One of the first priorities upon arriving in the US should be opening a checking account. Use the checking account to pay for rent and bills. You will receive a debit card that can be used for most all purchases in the US.

When you go to open a checking account take the following items with you:
- Home address
- Student ID
- Passport and I-20/DS-2019 or social security card

**COST OF LIVING**

You will want to set realistic expectations for the living expenses you will likely have in Nashville.

- Grocery bill: $50-$80 a week
- Cell calling + data: $20+ per month
- Common lunch on campus: $10
- Common restaurant meal: $10-$20
- Lifestyle expenses: $20-$40 a week
- Travel: $1000 (small trip) / $2000 (large-trip)
- Books and Academics: $500 per academic year
- Health fee+Student insurance: $2150 per term
- Transportation: $50+ per month
- Rent: + Utilities: $900+ per month (see below)

**TRANSPORTATION**

There are many ways around the city; know what is the best option for you!

- **Public bus:** Your Commodore Card allows you free use of Nashville’s buses
- **Car:** Many international students purchase a car. Must obtain a driver’s license and car insurance.
- **Ride-sharing:** Use apps Uber and/or Lyft.
- **Bike:** Nashville is relatively flat, but be safe!
- **Car Rental:** For long trips, consider renting a car. Must be at least 26 years old and have a license. Check Vandy’s website for car rental discounts!
All graduate and professional students must live off-campus. Know the housing resources and begin arranging your housing as soon as you can.

HOUSING

Take initiative! Connect with current students to learn more and incoming students to find roommates. Reach out if you need help!

links.
- Vanderbilt ISSS: Finding a Place to Live
- Vanderbilt Off-Campus Housing Search
- Housing search: Zillow
- Housing search: Apartments.com
- LGBTQI Friendly Housing
- Crime Map

ROOM-HUNTING

Work out what you can afford. Don’t forget additional expenses, like electricity, internet, trash, and furniture. **Average rent for students is over $800 a month.**

- The VU Peabody Admitted Students Facebook page is a great resource for connecting with potential roommates. Use it to reach out!
- Identify multiple housing options that could work for you. Make sure to contact the landlords and let them know you are interested.
- Start looking at least 2-3 months before move-in.
- Try to find a way to tour the locations before signing a lease.

HOUSING CONSIDERATIONS

You will be required to sign a lease for your housing situation. A lease is a contract binding you to its conditions.

- Most leases are for 12 months. They can range from 6-24 months.
- Read through the lease carefully and reach out to others if you have questions.
- Be clear about important features like air conditioning, washer/dryer, Wifi, parking, etc.
- There are usually large fees for terminating the contract early.
- Nashville average rent (2021): $1788 per month. You may need to do significant searching to find suitable options at lower price points.
- The average rent in Nashville is increasing over 15% a year.

NEIGHBORHOODS

Understand the differences between Nashville’s various neighborhoods. Look through the neighborhood resource that Peabody has created and think about which location works for you. Most students live in a neighborhood close to campus, but others intentionally live further away to experience another side of Nashville.

A few popular neighborhoods:

- **12 South:** About a five-minute drive to campus. There are awesome restaurants from laid-back spots to fine dining.
- **Hillsboro Village:** Walking distance to campus. You will see lots of college students. Cute shops, coffee houses, and great food are also plentiful.
- **Edgehill:** Walking distance to campus. Comprised mostly of individual homes. This is a quiet area, centrally located with a few restaurants and shops.
- **West End:** Walking distance to campus. Centrally located with many condos, apartments, and chain restaurants. Lots of students live in the area. Home of Centennial Park, the biggest urban park in Nashville and a great place to relax.

Adapted from: Peabody Office of Student Engagement & Well-Being - Nashville: A Neighborhood Quick Guide
REFERENCES

BANKING
Vanderbilt ISSS website: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/iss/
Understanding Credit Cards: https://finlit.yale.edu/planning/understanding-credit-cards

COST OF LIVING
Your Passport to Nashville: https://admissions.vanderbilt.edu/vandybloggers/2018/04/the-commodore-card-your-passport-to-nashville/
Budgeting and Goal Setting: https://finlit.yale.edu/planning/budgeting-and-goal-setting
Nashville’s International Grocery Stores: https://nashville.eater.com/maps/international-markets-best-nashville

TRANSPORTATION
Vanderbilt Transportation: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/movevu/transportation-options/
Nashville Public Transit: https://www.wegotransit.com/

HOUSING
Vanderbilt ISSS: Finding a Place to Live: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/iss/housing/finding-a-place-to-live/
Vanderbilt Off-Campus Housing Search: https://offcampushousing.vanderbilt.edu/housing
Housing Search: Zillow: https://www.zillow.com/user/acct/login/?cid=pf
Housing Search: Apartments: https://www.apartments.com/
Nashville LGBTQI Friendly Housing: https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/resources/housing-in-nashville
Crime Map: https://www.crimemapping.com/map/tn/nashville

NEIGHBORHOOD