

Niagara College International

HOUSING GUIDE

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Welcome

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Homestay is a terrific way to be introduced to Canadian culture and the Niagara community.

Wonderful local families provide support and assistance while students adapt to the lifestyle and demands of Canadian student life.

Homestay families are as diverse as the international students who attend Niagara College, but what our homestay families all have in common is a desire to contribute to the lives of others.

As a homestay family you have the exceptional opportunity to embrace other cultures from around the world and learn through personal experience the thrill of multiculturalism. The world truly is at your doorstep. Niagara College is host to students from dozens of countries around the world — a leader in International Education.

Students choose Niagara College for their own unique reasons and personal goals. They may come to improve their English before taking college or university courses, or they may simply want a Canadian cultural experience. They all share a spirit of adventure and the desire to further their careers.

This Housing Guide is made available to help families and students experience fulfilling and memorable relationships. Living with a family or peers includes some stressful times in any culture. We trust this guide will help each of you prepare for your experience and be better able to deal with the little stresses so you can truly enjoy your homestay experience.

Contact Information

Email: housing@niagaracollege.ca
Welland: 905-735-2211 ext. 7763
NOTL: 905-641-2252 ext. 4190
Fax: 905-735-2413

Homestay Policy



HOMESTAY PRICING

When	Cost	Description
Arrival	\$1380	First / last month's rent to be paid
Monthly	\$690	Due the first day of every month
Daily	\$23	Charged per day for early arrival

You must stay with your homestay for at least two months. If you decide to move, we recommend you do so between terms. If you need a receipt for your homestay fees, ask your family for one.

CHANGING YOUR HOMESTAY FAMILY

If you have problems with your homestay and would like to leave, please contact your Housing Coordinator to talk about the issues and what options are available.



You must pay \$100 fee to make changes to your Homestay placement.



You must notify your homestay on the first day of the month that you will be leaving in 30 days. Your last month's fee will cover your last 30 days. If you do not give 30 days notice from the first day of the month, your last month's fee will not be refunded to you.



If you are experiencing a health or safety issue in your homestay, you will be moved immediately at no cost.

FEES INCLUDE

- 🍽️ Meals
- 🛏️ Private Bedroom
- 🛏️ Bed
- 📖 Desk
- 🗄️ Dresser
- 📶 Internet (basic)

EXPECTATIONS

Talk to your host family about your needs and their expectations when you arrive.

Internet Access



Internet services in Canada can be expensive for your homestay family, so be respectful of the amount of time you spend on it.



Be prepared to share the cost of Internet coverage fees if Internet usage exceeds your host's limit.



Your homestay may disconnect their Internet if it is continually overused. It should be used in moderation. It is not intended for entertainment purposes such as downloading movies and music or playing video games.



NC has computer labs with free wireless Internet that are available for student use. The labs are open everyday.

Pets



Most Canadian families have cats or dogs as pets that stay in the home. Pets are treated as part of the family and are clean, friendly companions.

If you do not like pets in your home, please talk to your Housing Coordinator about solutions.

Smoking



Host families do not allow smoking in their homes. They may allow you to smoke outside, but ask first. You **MUST** follow their wishes.

If you do not follow their wishes, you may be asked to leave your homestay and will not receive your last month's fee in return.



Canadian families do not smoke inside their homes because they have an insurance rate based on no smoking indoors, or they may have family living in the home with health problems that are made worse by smoking.

Meals

7AM – 9AM

Breakfast: toasted bread or cereal.

11AM – 1PM

Lunch: usually sandwiches with meat or cheese fillings or left over food from dinner the evening before.

5PM – 7PM

Dinner: an evening meal prepared by and shared with your homestay family. This time should be used to talk with your host family about your day. **If you will not be home for dinner, let your homestay family know.**

You may have to prepare breakfast and lunch for yourself, but your homestay will show you how.

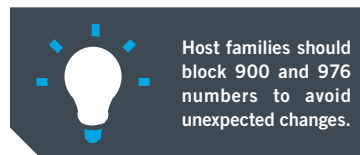


If you are still hungry after meals, talk to your host family about other foods you like or need to eat. Ask your host family where you can buy these foods.

Teach your host family about your culture by cooking them a traditional meal in their home.

Home Phone

Your homestay will allow you to make local calls on their home phone, but you will have to use a calling card for long distance calls. Check with your host family before making or receiving calls late in the evening.



Host families should block 900 and 976 numbers to avoid unexpected charges.

Cell Phone

Your cell phone may work with a Canadian SIM card. If so, you can buy one. If your phone does not work, you will have to buy a new phone.

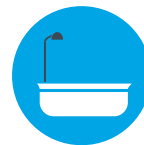
Do not buy a calling card without first establishing a phone plan. Most plans are paid monthly.



These companies are recommended by our international students for having flexible plans and no long contracts.

Personal Care

In Canadian culture, it is important to use deodorant, brush your teeth and shower every day.



In the bathroom...

- Showers should not take longer than 10 minutes
- Toilet paper gets flushed down the toilet, but sanitary napkins are wrapped and thrown in the garbage



Washing clothes...

- Get your homestay family to show you how to use their washing machine and dryer
- Only wash your clothes when you have a full load of laundry and after 7pm or on weekends when it costs less energy

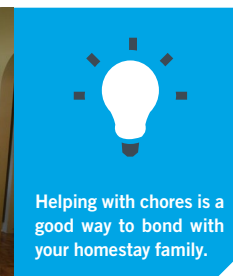


In the home...

- Turn off lights and electronics when you are not using them, as electricity in Canada is expensive during peak hours.

Household Work





While you stay in homestay, you are part of their family. Both males and females are expected to share chores around the home. This could include washing dishes, vacuuming or helping to prepare a meal.



Helping with chores is a good way to bond with your homestay family.

Weather

Niagara has four very distinct seasons:

 AUTUMN October – November Niagara 10°C – 20°C Cloudy and mild	 WINTER December – March Niagara -10°C and under Cloud, windy and lots of snow	 SPRING April – May Niagara 5°C – 12°C Sunny with showers	 SUMMER May – September Niagara Up to 30°C Very sunny and humid
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Come prepared for Canadian winters. You will need a heavy coat, scarf, gloves, hat and winter boots.

Money

Homestay fees:

- First and last month's fees should be paid when you arrive
- All other fees should be paid on the first day of the month

Banking:

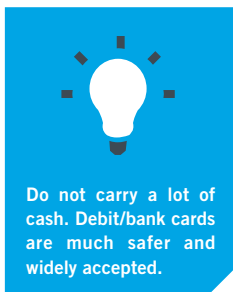
- Many banks have student accounts with low fees
- If you need help ask your host family or an IDSA to help you

Every day:

- Your host family will pay for your meals while you stay with them

Special Occasions

- You may have to pay for special food that your host family would not regularly eat
- If you go on a special trip with your hosts, you should be prepared to pay for yourself. If your hosts pay for anything for you, show your appreciation



Transportation



UPass (Universal Bus Pass): A bus pass sticker that is placed on your student card is included in your tuition fees. You can get your sticker from NCSAC (Niagara College Student Administrative Council). If you lose your sticker, you must pay for a new one. Details about the UPass sticker and bus schedules to NC can be found at ncsac.ca.



Walking: depending on your homestay, you may be able to walk to Niagara College. Depending on where the closest bus stop is located, you may have to walk up to 15 minutes to/from your host family.



Cycling: If you are under the age of 18, it is against the law to ride a bicycle without wearing a helmet. If you are over the age of 18, you are encouraged to wear a bicycle helmet but are not required to by law.



Driving: If you are going to drive in Ontario, you need to get an Ontario Driving License. For more information, visit:

ontario.ca/driving-and-roads/getg-drivers-licence-new-drivers

Guests

You must ask your homestay family before inviting any guests into their home, even just for a few hours. If you have family or friends who wish to visit you, they should stay in a hotel. **If your homestay has the space to accommodate them, they need to pay \$30 per day per person.**

Your boyfriend or girlfriend will typically not be allowed to stay overnight. Friends should also not be expecting to receive meals at your homestay on a regular basis. Keep the lines of communication open with your hosts to know their guidelines.







Conflict & Resolution

Hosts in Canada are diverse and multicultural and not always a “traditional family” as defined by your culture. Homestay families may be single parents, young professionals, retired, grandparents, or married for example.

It is not uncommon to have conflict, which typically stems from misunderstanding. Talk through the problem to clear up the misunderstanding.

Keys To Getting Along

-  Flexibility
-  Patience
-  Persistence in Communication
-  Leave your Expectations Behind!

Examples of conflicts and their resolutions.



STUDENT IS UNABLE TO GET HOME

Homestay families are not expected to drive students

Be aware of one another's schedules

Check the bus schedules before staying out late

If you need a ride, ask your host family politely and provide ample notice



STUDENT DISLIKES THE FOOD

Be honest with each other

Go grocery shopping together

Show your host family what you like (recipes etc.)

Discuss foods and find options of similar price

Cook together and learn from one another



STUDENT BREAKS AN ITEM

If it's under \$50 and the family doesn't ask for a replacement, consider giving them a small gift to show your appreciation.

Up to \$100, expect to replace it at your own cost

If it's between \$100-\$500, ask if the family will share the cost

If it's over \$500, please notify the Housing Coordinator for mediation and a fair resolution

SAFEGUARDS



Students should never agree to babysitting



Hosts and students should never borrow money from one another

If discussing religious or political views be respectful of all opinions



Uncomfortable situations for students or hosts should be reported immediately



If you cannot resolve an issue, or need help to speak with your host or student, talk to the Housing Coordinator at the International Office in person, by email or by phone.



Health Insurance



All Niagara College students are covered by health insurance through StudentGuard (www.guard.me) At the beginning of each term, students will be issued a new health number that will be emailed to their NC student email.

Students can go to any doctor/clinic, however, they may be asked to pay for the services. Receipts for prescriptions/clinic visit claims can be submitted online at www.guard.me

For major medical emergencies such as broken bones or serious accidents, dial 911 or go to the hospital to receive immediate medical care.

Helping International Students

For homestay families, new communication styles and cultures can be a challenge to get used to. It is very important to keep your sense of humour and persevere through any problems that might arise.



Things you can do to help each other:

- Students can often understand written English better than spoken English. Take the time to write things down to avoid confusion
- Draw pictures or use visual examples
- Ask the student if they understand and get them to repeat what they hear to clarify
- Don't assume that when someone smiles or laughs that they understand you
- Be careful with your tone of voice. It can say a great deal. Avoid sarcasm
- Be careful with anecdotes that cannot literally be interpreted or are culturally understood

Ideas for helping ESL students practice English:

- Read the newspaper together
- Encourage your student to keep a list of words or phrases they hear during the day to talk about in the evening
- Have students place orders over the phone for food, tickets etc. Avoid doing the talking for them. Instead, play a supportive and encouraging role.
- Label items in the home to help them learn the names
- Take them shopping to learn the names of items in the store
- Offer to help your student with their homework, but don't do it for them.



Welland Hospital

65 3rd Street
905-378-4647

St. Catharines Hospital

1200 Fourth Avenue
905-378-4647

Niagara Falls Hospital

5546 Portage Road
905-378-4647

Homestay Checklist

- Have I paid first and last month's homestay fee or rent?
- Have I opened a bank account?
- Do I know how to contact my host family?
- Do I have my bus pass?
- Do I have a cell phone?
- Have I discussed breakfast, lunch and dinner with my host family so I know what to expect?
- Do I know what the homestay or landlord's expectations are?
- Do I know if I will be doing my own laundry and how to use the washer and dryer?

PERSONAL NOTES



Landing Pad



Requirements

- Pay \$700 on arrival for 1 month stay
- Prepare your own breakfast from provided food; share dinner with your Landing Pad host.
- Provide your own lunch while you are at the College or looking for housing.
- Landing Pad is available to students 18 years of age or older
- No refunds... it's a lot less than an extended hotel stay or a bad rental experience!



NEED SOMEWHERE TO LAND? CHECK!

Looking for a way to reduce the stress of finding a place to live? Use the Landing Pad!

Room and 2 meals per day for 1 month after your arrival, while you...

- Have friends/family support you in adapting to Canada
- Look for living space and roommates
- Discover Niagara College and the local community
- Learn about Ontario law and life

On-Campus Living

If you prefer to experience college life on campus, consider living in residence. The Niagara College residence is a modern, clean and comfortable building that can house up to 230 students. Each apartment is fully furnished with a kitchen table, chairs, refrigerator, microwave and private bathroom. You will have your own furnished bedroom and share cooking and bathroom facilities in a private two room apartment. If you are interested in staying in the residence, apply early, as space is limited.



For more information and fees go to: niagararez.ca

Off-Campus Housing



Many great accommodations are within a very short walk of the campus. Which brings us back to the advantage of learning in Niagara: affordable, safe, quality housing within 30 minutes of the college - all part of our Niagara charm.

Landlords and tenants of most rental units are covered by the rules in the Landlord Tenant Act of Ontario. A rental unit can be an apartment, a house, or a room in a rooming or boarding house.

The Act does not apply if the tenant must share a kitchen or bathroom with the landlord.

FIND HOUSING



NC Off Campus Living
housing.niagaracollege.ca/ocl

Welland Tribune
classifieds.wellandtribune.ca

St. Catharines Standard
classifieds.stcatharinesstandard.ca

Niagara Falls Review
classifieds.niagarafallsreview.ca

Westlodge Inn & Suites
niagarawestlodgehousing.com

Kijiji
kijiji.ca/h-st-catharines/80016

PadMapper
padmapper.com

*Note: Niagara College does not inspect off campus housing. Some hotels do work to provide special rates for students, for more information email housing@niagaracollege.ca



international.niagaracollege.ca/housing

Welland Campus

300 Woodlawn Road, Welland
Ontario, L3C 7L3

(905) 735-2211 Ext. 7763
housing@niagaracollege.ca

Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus

135 Taylor Road, Niagara-on-the-Lake
Ontario, LOS 1J0

(905) 735-2211 Ext. 4190
housing@niagaracollege.ca

 **Niagara
College
Canada**
APPLIED DREAMS.