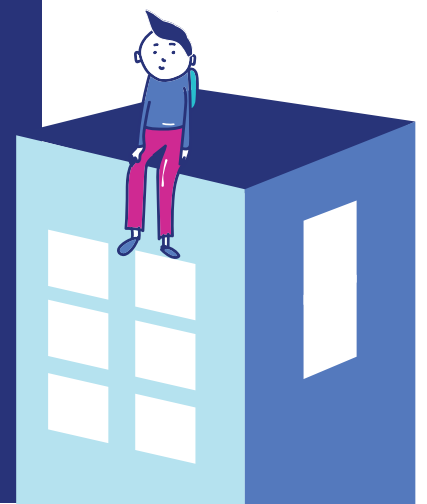
On-site accommodation teams, laundry facilities, fitness centres, high-speed Wi-Fi, and other amenities can be found in on-campus housing.

### **Community:**

On-campus student accommodation has the perk of living with people who are sharing the same experience as you, thus allowing you to socialise and widen your circle of friends.

### **Price:**

On-campus accommodation is generally cheaper than off-campus accommodation, however, this mainly depends on the university itself as well as the current housing rates.





## > Cons

### **Summer Stays:**

Since this accommodation is located on campus, most, if not all, on-campus accommodation options do not allow students to stay during the summer, forcing international students to find another place to stay during this period.

### **Limited Exposure:**

Having everything on campus is both a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, you have everything you need right under your nose, and on the other hand, you get little to no contact with the outside world, which limits your study abroad experience.

# Off-Campus Accommodation

Off-campus accommodation has so many different types, each comes with its own sets of pros and cons, here are the ones you need to get acquainted with!

## Private

A private let or private accommodation generally is a property managed by a single person and not a provider or an entity. In most cases, these privately owned accommodation options are not usually categorized as student accommodation since they lack some of the main features, and non-students can rent them as well.

### > Pros

#### **Price:**

It is cheaper to rent a room in private accommodation than it is in an on-campus facility or other accommodation types.

#### **Variety:**

A private let is not limited by location or room type; you can rent whatever room you want wherever you want and have a variety of options to choose from.

#### **Short Stays:**

If you are staying for a short period of time in a city, for example throughout the duration of a course and not an entire semester, then these would come in handy. Private accommodation has short-term contracts and allows you to stay for your desired period of time.



**Plus Ones:**

Most student accommodation options do not allow for you to have a plus one in your room, especially if they're not a student. This is not the case in private accommodation as it allows you to live with whomever you want.

**Last-Minute Booking:**

If you are in a time crunch, private lets are a great option to book last minute.

## > Cons

**Safety:**

While private accommodation can be safe, it is not as safe as other accommodation types like PBSAs or on-campus accommodation.

**Student-Friendliness:**

Since it's not originally designed with students in mind, private accommodation may not be as student-friendly as other types of accommodation and might lack some of the facilities.

## Co-Living

2.2

Co-living or purpose-built shared living space (PBSL) is the concept of sharing a living space with one or more other individuals. Each student would typically have a private room, but a common kitchen, a utility space, and a lounge area.

### > Pros

#### **Flexibility:**

An ultimate benefit of co-living spaces is the flexibility it has flexible leases and allows you to opt-out of your tenancy whenever you need.

#### **Services:**

Contrary to popular belief, co-living spaces are in fact equipped and serviced, so they include useful facilities and amenities to facilitate your stay.

#### **Community:**

Similar to on-campus accommodation, living in a co-living space helps you form bonds and socialise with people of different backgrounds and cultures.

#### **Price:**

This is one of the most affordable options when it comes to student accommodation.

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## > Cons

### **Privacy:**

You might not have access to your own private space as much as you would in other types of accommodation. This can have a negative effect on you, especially if you're an introvert or if you require peace and quiet to get things done.

### **Student Friendliness:**

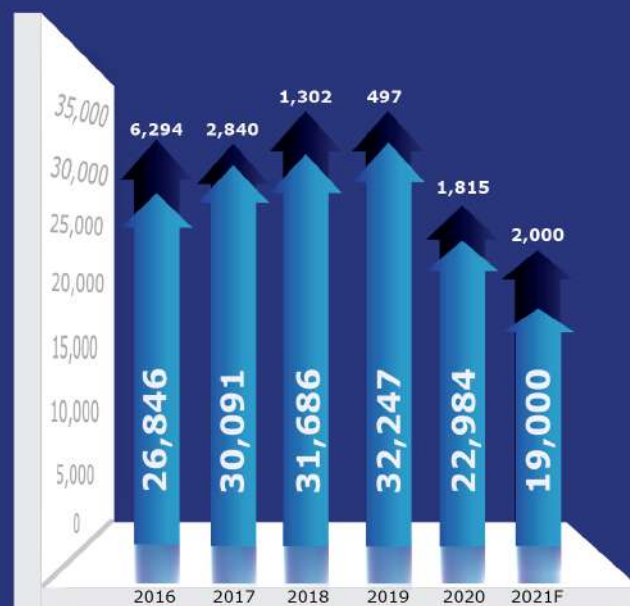
Again, similar to private accommodation, co-living spaces are not exactly tailored to students and their lifestyles so they might lack some of the facilities.

## PBSA

# Purpose Built Student Accommodation

Purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) is a type of student accommodation that is designed with the student in mind. It is a type of private housing that provides apartments or studios as well as shared living spaces for university students. The services and facilities included in these living spaces are tailored to cater for students in higher education with communal study areas, 24/7 security, and laundry facilities.

Recently, Purpose-built student accommodation buildings have become even more luxurious and they've added entertainment facilities as well, including games areas, cinema rooms, spas, swimming pools, and even gym facilities. There are even some PBSAs that offer on-site cafes or grocery stores with some providing free breakfast for students.



**New Supply Of PBSA Beds**

■ London  
■ Provincial

## > Pros

### **Student Friendly:**

PBSAs are built with the student in mind and are therefore equipped with everything students might need, making their stay easy and guiding them throughout their study period.

### **Location:**

In terms of location, PBSAs are located close to universities or institutions or generally in a student-friendly neighbourhood, thus making the student's commute easier.

### **Safety:**

This is considered one of the safest options for student accommodation. PBSAs are often fitted with on-site security teams and are CCTV monitored.

### **All-inclusive:**

Most PBSAs have utility bills included in the rent, meaning you don't have to pay several bills, just a single weekly or monthly one covering rent, heating, electricity, water, gas, and Wi-Fi.

**Community:** This is yet another type of student accommodation that helps students bond with other people and grants them a sense of belonging and community.

## > Cons

### **Price:**

Some PBSAs fall on the pricier side of student accommodation, however, most of the time the rates are flexible and can be subject to change due to discounts or offers.

**Flexibility:** Unlike private accommodation and co-living spaces, some PBSAs have less flexible leases that might be harder to opt out of if needed.

# Other Types

3

Aside from the main types of off-campus accommodation, there are a few that are less frequently mentioned or booked, here is a brief!

## Homestays

3.1

This type of student accommodation is more of a visit or a stay with someone else. A homestay is basically living in another person's house throughout the duration of a course or a semester. People who are interested in hosting international students usually offer up their houses and make them available for students to stay there.

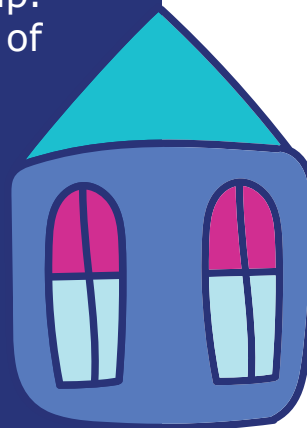
### > Pros

#### **Cultural Exchange:**

This allows students to connect with locals from the country they're studying in, immerse themselves in the culture, and widen their horizons as well as their circle, thus having an all-inclusive study abroad experience.

#### **Price:**

This type of student accommodation is generally affordable, if not downright cheap. Homestays usually fall within the budget of many students across the globe.





## > Pros

### **Safety:**

Some students might find the concept of homestays to be a bit sketchy and unsafe, considering they're living in the house of a stranger.

### **Student Friendliness:**

Similar to some student accommodation types, homestays are not exactly student-friendly and therefore might lack some facilities that students would find essential in their living space.



# Room Types

When booking student accommodation, you'll come across several room types and options to choose from. In this guide to student accommodation, we want to introduce you to the various types of rooms you can rent in a student accommodation based on your preferences, needs, and budget. Here are some of the most common room types you'll encounter!



# Room Types



En-Suites



Single



Studio



Flat



Double

## Single Room

This is usually the most budget-friendly accommodation option. A single room is typically located in a shared flat and is furnished with a bed, a wardrobe, and a study area. Kitchens, bathrooms, and lounge areas are shared if you reside in a single room. This is the ideal choice for those who long for a sense of community and would enjoy living with others.



## En-suite Room

Similar to single rooms, en-suite rooms are also located in shared flats or apartments, with the difference being that en-suite rooms have their own private bathroom, hence their name. En-suite rooms are also fitted with a bed, a wardrobe, and a study area. As a resident of this type of room, you will also get access to a shared living area and a shared kitchen. This room type is the perfect balance between privacy and sharing your space with others, ideal for ambiverts!



## Studio

If you enjoy privacy and like to have your own space without outside distractions or interruptions, then studios are the ideal room type for you. This self-contained unit is usually larger than a standard room with the same furniture being included with the addition of a kitchenette and a private bathroom so you won't need to leave your room for anything.



## Twin Room



Are you planning to study abroad with a friend or a sibling? Then this is the room for you! Twin rooms are designed to fit two people and usually come fitted with twice the number of beds, workspaces, and a double wardrobe to fit all your clothes together. Twin rooms are also budget-friendly since you split the costs with your roommate.

## Penthouse



A penthouse is basically a room with a view! Located on the top floor or the roof of a student accommodation building, you can have your choice of room in a penthouse with stunning views of the city you're studying in. Penthouses can have either single rooms, en-suite rooms, or studios.

## Flat



A flat is more or less a bigger studio. This is another ideal room choice for those who value their privacy and their own sacred space. Flats are generally fully-furnished apartments with plenty of space where you can find a separate bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, and living area. Your extra space and privacy, however, will come at an extra cost as well as extra chores to take care of.

## Double Room



This is the room to go for if you're studying and living with your significant other. Double rooms generally come with a double bed, a workspace or two, and a double wardrobe. They are relatively affordable since the rent is split in half, and you get to share everything in the room.

## Triple/Quadruple Room



A triple/quadruple room, also known as a dorm room, is exactly as its name suggests; a room that accommodates up to four people. This room is perfect for extroverts and people who want to widen their horizons and meet different people of various cultures and backgrounds. These rooms are usually not furnished the same everywhere, they come with three or four beds, a workspace or more, and a wardrobe or no wardrobe at all, so be sure to check first.





# Unique Student Accommodation TERMINOLOGY

When looking for your ideal student accommodation, you need to familiarise yourself with the language and terminology used in the field. Some terminology can be region-specific and some others apply to student accommodation anywhere.

Here are some of the most notable student accommodation terminology you need to know before setting off to secure the perfect student accommodation!

- **Region-Specific Terminology**
- **General Student Accommodation Terminology**

# Region-Specific Terminology

These are some student accommodation terminology that is used in certain countries or regions. If you are booking student accommodation in the UK or Australia, for example, you need to know what each term means.



## ● UK Deposit

A UK deposit is the amount of money paid by the student after signing the contract and before the start of their tenancy. This amount is set to act as a holding fee or a security deposit. UK Deposits are refundable at the end of the tenancy period provided there are no damages done to the property.

## ● UK Guarantor

If you're an international student in the UK and would like to pay your student accommodation rent in instalments, you're likely to be asked to provide a UK guarantor. A guarantor is a person who signs the rental contract with you and is either responsible for a loan you have taken out or commits to paying your rent if you are unable to do so yourself. A guarantor is most often a family member, but it can be anyone else like a guardian or a family friend.

A UK guarantor has to abide by certain requirements:

Be a resident of the United Kingdom.

- Aged between 18 and 75.
- Has a good credit history.
- Able to cover monthly rent.

## ● Australian Bond

This is the most common payment for student accommodation in Australia. An Australian bond is basically a non-refundable 2-4 weeks rent payment that is considered part of the rent. It has to be paid in advance before the start of the tenancy period.



## General Student Accommodation **Terminology**

These are words that are commonly used for student accommodation across the globe. The more you know of them, the easier it will be for you to go through the student accommodation booking process.

## ● Advanced Rent Payment (ARP)

In some places, it is illegal to ask for any kind of payment before the student checks into their student accommodation, this is why buildings/student accommodation owners ask for an advanced rent payment instead.

An ARP is usually counted toward the first instalment of a booking. This means that if the rent is £1000, for example, the student will pay £250 to book the accommodation and then proceed to pay the remaining £750 at the first instalment's due date.

## ● **Cooling-Off Period/Cancellation Window**

This is a flexible time window that changes based on the student accommodation and the provider. A cooling-off period/cancellation window is a specific period of time when a student is allowed to cancel their student accommodation booking without being asked to find a replacement and can still get their deposit refunded.

## ● **All-Inclusive Bills**

Utilities like gas, electricity, water, heating, and in some cases, internet usually require separate bills with their own separate payments. If a student accommodation provider mentions the availability of all-inclusive bills, this means you will not be required to pay separately for utilities as they are included in the weekly/monthly rent fee.

Other building amenities such as laundry, parking, and others, however, are not typically included in the rent, meaning they are either provided for free or you'll be required to pay an extra charge for them, like for example, coin-operated laundries.

## ● **Contents Insurance**

If a property offers contents insurance, then it basically acts as a guarantee for the student that in the event any of the contents of the student's rooms were damaged and it's not the student's fault, the property is responsible for fixing them.

## ● **Catered/Self-Catered**

In catered student accommodation, you receive breakfast and evening meals that are provided by the property seven days a week. In self-catered student accommodation, however, you get access to either your own private kitchen or a communal kitchen where you can cook your own





## Facilities In A Student Accommodation

Facilities are an essential part of any student accommodation. When choosing a place to live and spend your study period at, you want to make sure that it will accommodate you well and provide you with the needed amenities and services to facilitate your stay there.

Facilities in student accommodation buildings can have different purposes, either they cover your basic needs, are there for your convenience, provide comfort, or add a sense of luxury to your stay. Here are some of the facilities to look out for when booking your student accommodation!



## All-Inclusive Utility Bills

This is one of the most beneficial amenities to come with your student accommodation. As we've already mentioned, all-inclusive utility bills basically mean that electricity, gas, water, heating, and Wi-Fi are all included in your weekly or monthly rent. This is much cheaper than paying individual bills for each service. Some student homes, however, have a cap limit for electricity and water usage included in your rent, so make sure you check beforehand.



## Insurance

This is important to make sure you don't get scammed or pay any extra fees for damages you did not cause. If your student accommodation offers contents insurance, this means that everything in your room is insured and if anything needs fixing, the provider/landlord is responsible for it.



## Security

Your safety comes first when booking your student accommodation, this is why finding a place that has 24/7 security and is CCTV-monitored is essential. Other security features like alarm systems, lockable rooms, secure systems, a fire system, and an on-site team would also come in handy and reassure your loved ones that you'll be safe in your new home.



## On Site Maintenance

You can never be too prepared for any mishaps around your student home. A leaky tap or a blinking light bulb can keep you up all night, but on-site maintenance available at hand can definitely save your sleep as well as the extra cash you'd pay for a handyman. This is an important feature to look for in your student accommodation as you'll definitely be needing fast and easy fixes for items in your room.



## On Site Laundry Facilities

As you move into your own accommodation, you are not responsible for your own laundry, no more counting on a parent, a friend, or a roommate to help you out. This is why having easily accessible on-site laundry facilities at your student accommodation is important.

These facilities could come in different forms, some providers offer in-unit washers and dryers that you would share with flatmates, while others have a laundry room in the building for all residents to make use of. Save yourself the struggle of handwashing and the trip to the laundromat you didn't even want to take!



## Wi-Fi

This one feels a bit like stating the obvious, because who can survive somewhere without internet access? Especially as a student, how are you supposed to study, get assignments done, and do any research? This is why it goes without saying that the student accommodation you end up choosing has to have Wi-Fi. that you'll be safe in your new home.



## Study Areas

Some students require a separate place to study that is quiet, peaceful, and close by. Several student accommodation providers have available study areas for students to catch up on their work and cram for exams and assignments without having to leave the comfort of their student homes.



## Communal and Social Spaces

An important aspect of the student accommodation experience is connecting with like-minded individuals who are on the same journey as you. At your student accommodation, there will definitely be several other students who share your feelings of excitement for their new adventure as well as homesickness, all of which are things you can bond over in communal or social spaces at your student home.

Communal social spaces can be anything from a communal lounge, a communal kitchen, and a courtyard, to a cinema room, a games room, or even a karaoke room. This is so you can study, socialise, and have fun while you're at it!



## Gym and Fitness Facilities

A great way to let off some steam and unload some of the stress of your life as a student is to exercise. Having an easily accessible and free on-site gym or any other fitness facility like a yoga room or a dance studio at your student accommodation is incredibly beneficial and would help keep you fit and healthy and keep your stress at bay.

# What is a Student **Accommodation** **MarketPlace?**

A student accommodation marketplace is a place, most often a website, where students can go and browse through a wide range of student accommodation options in different parts of the world. Casita, for example, is a student accommodation marketplace that has housing options in over 60 countries and 700 cities for students to pick and choose from.

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## What is the Difference Between a Student Accommodation **Student Accommodation Marketplace** **& Student Accommodation Provider?**

While a student accommodation provider has limited options in limited cities and only advertises its own accommodation options, a student accommodation marketplace has a variety of options across different cities and from different providers for students to choose from.

When it comes to finding the ideal accommodation, a student accommodation marketplace is far more beneficial than an individual student accommodation provider. This is because students can browse through the student accommodation marketplace, filter, compare, and choose their ideal accommodation that is tailored to their needs, preferences, and budget.



# Casita


as a Student Accommodation

# MarketPlace

As a student accommodation marketplace, Casita offers its free-of-charge, safe, and helpful services to help students across the globe secure their ideal student accommodation anywhere in the world. Using Casita's website, you can filter through hundreds of rooms in your city of choice, compare them in terms of budget, location, and amenities, and seek guidance from the team of equipped multilingual accommodation experts that are available around the clock.

# How to Book Student Accommodation?

Once you've made up your mind on which student accommodation you're looking at and what room type you're choosing, the next step is to book and secure said accommodation. Here is how you can do it!



## On-Campus Student Accommodation

If you're booking on-campus accommodation, all you have to do is head to the university or college's website, go to their student accommodation or residence halls page, choose the room that suits you, and book your place in the desired period of time. You should then receive a confirmation e-mail and can follow up with the university for payments and tenancy agreements if any.



## Off-Campus Student Accommodation

When booking off-campus accommodation, you can head to Casita's website and book your accommodation of choice. Once you've filtered through the available options, made your comparisons, and chosen the ideal accommodation for you, you can go on and fill out the form and reserve your room by clicking the Enquire button. Our Accommodation Experts will get in touch with you to help you finalise your booking.





## When to Start Looking For **Student Accommodation ?**

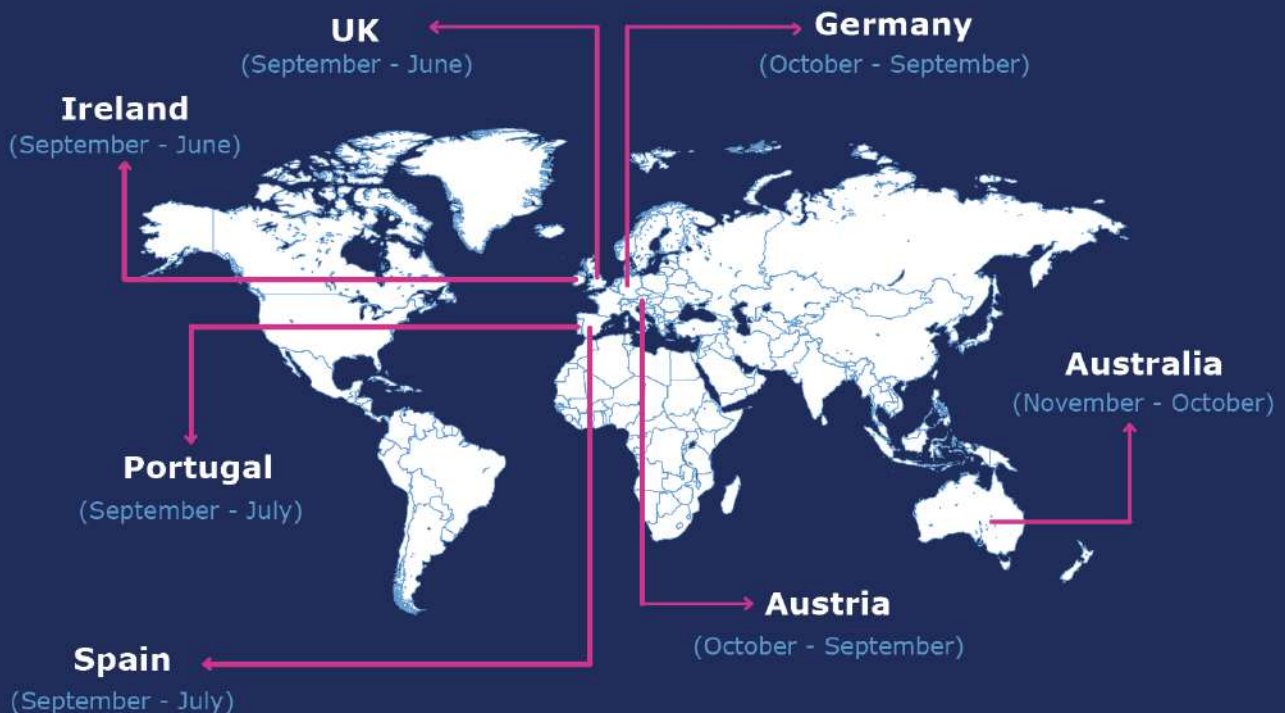
The timing during which you start looking for student accommodation is crucial! It is ideal for you to start looking at least six months before your semester starts. This means that the exact time to start looking can change from one country to another and from one semester to another.

For example, if you're booking student accommodation in the UK for the September intake, then you should start looking for accommodation between the months of January and March. The UK also has a couple of other intakes, the January intake and the April intake. For the January intake, you should preferably look for your student accommodation between May and July. The April intake, on the other hand, would require you to start looking around September.

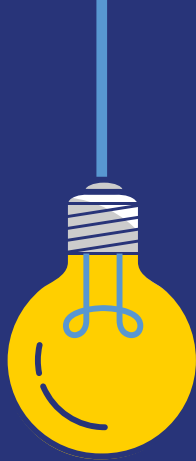


If you are booking student accommodation in Australia, on the other hand, there is a February intake and you need to start your student accommodation search for it between the months of June and August. There is also a July intake for which you should start your student accommodation search by around December or January. Lastly, Australia has a November intake, and you need to start looking for student accommodation from the month of March to the month of May.

## IDEAL TIME to search for Student Accommodation by Location



\*\* Country  
(Start- End)



## Tips and Tricks To Secure the Perfect Student Accommodation ?

Trying to find the perfect student accommodation can be a stressful and often overwhelming process, worry not, though, we've got you covered! Below is our well-guarded list filled with tips and tricks for you to secure the ideal student accommodation in a seamless and hassle-free process!



### Location Comes First

Location is such an important thing to consider when booking your student accommodation. You want to live somewhere that is within walking distance from your university campus or at least surrounded by good transport links that will get you there with ease.

When considering the location of your student accommodation, you also want to choose a neighbourhood where everything will be easy and accessible. Your ideal choice should be a student neighbourhood, so you can have access to the amenities that every student might need, like coffee shops, fast food restaurants, bookshops, and laundry facilities. Living there will also allow you to meet like-minded people and make new friends!



## Remember Your Budget

Listen, we know that flashy advertisements for luxurious and totally overpriced student rooms are catchy and a little convincing, but do not let that sway you! Remember that you can get a great room with everything you need at an affordable price if you think smart, you still need some of your budget to cater to your lifestyle as an international student in a foreign city.

That's why you should consider a student room in a PBSA that includes utility bills in the rent, so you don't have to worry about any extra fees. Other economic options include sharing a room or flat; this is the cheaper alternative to staying in a private studio or a one-bedroom apartment. This will leave room in your budget for food, books, and other necessities as well as entertainment!



## Carefully Choose Your Room

As we've already discussed, there are several room types in each student accommodation. Rooms can be single, double, en-suite, or triple, along with studios and one-bedroom apartments. When choosing the ideal room for yourself, you have to make sure it aligns with your needs, preferences, and overall personality.

For example, if you are a social and extroverted person, a room in a shared apartment would be perfect for you. You'd have the chance to meet new people, make friends, and expand your circle. If you are more of a private and introverted person, however, then a studio or a one-bedroom apartment would fit you just right. There, you would have your very own space and you can socialise with other people only when you want to.



## Facilities Are a Priority

We've already established the importance of amenities and facilities provided at your student accommodation and which ones to look out for exactly. It doesn't hurt to remind you to prioritise them during your search for the perfect student accommodation. The top facilities you should definitely keep an eye out for in your student accommodation are all-inclusive utility bills, Wi-Fi, laundry facilities, security, and communal spaces.



## Check For Arrival Packs

Some student accommodation providers offer students arrival packs when they first get there. Bedding packs, kitchen packs, bathroom packs, and even cleaning packs are available for students to make use of upon arrival. Make sure to ask what are they offering and if it's for free or for an extra charge. Some accommodation options have all-in-one packs to make moving in easier for you. This comes in handy, especially when you are on a budget and can't pay extra for essentials.



# DOs and DONT's of Signing a Student Accommodation Contract

Signing the student accommodation contract is the final step of securing your ideal student accommodation. As a student, you might not have much experience with contracts and what to do and not to do when signing one. We're here to help you out, here are the things you need to note when signing a student accommodation contract!

## Check The Contract Type

Check if your contract is an individual contract or a joint tenancy agreement, and go with the individual contract if available

## Revise Deposit Schemes

Before committing to paying any deposit or down payment, make sure your deposit is protected under a deposit protection scheme. Check out the UK ones [here](#).

## Negotiate your Rent

The rent written in your tenancy agreement can be subject to negotiation, if you think you can pay less, then do not hesitate to mention it.

## Read the Fine Print

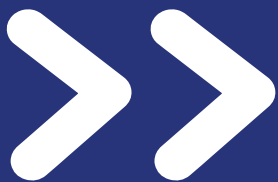
Thoroughly read the contract and do not gloss over the fine print, make sure you read it carefully more than once and ask questions if there is anything you're missing or do not understand. Do not sign something you don't fully understand.

## Check the Inventory

You should be given an inventory list of the contents of your student room. In case you don't get one from your landlord, take pictures of everything in the room and email them to the landlord along with a list of the items.

## Check if You Need a Guarantor

Read the contract carefully and check if you might require a guarantor and what are the requirements for one. You can check this [guide](#) for further information on guarantors.



**We now declare you ready to venture into the world of student accommodation and book the ideal one for you!**

Use this as a guide throughout every step of the searching and booking process and make sure you land yourself the perfect student accommodation for you!





## Frequently Asked Questions

When choosing a specific type of student accommodation, there are **six** factors to consider.

These factors are as follows:

1. Location
2. Price
3. Facilities
4. Service Quality
5. Nature of the living environment
6. Security

**What are the six factors that influence the type of accommodation you choose?**

Adapting to the environment in a new place can be a bit challenging, here are our top **tips for surviving student accommodation.**

- Make connections with fellow residents and expand your circle!
- Decorate your space to make it feel like home.
- Stay in touch with family and friends back home!
- Join a club or a community to keep yourself occupied.

**How do you survive student accommodation?**

- Decorate your room with items and memorabilia from your home.
- Hang frames with pictures of your family, friends, and pets.
- Put up posters and stickers of your favourite bands, movies, and shows.
- Fill your room with plants and greenery for comfort.

**How to make my student accommodation feel like home?**