



Unofficial

**University of Michigan
Relocation Guide**

*Ann Arbor Dream Homes
2025*

RELOCATION GUIDE

Preface

Relocating to Ann Arbor for a University of Michigan faculty or staff position? This comprehensive relocation guide (2025) provides all the essential information to help you make a smooth transition. Whether you're buying a home or renting an apartment, this guide walks you through everything from real estate market trends and budgeting to commuting, schools, and lifestyle.

Ann Arbor is one of the best places to live in Michigan, known for its walkable neighborhoods, top-rated schools, and vibrant cultural scene. With the University of Michigan driving a strong local economy, the housing market is competitive. That's why we provide detailed insights on Ann Arbor's real estate trends, best neighborhoods for faculty and staff, and renting vs. buying considerations. You'll also find a complete home buying guide, including mortgage pre-approval tips, financing options, and working with a local real estate agent. If you prefer renting, we cover lease agreements, tenant rights, and university-affiliated housing options for faculty and staff.

Moving logistics can be overwhelming, so we've included a step-by-step relocation timeline, budgeting tips, and recommended moving services. Once you arrive, setting up essential services is a priority. This guide outlines how to register a vehicle, apply for a Michigan driver's license, set up utilities, and find the best internet providers in Ann Arbor.

For daily commuting, we explore public transportation options, faculty parking permits, U-M campus shuttles, and Ann Arbor's bike-friendly routes. Whether you drive, take the bus, or bike, we help you find the best way to navigate the city efficiently.

If you're moving with a family, understanding Ann Arbor's school system is key. We provide an overview of public and private schools, Montessori programs, early childhood education, and University of Michigan childcare resources. We also include spousal employment resources and faculty benefits to help your entire household settle in smoothly.

Beyond logistics, Ann Arbor offers a dynamic lifestyle. From local shopping and fine dining to outdoor recreation and cultural events, this guide highlights the best things to do in Ann Arbor year-round. Whether it's football Saturdays at Michigan Stadium, the Ann Arbor Art Fair, or enjoying the scenic Huron River, there's something for everyone. We also cover seasonal living tips, including preparing for Michigan winters and home maintenance recommendations.

This guide is designed to support University of Michigan faculty and staff with every aspect of their move, ensuring a seamless transition. While we strive for accuracy, this guide is for informational purposes only. Ann Arbor Dream Homes is not affiliated with the University of Michigan, but we created this guide to help newcomers settle in with confidence.

Welcome to University of Michigan, welcome to Ann Arbor!

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1. Welcome to Ann Arbor

1.1. Introduction to the Area

Ann Arbor, Michigan, is a dynamic city known for its academic excellence, cultural vibrancy, and strong economy. Home to the University of Michigan, it combines the intellectual energy of a university town with the amenities and innovation of a larger metropolitan area. With a population of approximately 123,000 residents, Ann Arbor offers a high quality of life, excellent public services, and a thriving arts and food scene.

Located 45 miles west of Detroit, Ann Arbor is a hub for education, healthcare, technology, and research. Its diverse community includes students, professionals, and families drawn to its top-rated schools, beautiful parks, and strong job market. The city is also known for its walkability, bike-friendly streets, and extensive public transportation options, making it easy to navigate.

Ann Arbor consistently ranks among the best cities to live in the U.S. due to its low unemployment rate, high median income, and strong real estate market. Whether you're looking for a quiet residential neighborhood, a historic district, or a lively downtown experience, Ann Arbor has diverse housing options to meet your needs.

1.2. Why Ann Arbor? Lifestyle, Economy, and Community

Lifestyle

Ann Arbor offers a unique blend of urban and suburban living, making it an attractive destination for faculty, staff, and professionals relocating to the area. The city is known for its intellectual and cultural vibrancy, supported by the University of Michigan's influence. Some key aspects of the Ann Arbor lifestyle include:

- **Outdoor Recreation:** With over 160 parks, miles of biking trails, and the scenic Huron River, Ann Arbor is perfect for outdoor enthusiasts. Nichols Arboretum, Gallup Park, and the Border-to-Border Trail offer beautiful green spaces for walking, biking, and kayaking.
- **Arts & Culture:** Ann Arbor is home to the Ann Arbor Art Fair, Michigan Theater, Hill Auditorium, and numerous galleries and performance venues. The city has a strong music and theater scene, hosting events like the Ann Arbor Folk Festival and performances by the Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra.
- **Dining & Shopping:** The city boasts a nationally recognized food scene, with everything from farm-to-table restaurants and international cuisine to local favorites like Zingerman's Deli. Downtown Ann Arbor and Kerrytown are filled with unique boutiques, bookstores, and artisan shops.
- **Sports & Fitness:** The University of Michigan's athletic programs bring excitement to the city, with Wolverine football at Michigan Stadium ("The Big House"), basketball at Crisler Center, and other NCAA events. The city also offers fitness centers, yoga studios, and recreational sports leagues.

Economy

Ann Arbor has a strong and diverse economy, consistently ranking among the best cities for job growth and innovation in the U.S. Key economic drivers include:

- **Education & Research:** The University of Michigan is the largest employer, with over 30,000 faculty and staff. It also attracts over \$1.7 billion in annual research funding, supporting innovation in healthcare, engineering, and technology.
- **Healthcare & Biotechnology:** Michigan Medicine, a nationally ranked hospital system, employs thousands and contributes significantly to medical research and patient care.
- **Technology & Startups:** Ann Arbor is home to a growing tech sector, with companies like Duo Security (acquired by Cisco), May Mobility (autonomous vehicles), and LLamasoft (supply chain AI solutions). The Ann Arbor SPARK initiative supports startups and economic development.
- **Automotive & Manufacturing:** Proximity to Detroit gives Ann Arbor a key role in automotive research, AI, and mobility technology, with firms like Toyota, Ford, and Hyundai operating research centers in the region.
- **Cost of Living:** While housing costs are higher than the state average, Ann Arbor's high median income (~\$80,000) and strong job market help balance affordability.

Community

Ann Arbor is known for its progressive values, engaged citizenry, and inclusive atmosphere. The city attracts a mix of students, professionals, and families, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural diversity. Key aspects of Ann Arbor's community include:

- **Education-Focused:** With top-ranked public schools and world-class higher education institutions, Ann Arbor prioritizes learning, research, and intellectual growth.
- **Diversity & Inclusion:** The city values cultural diversity, with strong international communities, numerous cultural festivals, and a commitment to social justice and sustainability.
- **Civic Engagement:** Ann Arbor residents are actively involved in local government, environmental initiatives, and community organizations, shaping policies on sustainability, transit, and public services.
- **Events & Festivals:** The city hosts year-round events like the Ann Arbor Art Fair, Summer Festival, and Film Festival, making it a lively and engaging place to live.

With its strong economy, vibrant lifestyle, and welcoming community, Ann Arbor is an ideal place for University of Michigan faculty and staff to call home.

1.3. Understanding the Local Housing Market

Overview of Ann Arbor's Housing Market

Ann Arbor's housing market is highly competitive, driven by its strong job market, high quality of life, and demand from University of Michigan faculty, staff, students, and professionals. Home prices and rental rates remain above the state average due to the city's desirability, limited housing inventory, and proximity to major employers like Michigan Medicine, U-M, and the growing tech sector.

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- Median Home Price (2025): ~\$500,000 - \$550,000 for a single-family home
- Median Condo Price: ~\$300,000 - \$400,000
- Rental Market:
 - One-bedroom apartment: \$1,500 - \$2,000/month
 - Two-bedroom apartment: \$2,200 - \$2,800/month
 - Single-family home rental: \$2,500 - \$4,000/month (varies by neighborhood and size)
- Housing Market Trend: The Ann Arbor market remains seller-friendly, with low inventory and strong buyer demand. Homes in desirable neighborhoods often receive multiple offers and sell quickly, particularly in spring and summer.

Renting vs. Buying in Ann Arbor

Renting may be a better option if you:

- Are relocating temporarily or for a short-term appointment.
- Want to explore Ann Arbor before committing to a home purchase.
- Prefer flexibility without homeownership responsibilities.

Buying may be a better option if you:

- Plan to stay for at least 5+ years, making homeownership more cost-effective.
- Want to build equity and take advantage of Ann Arbor's strong property appreciation.
- Can secure competitive mortgage rates and down payment assistance programs.

Best Neighborhoods for Faculty & Staff

Ann Arbor offers a variety of neighborhoods catering to different lifestyles, budgets, and proximity needs.

- Near U-M Campus (Walkable & Historic) – Higher Prices
 - Kerrytown: Trendy, walkable, near shops, restaurants, and the Farmer's Market.
 - Burns Park: Historic homes, family-friendly, close to downtown and campus.
 - Old West Side: Charming, well-preserved historic district with strong community ties.
- Family-Friendly & Quiet Neighborhoods – Mid to High Prices
 - Ann Arbor Hills: Large lots, upscale homes, and top-rated schools.
 - Eberwhite: Tree-lined streets, good schools, and close to downtown.
 - Dicken & Lansdowne: Affordable single-family homes, parks, and a suburban feel.
- Up-and-Coming & Affordable Areas – Lower to Mid Prices
 - Bryant & Mitchell: Budget-friendly homes with easy highway access.
 - Northside: Growing area with newer developments and quick campus access.
 - Pittsfield Township: Lower property taxes, more space, and a mix of new and older homes.
- Luxury & Gated Communities – Premium Prices
 - Geddes & Barton Hills: Exclusive, scenic areas with large estate homes.
 - Loch Alpine: Quiet, well-manicured golf course community.

Buying a Home in Ann Arbor: Key Considerations

- High Demand: Many homes receive multiple offers within days of listing.
- Competitive Bidding: Buyers should be prepared for offers above asking price in hot areas.
- Property Taxes: Ann Arbor has higher property taxes than surrounding townships.
- HOAs & Regulations: Some neighborhoods have homeowners associations (HOAs) that enforce property rules and fees.

Renting in Ann Arbor: What to Expect

- Leases often start in May or August, aligning with the academic year.
- Security deposits range from 1-1.5 months' rent.
- University Housing Options are available for faculty, staff, and visiting scholars.

Tips for Securing Housing in Ann Arbor

- Start early: Spring and summer are peak seasons for both buying and renting.
- Get pre-approved (if buying): A mortgage pre-approval strengthens your offer.
- Work with a local real estate agent: They can provide off-market listings and negotiation insights.

2. Planning Your Move

2.1. Relocation Timeline and Checklist

Relocating to Ann Arbor as a University of Michigan faculty or staff member requires careful planning to ensure a smooth transition. Below is a detailed timeline and checklist to guide each stage of the move.

6+ Months before Moving (Initial Planning)

- Research Ann Arbor's housing market, including renting vs. buying and neighborhood options.
- Estimate moving costs, including moving services, rental deposits, and down payment considerations.
- Check University of Michigan relocation resources for faculty and staff.
- Review employment contracts and benefits, including potential moving assistance.
- If buying a home, start researching mortgage lenders and pre-approval options.

3-6 Months before Moving (Housing and Logistics)

- Secure housing by signing a lease or starting the home-buying process.
- If renting, understand lease terms, security deposits, and application requirements.
- If buying, work with a real estate agent to tour properties and submit offers.
- Schedule school enrollment for children if applicable. For Public Schools you will need a verified local address. It is better to check with schools ahead of time so that you can have all the required documentation ready for registration. ## <https://www.a2schools.org/>
- Research and book a moving company or rental truck, especially for peak moving months.
- Begin downsizing and decluttering to reduce moving costs and packing time.

2 Months before Moving (Preparation)

- Finalize moving plans, including travel arrangements and transportation.
- If purchasing a home, complete inspections, finalize financing, and prepare for closing.
- Notify landlords or property management about moving out, if renting.
- Start packing non-essential items and label boxes for easy unpacking.
- Arrange for utilities to be set up at the new residence, including electricity, water, gas, and internet.
- Transfer or set up banking and financial services in Ann Arbor.

1 Month before Moving (Final Arrangements)

- Change address with USPS, banks, insurance providers, and subscription services.
- Set up mail forwarding and update online delivery accounts.
- Confirm moving company or truck rental details.
- Notify employer of official moving dates and update HR records if necessary.
- Schedule vehicle registration and driver's license updates for Michigan residency.
- If applicable, request time off work for moving and settling in.

2 Weeks before Moving (Final Packing and Coordination)

- Pack essential items separately for immediate use upon arrival.
- Confirm travel arrangements, including hotel stays if necessary.
- Arrange for childcare or pet care on moving day if needed.
- Dispose of or donate unwanted items and hazardous materials that cannot be moved.
- Verify all necessary documents, including rental agreements, home purchase documents, and moving receipts.

Moving Week

- Pack last-minute items and label boxes clearly.
- Clean the old residence and complete any required repairs.
- Conduct a final walkthrough to check for forgotten belongings.
- If renting, schedule a move-out inspection with the landlord.
- Confirm utility setup at the new home.

Arrival in Ann Arbor

- Unpack essential items and inspect new housing for any issues.
- Set up utilities, internet, and other essential services.
- Explore the neighborhood and locate nearby grocery stores, pharmacies, and other conveniences.
- Visit the University of Michigan campus to finalize office setup and employee onboarding.
- Register with a local healthcare provider and update emergency contacts.
- If applicable, register children for school and confirm transportation arrangements.

A well-planned relocation minimizes stress and ensures a smooth transition to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan.

2.2 Budgeting for Your Move

Relocating to Ann Arbor requires a well-structured budget to manage expenses effectively. Understanding the upfront costs, ongoing expenses, and potential financial assistance options can help minimize surprises and keep the move financially manageable.

Estimated Moving Costs

The total cost of relocating depends on factors such as distance, household size, and moving services used.

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Typical Moving Expenses

- Moving Company (Full-Service Move): \$3,000 - \$10,000 (varies by distance and household size)
- Truck Rental (DIY Move): \$500 - \$2,500 (plus fuel and equipment rental)
- Packing Supplies: \$100 - \$500 (boxes, tape, bubble wrap, specialty packing materials)
- Temporary Storage: \$50 - \$300/month (for short-term storage if needed)
- Travel Expenses: \$200 - \$1,500 (gas, flights, lodging, meals) per person
- Utility Setup Fees: \$100 - \$400 (activation costs for electricity, water, internet, etc.)
- Security Deposit or Down Payment:
 - Renting: Typically 1-1.5 months' rent (\$1,500 - \$4,000+)
 - Buying: 5-20% down payment (\$25,000 - \$110,000+ for median Ann Arbor home) plus closing costs (2 to 5% of house value) and commission fees.

Setting a Moving Budget

A detailed budget can help manage expenses efficiently. Below are the key components to consider:

1. Moving Logistics

- Decide between hiring movers, renting a truck, or using a hybrid approach (e.g., portable storage units).
- Obtain quotes from multiple moving companies for price comparisons.
- Consider relocation insurance to protect valuable items.

2. Housing Expenses

- Renters: Account for security deposits, first month's rent, and application fees.
- Buyers: Include down payment, closing costs (2-5% of home price), and property taxes.

3. Travel Costs

- Include costs for flights, fuel, rental cars, or hotels if moving from out of state.
- Plan for temporary accommodations if moving before securing permanent housing.

4. Utilities and Essential Services

- Setup costs for utilities and internet can range from \$100 - \$400.
- Budget for new furniture, appliances, or home essentials if upgrading housing.

5. Unexpected Costs

- Factor in pet relocation fees, cleaning services, and emergency repairs.
- Set aside at least 5-10% of the moving budget for unplanned expenses.

Cost-Saving Strategies

- Move during off-peak months (fall and winter) to secure lower rates.
- Declutter before moving to reduce moving weight and packing costs.
- Use employer relocation benefits if available.
- Negotiate moving quotes and ask about price-matching or discounts.
- Look for rental promotions such as waived application fees or discounted first-month rent.

Proper budgeting ensures a smooth relocation to Ann Arbor without financial strain.

2.3. Moving Services and Transportation

Relocating to Ann Arbor requires selecting the right moving services and transportation options based on budget, household size, and timeline. Whether hiring professional movers, renting a truck, or using a hybrid approach, careful planning can ensure a smooth transition.

Choosing the Right Moving Service

Several options are available, each with varying costs and levels of convenience.

1. Full-Service Moving Companies

- Handles packing, loading, transportation, unloading, and unpacking.
- Ideal for long-distance moves or busy professionals.
- Costs range from \$3,000 - \$8,000 (varies by distance and household size).
- Popular full-service movers include United Van Lines, Allied, and Mayflower.

2. Hybrid Moving Services (**Partial DIY**)

- Portable storage containers (e.g., PODS, U-Pack, 1-800-Pack-Rat) allow self-loading with professional transport.
- Costs typically range from \$1,500 - \$4,500 depending on storage needs and distance.
- Suitable for those needing temporary storage before moving into a permanent home.

3. Truck Rental for DIY Moves

- Rental companies like U-Haul, Penske, and Budget Truck Rental offer affordable long-distance options.
- Costs range from \$500 - \$2,500, plus fuel and additional equipment.
- Recommended for those comfortable driving large trucks.

4. Labor-Only Moving Services

- Ideal for loading and unloading rental trucks or storage units.
- Available through companies like TaskRabbit, Moving Help, or local moving labor services.
- Hourly rates range from \$50 - \$150 per mover.

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Booking a Moving Service

- Reserve early, especially for summer and peak moving months (May–August).
- Get multiple quotes and compare services.
- Check for insurance coverage and customer reviews before hiring.

Transportation Options in Ann Arbor

Driving and Vehicle Registration

- Michigan law requires new residents to register vehicles and obtain a Michigan driver's license within 30 days.
- Vehicle registration fees depend on the car's value and weight.

Public Transportation

- TheRide (AAATA): Local bus system with routes connecting Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and U-M campuses. ## <https://www.theride.org/>
- U-M Blue Bus: Free transit for faculty, staff, and students between campus locations. ## <https://ltp.umich.edu/campus-transit/routes-and-schedules/>
- Michigan Flyer: Airport shuttle service between Ann Arbor and Detroit Metro Airport (DTW). ## <https://www.michiganflyer.com/customer-care>

Bike and Pedestrian Options

- Ann Arbor is bike-friendly, with dedicated bike lanes and trails. ## <https://www.a2dda.org/getting-around/bike/>
- Walkability is high, especially in downtown, Kerrytown, and campus areas.

Parking and Commuting

- U-M parking permits are required for faculty and staff parking on campus. ## <https://ltp.umich.edu/parking/permit-parking/>
- Downtown has metered and permit-based parking garages. ## <https://www.a2gov.org/services/parking/>

Selecting the right moving services and transportation helps ensure a stress-free relocation to Ann Arbor.

2.4. Real Estate Market Trends and Pricing

Ann Arbor's real estate market remains highly competitive, driven by strong demand from University of Michigan faculty, staff, students, and professionals. The city's limited housing inventory, combined with a strong economy and high quality of life, keeps home prices and rental rates above the state average.

Current Housing Market Overview (2025)

- Median Home Price: \$500,000 - \$550,000 for a single-family home.
- Median Condo Price: \$300,000 - \$400,000.
- Annual Home Appreciation Rate: 3-6%, depending on neighborhood demand.
- Average Days on Market: 15-30 days for well-priced homes in desirable areas.
- New Construction Price per Sq. Ft.: \$250 - \$350, varying by location.
- Property Taxes: 2.1 - 2.5% of assessed home value, higher in Ann Arbor than surrounding townships.

Home Price Trends by Neighborhood (2025)

- **Downtown & Near U-M Campus (Premium Prices)**
 - Kerrytown, Burns Park, Old West Side: \$600,000 - \$900,000 (historic homes, walkable, high demand).
 - Ann Arbor Hills, Geddes, Barton Hills: \$800,000 - \$2M+ (luxury homes, large lots, prestigious areas).
- **Family-Friendly Neighborhoods (Mid-to-High Price Range)**
 - Eberwhite, Dicken, Lansdowne: \$450,000 - \$650,000 (good schools, suburban feel, parks nearby).
 - Northside, Water Hill, Huron Hills: \$400,000 - \$650,000 (charming homes, growing popularity).
- **More Affordable and Up-and-Coming Areas**
 - Bryant, Mitchell, Southside: \$300,000 - \$450,000 (budget-friendly, increasing appreciation).
 - Pittsfield Township, Ypsilanti Township: \$275,000 - \$400,000 (lower taxes, new developments).

Rental Market Trends (2025)

- One-bedroom apartment: \$1,500 - \$2,000/month.
- Two-bedroom apartment: \$2,200 - \$2,800/month.
- Single-family home rentals: \$2,500 - \$4,000/month, depending on size and location.
- Luxury rentals (Downtown/Kerrytown): \$2,800 - \$4,500/month for high-end apartments or condos.
- Lease Terms: Most leases start in May or August, aligning with the university schedule.

Market Trends and Future Projections

- **High Demand, Limited Supply:** Homes in desirable areas receive multiple offers, often above asking price.
- **Increased New Construction:** More developments are occurring in Pittsfield Township and nearby Ypsilanti, offering more affordable options.
- **Mortgage Rate Impact:** Interest rates remain a key factor in affordability, influencing buyer demand.
- **Continued Price Appreciation:** Home values are expected to increase by 3-6% annually, barring economic shifts.

Ann Arbor's strong economy, growing tech sector, and university-driven demand ensure a stable and appreciating real estate market.

3. Housing Options

3.1. Renting vs. Buying: Pros and Cons

Deciding whether to rent or buy in Ann Arbor depends on financial goals, lifestyle preferences, and long-term plans. Both options have advantages and challenges, especially in a competitive market influenced by the University of Michigan, healthcare sector, and tech industry.

Pros and Cons of Renting

Pros

- Flexibility – Ideal for those on temporary contracts, planning to relocate again, or wanting to explore different neighborhoods before buying.
- Lower Upfront Costs – No need for a down payment, just a security deposit (typically 1-1.5 months' rent) and first month's rent.
- Minimal Maintenance Responsibilities – Landlords handle repairs, landscaping, and property taxes.
- Access to Prime Locations – Renting allows access to high-demand areas like downtown and near U-M campus without the high costs of home ownership.
- Easier to Budget – Fixed monthly rent payments without unexpected home maintenance costs.

Cons

- No Equity Building – Rent payments do not contribute to ownership or long-term wealth.
- Annual Rent Increases – Ann Arbor's rental market has steady price hikes due to demand.
- Limited Customization – Renters cannot renovate or modify the property.
- Potential Lease Restrictions – Rules on pets, parking, and subleasing can limit options.

Pros and Cons of Buying

Pros

- Investment & Equity Growth – Ann Arbor's home values appreciate by 3-6% annually, offering long-term financial benefits.
- Stability & Predictability – Fixed mortgage payments provide more stability compared to rising rental costs.
- Tax Benefits – Mortgage interest, property taxes, and some home expenses may be tax-deductible.
- Customization & Control – Owners can renovate, remodel, and personalize their home.
- Potential Rental Income – Homeowners can rent out rooms or convert properties into income-generating rentals (common in university towns).

Cons

- High Upfront Costs – A typical down payment is 5-20% (\$25,000 - \$110,000 for a median-priced home), plus closing costs of 2-5%.
- Property Taxes & Maintenance – Ann Arbor’s property taxes (2.1-2.5%) are among the highest in Michigan, and homeowners must handle repairs, maintenance, and HOA fees if applicable.
- Market Fluctuations – While Ann Arbor has steady appreciation, home values can be affected by interest rates and economic conditions.
- Longer Commitment – Selling a home takes time, making relocation more complex than ending a rental lease.

Who Should Rent?

- Those staying in Ann Arbor short-term (1-3 years).
- Anyone preferring low-maintenance housing.
- Individuals wanting financial flexibility before committing to a home purchase.

Who Should Buy?

- Faculty and staff planning to stay 5+ years.
- Those looking for long-term investment and equity growth.
- Buyers who want stability, control, and potential rental income opportunities.

Ann Arbor’s competitive market makes both renting and buying viable, depending on lifestyle needs and financial readiness.

3.2. University Housing and Temporary Housing

University of Michigan faculty and staff have access to various housing options, including university-affiliated housing, short-term accommodations, and temporary rental solutions. These options provide flexibility for those relocating, on short-term contracts, or looking for permanent housing.

University Housing Options

While the University of Michigan primarily provides on-campus housing for students, limited university-affiliated housing is available for faculty, staff, and visiting scholars.

Northwood Community Apartments (U-M Affiliated)

- Located on North Campus, offering a quiet residential setting.
- Available to graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, faculty, and staff.
- Furnished and unfurnished one- to three-bedroom apartments.
- Leases typically start in August, aligning with the academic calendar.
- Utilities included in rent, making budgeting easier.
- Free access to U-M Blue Bus routes, providing easy campus connectivity.
- Website: housing.umich.edu for availability and pricing.

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Other U-M Housing Options

- Munger Graduate Residences – Designed for graduate students and faculty, offering furnished private rooms with shared common spaces.
- Family Housing – Select units available for faculty with families.

Temporary Housing Options

For faculty and staff waiting for permanent housing, Ann Arbor offers short-term rental options, extended-stay hotels, and corporate housing.

Short-Term Rentals & Furnished Housing

- SabbaticalHomes.com – Designed for academics seeking temporary furnished housing.
- Blueground, Landing, Zeus Living – Flexible month-to-month corporate housing rentals.
- Airbnb & Vrbo – Available for weekly or monthly stays, though pricing fluctuates.

Extended-Stay Hotels

For those preferring a hotel setting with flexible leasing, Ann Arbor has several extended-stay options with amenities like kitchens, workspace, and weekly rates.

- Residence Inn by Marriott Ann Arbor Downtown – Located near Main Street, walkable to campus.
- Sonesta Simply Suites Ann Arbor – Budget-friendly with long-term stay options.
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott – Includes full kitchens and on-site laundry.
- Staybridge Suites Ann Arbor – Located near Briarwood Mall, offering suites with full kitchens.

University-Affiliated Temporary Housing for New Faculty

- U-M provides limited short-term housing assistance for incoming faculty through the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (FASAP).
- Some academic departments offer transitional housing resources for new hires.
- Contact U-M Housing or HR Services for details.

Best Practices for Securing Temporary Housing

- Book early during peak relocation months (May–August).
- Check lease flexibility for month-to-month options if waiting for a permanent home.
- Confirm pet policies if traveling with pets.
- Use university resources for subsidized or academic housing options.

University and temporary housing options in Ann Arbor provide convenient, flexible solutions for new faculty and staff during their transition.

3.3. Best Neighborhoods for Faculty and Staff

Ann Arbor offers a diverse range of neighborhoods catering to faculty, staff, and professionals based on proximity to the University of Michigan, lifestyle preferences, budget, and amenities. Below are some of the top neighborhoods based on walkability, commute time, housing prices, and overall appeal.

1. Walkable & Close to Campus (Higher Prices, Historic Homes)

Ideal for faculty and staff who want to live near U-M, enjoy vibrant city life, and prefer historic architecture.

Kerrytown

- Median Home Price: \$600,000 - \$900,000
- Rental Prices: \$2,200 - \$3,800/month for apartments and condos
- Highlights: Walkable, historic homes, Farmers Market, Zingerman's Deli, boutique shops.
- Commute: 5-10 minutes to Central Campus, near U-M Medical Center.

Burns Park

- Median Home Price: \$700,000 - \$1.2M
- Rental Prices: \$2,500 - \$4,500/month
- Highlights: Family-friendly, historic homes, close to Burns Park Elementary (top-rated school).
- Commute: 5 minutes to Central Campus, walkable and bike-friendly.

Old West Side

- Median Home Price: \$550,000 - \$850,000
- Rental Prices: \$2,200 - \$3,500/month
- Highlights: Quiet residential streets, Victorian-style homes, near downtown dining and entertainment.
- Commute: 5-10 minutes to U-M, easy bike access.

2. Family-Friendly Neighborhoods (Suburban Feel, Top Schools, Mid-to-High Prices)

Great for faculty and staff with families looking for top-ranked schools, parks, and quiet residential streets.

Ann Arbor Hills

- Median Home Price: \$800,000 - \$1.5M
- Rental Prices: \$3,500 - \$6,000/month
- Highlights: Large lots, tree-lined streets, close to Nichols Arboretum and Huron Hills Golf Course.
- Commute: 10-15 minutes to U-M Central Campus.

Eberwhite

- Median Home Price: \$450,000 - \$650,000

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- Rental Prices: \$2,000 - \$3,500/month
- Highlights: Family-friendly, Eberwhite Elementary (highly rated), close to Eberwhite Woods for outdoor activities.
- Commute: 10 minutes to U-M, easy access to I-94.

Dicken & Lansdowne

- Median Home Price: \$450,000 - \$700,000
- Rental Prices: \$2,200 - \$3,800/month
- Highlights: Great schools, parks, quiet suburban feel, near Briarwood Mall.
- Commute: 10-15 minutes to campus.

3. Affordable & Up-and-Coming Areas (Lower Prices, High Appreciation Potential)

Best for faculty and staff looking for affordable housing options with good investment potential.

Northside & Water Hill

- Median Home Price: \$400,000 - \$600,000
- Rental Prices: \$1,800 - \$3,200/month
- Highlights: Growing in popularity, near the Huron River, walkable to downtown.
- Commute: 5-10 minutes to U-M.

Bryant & Mitchell

- Median Home Price: \$300,000 - \$450,000
- Rental Prices: \$1,500 - \$2,800/month
- Highlights: Affordable homes, near Mitchell Elementary & Scarlett Middle School.
- Commute: 10-15 minutes to U-M, easy access to I-94.

Pittsfield Township

- Median Home Price: \$275,000 - \$400,000
- Rental Prices: \$1,600 - \$3,000/month
- Highlights: Lower taxes, new developments, suburban feel, near shopping centers.
- Commute: 15-20 minutes to U-M.

4. Luxury & Executive Living (Exclusive Homes, Premium Amenities, High Prices)

Preferred by senior faculty, executives, and professionals looking for upscale living with privacy.

Geddes & Barton Hills

- Median Home Price: \$1M - \$3M+
- Rental Prices: \$4,500 - \$8,000/month
- Highlights: Large estate homes, scenic views, top-rated schools, private setting.
- Commute: 15-20 minutes to U-M.

Loch Alpine

- Median Home Price: \$600,000 - \$900,000
- Rental Prices: Limited rental availability, higher-end pricing.
- Highlights: Golf course community, peaceful setting, near Huron River.
- Commute: 15-20 minutes to U-M.

Choosing the Right Neighborhood

- For walkability and campus access → Kerrytown, Burns Park, Old West Side.
- For family-friendly living → Ann Arbor Hills, Eberwhite, Dicken, Lansdowne.
- For affordability and investment potential → Bryant, Mitchell, Pittsfield Township.
- For luxury and executive homes → Geddes, Barton Hills, Loch Alpine.

Ann Arbor's diverse neighborhoods offer options for every budget and lifestyle, making it an ideal location for University of Michigan faculty and staff.

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4. Home Buying Guide

4.1. Steps to Purchasing a Home in Ann Arbor

Buying a home in Ann Arbor requires careful planning due to the competitive real estate market and high demand near the University of Michigan. Following a structured approach ensures a smooth home-buying process and maximizes investment value.

Step 1: Assess Financial Readiness

- Review your budget to determine affordability. Consider mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance, and maintenance costs.
- Check credit score (typically 620+ for conventional loans, 580+ for FHA loans).
- Calculate the down payment:
 - 5-20% down payment is standard (\$25,000 - \$110,000+ for median Ann Arbor homes).
 - First-time buyers may qualify for FHA loans (3.5% down) or state/local assistance programs.
- Estimate closing costs (2-5% of home price, covering appraisal, lender fees, and title insurance).
- Be prepared to cover real estate agent commission fees if they are not covered by the seller.

Step 2: Get Pre-Approved for a Mortgage

- Contact lenders to compare interest rates and loan options.
- Obtain pre-approval letter to demonstrate financial readiness and strengthen offers.
- Common mortgage options include:
 - Conventional Loans (best for buyers with strong credit and higher down payments).
 - FHA Loans (lower down payment, good for first-time buyers).
 - VA Loans (for military-affiliated buyers, often 0% down).
 - Jumbo Loans (for homes exceeding conventional loan limits, common in Ann Arbor's luxury market).

Step 3: Hire a Local Real Estate Agent

- Work with an Ann Arbor-based agent familiar with the market and U-M area.
- Agents assist with finding listings, negotiating offers, and navigating closing.
- Ensure the agent is experienced in competitive bidding situations.

Step 4: Search for Homes & Make an Offer

- Define key preferences: location, price range, home size, and amenities.
- Tour homes quickly: Ann Arbor's market moves fast and desirable properties sell within 15-30 days.
- Make a strong offer:
 - Homes in high-demand areas often require offers above asking price.
 - Consider waiving contingencies or offering a larger earnest money deposit to be more competitive.
- Negotiate terms: Work with your agent to adjust the offer if needed (e.g., closing date, inspection contingencies).

Step 5: Conduct Home Inspection & Appraisal

- Hire a licensed home inspector to check for structural issues, plumbing, and electrical concerns.
- If major issues arise, negotiate repairs or price reductions with the seller.
- The lender requires a home appraisal to confirm the property value aligns with the loan amount.

Step 6: Finalize the Mortgage & Close the Deal

- Secure final loan approval by providing updated financial documents.
- Review the closing disclosure outlining loan terms and final costs.
- Complete a final walkthrough to ensure the property is in agreed-upon condition.
- Sign closing documents and transfer funds for the down payment and closing costs.
- Receive keys to the new home once the sale is finalized.

Step 7: Move In & Settle

- Transfer utilities, internet, and mailing address.
- Plan for home maintenance and property tax payments.
- Join local neighborhood groups to integrate into the community.

The Ann Arbor housing market is competitive, so early preparation, a strong financial position, and strategic offers are key to securing a home.

4.2. Mortgage Pre-Approval and Financing Options

Securing a mortgage is a crucial step in the home-buying process, especially in Ann Arbor's competitive housing market. Understanding pre-approval requirements, loan options, and financing strategies ensures buyers are financially prepared.

Mortgage Pre-Approval Process

1. What is Mortgage Pre-Approval?

Mortgage pre-approval is a lender's commitment to providing a loan up to a specified amount, based on an applicant's creditworthiness, income, and financial history. It strengthens offers in competitive markets like Ann Arbor, as sellers prefer buyers who are financially verified.

2. Steps to Get Pre-Approved

- Check Credit Score:
 - Conventional Loans: Minimum 620+
 - FHA Loans: Minimum 580+ (lower down payment)
 - VA Loans: No minimum required, but typically 620+
- Gather Required Documents:
 - Proof of income (W-2s, tax returns, pay stubs or 1099s for self-employed buyers).
 - Bank statements (last 2-3 months).
 - Employment verification.
 - Debt information (student loans, credit cards, car loans).

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- Compare Lenders & Loan Terms:
 - Get multiple pre-approval letters to compare interest rates and fees.
 - Local lenders familiar with Ann Arbor's market may offer faster processing and competitive terms.
- Receive Pre-Approval Letter:
 - Indicates maximum loan amount and interest rate.
 - Typically valid for 60-90 days.
 - Strengthens purchase offers in competitive bidding situations.

Mortgage Financing Options

Different loan programs cater to varying financial situations. Choosing the right mortgage depends on down payment ability, credit score, and long-term goals.

1. Conventional Loans

- Ideal for buyers with strong credit and a larger down payment.
- Down Payment: 5-20% (Ann Arbor median home price: \$500,000 - \$550,000 → \$25,000 - \$110,000 down).
- Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI): Required if down payment is less than 20%.

2. FHA Loans (Federal Housing Administration)

- Best for first-time homebuyers or those with lower credit scores.
- Down Payment: 3.5% (as low as \$17,500 for a \$500,000 home).
- Credit Score: Minimum 580 (with 3.5% down), or 500 (with 10% down).
- Higher mortgage insurance costs compared to conventional loans.

3. VA Loans (Veterans Affairs)

- Available to military service members, veterans, and eligible spouses.
- Down Payment: 0% required.
- No PMI (Private Mortgage Insurance), lowering monthly costs.
- Competitive interest rates and flexible credit requirements.

4. USDA Loans (Rural Development Loans)

- For buyers in eligible rural or suburban areas (some townships near Ann Arbor may qualify).
- Down Payment: 0% required.
- Income restrictions apply based on location.

5. Jumbo Loans

- For homes exceeding conforming loan limits (\$766,550+ in 2025 for Washtenaw County).
- Higher credit score (700+) and larger down payments (10-20%) required.
- Common in luxury Ann Arbor neighborhoods like Barton Hills and Geddes.

Additional Financing Assistance

First-Time Homebuyer & Down Payment Assistance Programs

- MSHDA (Michigan State Housing Development Authority) Loans:
 - Offers up to \$10,000 in down payment assistance for eligible buyers.
 - Minimum credit score 640.
- Washtenaw County Homebuyer Assistance Program:
 - Income-based assistance for low-to-moderate-income buyers.
- University of Michigan Faculty & Staff Relocation Assistance:
 - Some departments offer housing support for new hires.

Key Mortgage Considerations for Ann Arbor Buyers

- Competitive Market: Pre-approval is essential before making an offer.
- Property Taxes: Ann Arbor's property tax rate is 2.1 - 2.5%, higher than nearby townships.
- Interest Rates: Rates fluctuate, impacting monthly payments. Locking in a lower rate early saves money long term.
- Loan Pre-Approval vs. Pre-Qualification: Pre-approval is a stronger commitment than pre-qualification.

Final Steps in the Mortgage Process

1. Get Pre-Approved Before House Hunting – Strengthens purchase offers.
2. Compare Loan Options – Select the best mortgage for financial goals.
3. Work with a Local Lender or Bank – Faster processing and familiarity with Ann Arbor's market.
4. Lock in Interest Rate – Protects against rate increases.
5. Complete Final Loan Approval – Submit additional documents before closing.

Being financially prepared with the right mortgage option and pre-approval ensures a smoother home-buying process in Ann Arbor's competitive market.

4.3. Working with a Local Real Estate Agent

Partnering with a local real estate agent is essential for navigating Ann Arbor's competitive housing market. An experienced agent provides market insights, negotiation expertise, and access to off-market listings, ensuring buyers secure the best home within their budget.

Benefits of Using a Local Real Estate Agent

1. In-Depth Market Knowledge

- Understanding of neighborhood trends, pricing, and home appreciation rates.
- Insight into school districts, local amenities, and commute times.
- Awareness of seasonal market fluctuations and buyer competition levels.

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2. Access to Exclusive Listings

- Early alerts on new and off-market properties not publicly listed.
- Connections with local sellers, builders, and investors.
- Ability to schedule showings before homes hit the open market.

3. Negotiation & Offer Strategy

- Expertise in handling multiple-offer situations (common in Ann Arbor's hot market).
- Ability to craft competitive yet reasonable offers.
- Assistance with price negotiations, contingencies, and seller concessions.

4. Transaction Management & Legal Guidance

- Coordination of inspections, appraisals, and closing paperwork.
- Ensures buyers understand contracts, contingencies, and financing terms.
- Compliance with Michigan real estate laws and disclosures.

How to Choose the Right Real Estate Agent

1. Look for Local Experience

- Select an agent with a proven track record in Ann Arbor and nearby areas.
- Verify sales history, client reviews, and neighborhood expertise.
- Ensure the agent understands faculty and staff relocation needs.

2. Ask Key Questions

- How many homes have you sold in Ann Arbor in the past year?
- What neighborhoods do you specialize in?
- How do you handle competitive bidding situations?
- Do you have experience working with University of Michigan employees?

3. Verify Credentials & References

- Ensure the agent is a licensed REALTOR® (not just a real estate agent).
- Request past client testimonials and referrals.
- Check online reviews on Zillow, Realtor.com, or Google.

Where to Find a Local Real Estate Agent

- Check out our website AnnArborDreamHomes.com

Key Considerations When Working with an Agent

- **Exclusivity Agreement:** Some agents require an exclusive buyer representation agreement, ensuring dedicated service.
- **Commission Fees:** Typically, seller pays agent commissions, but buyers should clarify fee structures upfront.

- **Communication Style:** Choose an agent who responds quickly and aligns with your preferred method of communication (email, phone, text).

Final Steps in Selecting an Agent

1. Interview multiple agents to compare expertise and approach.
2. Review past sales and client testimonials.
3. Confirm experience in competitive bidding scenarios.
4. Sign a buyer's agreement if needed and begin the home search.

A skilled Ann Arbor real estate agent provides the expertise, access, and negotiation skills needed to secure a home in a fast-moving and high-demand market.

4.4. Home Inspections and Maintenance Tips

A home inspection is a critical step in the home-buying process, ensuring that a property is structurally sound and free of major defects before purchase. Once a home is bought, ongoing maintenance is essential to preserve its value and avoid costly repairs.

Home Inspection Process

1. Why Home Inspections Are Important

- Identifies hidden structural, electrical, plumbing, or HVAC issues.
- Helps buyers negotiate repairs or price adjustments before closing.
- Ensures the home meets safety and building code requirements.
- Provides insight into future maintenance costs.

2. Choosing a Home Inspector

- Hire a licensed and certified inspector (American Society of Home Inspectors – ASHI).
- Verify experience with Ann Arbor homes (older homes may require specialized knowledge).
- Ask for sample reports to ensure thorough documentation.

3. Key Areas Covered in a Home Inspection

- **Foundation & Structural Integrity** – Checks for cracks, shifting, or water damage.
- **Roof & Attic** – Assesses condition, leaks, ventilation, and insulation.
- **Electrical Systems** – Verifies wiring, panel capacity, and potential fire hazards.
- **Plumbing & Water Systems** – Checks pipes, water pressure, drainage, and leaks.
- **Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC)** – Ensures proper functioning and energy efficiency.
- **Windows & Doors** – Inspects for insulation issues, drafts, and security.
- **Basement & Crawl Spaces** – Looks for moisture problems, mold, and foundation concerns.

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4. Common Issues Found in Ann Arbor Homes

- Older Homes (Pre-1950s, Historic Districts) – May have outdated electrical wiring (knob-and-tube), lead pipes, and foundation issues.
- Moisture & Basement Leaks – Common due to Michigan’s freeze-thaw cycle.
- Radon Levels – Ann Arbor has areas with elevated radon, requiring testing and mitigation.
- Septic & Well Systems (if outside city limits) – Needs proper inspection and maintenance.

5. After the Inspection: Next Steps

- Negotiate Repairs or Price Adjustments – Request seller to fix issues or provide credits.
- Decide on Deal Breakers – Major structural issues may require reconsidering the purchase.
- Plan for Future Repairs – Use the inspection report as a home maintenance guide.

Home Maintenance Tips for Ann Arbor Homes

1. Seasonal Maintenance Checklist

Spring

- Inspect roof, gutters, and drainage systems for winter damage.
- Service air conditioning units before warm weather.
- Check for foundation cracks caused by freezing temperatures.

Summer

- Maintain landscaping and trees to prevent damage from overgrowth.
- Clean window screens and exterior siding.
- Inspect and seal driveways and walkways to prevent cracking.

Fall

- Clean gutters and downspouts to prevent ice buildup.
- Service furnace and heating system before winter.
- Insulate pipes and windows to improve energy efficiency.

Winter

- Check for ice dams on the roof, which can lead to leaks.
- Maintain indoor humidity to prevent wood damage and condensation.
- Keep walkways and driveways salted and shoveled for safety.

2. Preventative Maintenance

- HVAC System – Change filters every 2-3 months, schedule professional servicing annually.
- Plumbing – Insulate pipes in winter to prevent freezing.
- Roof & Gutters – Inspect annually for leaks and damage.
- Foundation & Basement – Ensure proper drainage to prevent water infiltration.
- Radon Testing – Test every 2-3 years due to natural shifts in soil conditions.

3. Energy Efficiency Improvements

- Install smart thermostats for optimized heating and cooling.
- Upgrade windows and insulation to reduce energy bills.
- Use LED lighting and energy-efficient appliances.

Key Takeaways

- A home inspection ensures a sound investment and prevents unexpected costs.
- Seasonal maintenance extends home lifespan and prevents expensive repairs.
- Energy efficiency improvements reduce costs and increase home value.

Regular inspections and upkeep help maintain a safe, efficient, and long-lasting home in Ann Arbor's variable climate.

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5. Rental Guide

5.1. Finding the Right Rental Property

Ann Arbor's rental market is competitive, especially near the University of Michigan, where demand is high among faculty, staff, students, and professionals. Finding the right rental requires early planning, understanding lease terms, and evaluating different neighborhoods.

1. Define Rental Needs

- Budget Considerations
 - Average Rent Prices (2025):
 - One-bedroom apartment: \$1,500 - \$2,000/month
 - Two-bedroom apartment: \$2,200 - \$2,800/month
 - Single-family home rental: \$2,500 - \$4,000/month
 - Include utilities, parking fees, and renter's insurance in budgeting.
- Location Preferences
 - Proximity to U-M Campus, workplace, or transit routes.
 - Walkability, parking availability, and neighborhood safety.
- Amenities and Lease Terms
 - Furnished vs. Unfurnished: Short-term vs. long-term stay considerations.
 - Pet Policies: Check if properties allow pets and any associated fees.
 - Lease Length: Typical leases are 12 months, but some offer short-term (3-6 months).

2. Best Neighborhoods for Renting

- Near U-M Campus (Walkable, Higher Prices)
 - Kerrytown: Historic charm, close to downtown, \$1,800 - \$3,500/month.
 - Burns Park: Family-friendly, near schools, \$2,000 - \$4,000/month.
 - Old West Side: Quiet, near downtown, \$1,700 - \$3,200/month.
- More Affordable & Up-and-Coming Areas
 - Northside & Water Hill: Good value, near Huron River, \$1,500 - \$2,500/month.
 - Pittsfield Township: Lower taxes, new apartments, \$1,400 - \$2,400/month.
 - Bryant & Mitchell: Budget-friendly, \$1,300 - \$2,200/month.

3. Where to Search for Rentals

- Online Listings
 - Zillow, Apartments.com, Rent.com – Listings from landlords and property managers.
 - Craigslist & Facebook Marketplace – Direct listings from owners, but watch for scams.
- University-Affiliated Resources
 - University of Michigan Housing – Limited options for faculty/staff.
 - U-M Off-Campus Housing – Resources for renting near campus.

4. Rental Application Process

- Prepare Required Documents
 - Proof of income (pay stubs, employment verification).
 - Credit report (some landlords require 650+ credit score).
 - References from previous landlords.
- Application Fees & Security Deposits
 - Application fees range from \$30 - \$75 per applicant.
 - Security deposit is typically 1-1.5 months' rent.
- Tenant Screening & Approval
 - Landlords check rental history, income (3x rent recommended), and creditworthiness.
 - Expect a response within 3-5 days after applying.

5. Lease Considerations & Red Flags

- Read Lease Terms Carefully
 - Clarify renewal policies, subletting rules, and maintenance responsibilities.
 - Ask about late payment fees and rent increase policies.
- Watch for Red Flags
 - Listings with no in-person tours (potential scams).
 - Cash-only deposits or wire transfers.
 - Unclear lease terms or excessive upfront fees.

6. Moving In & Tenant Rights

- Conduct a move-in inspection and document existing damages.
- Ensure utilities and renter's insurance are set up before moving in.
- Know Michigan tenant rights regarding security deposits and maintenance responsibilities.

A proactive approach, early search, and clear understanding of lease terms help secure the best rental in Ann Arbor's competitive market.

5.2. Lease Agreements and Tenant Rights

Understanding lease agreements and tenant rights is crucial when renting in Ann Arbor. Michigan's landlord-tenant laws outline responsibilities for both parties, ensuring a fair and legally compliant rental process.

1. Understanding Lease Agreements

A lease agreement is a legally binding contract between the tenant and landlord, specifying rental terms, responsibilities, and conditions.

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Key Components of a Lease

- Lease Term: Most leases are 12 months, but some offer month-to-month or short-term options.
- Rent Payment Terms:
 - Due date, late fees, and acceptable payment methods.
 - Some landlords require income verification (typically 3x rent).
- Security Deposit:
 - Michigan law allows landlords to charge up to 1.5 months' rent as a deposit.
 - Deposits must be returned within 30 days after move-out, minus deductions for damages.
- Maintenance Responsibilities:
 - Landlord: Responsible for major repairs, structural issues, and habitability.
 - Tenant: Responsible for daily upkeep, minor repairs, and keeping the unit clean.
- Subletting & Roommates: Some leases prohibit or require landlord approval for subletting.
- Utilities & Fees:
 - Clarifies whether utilities are included or tenant-paid.
 - Water, trash, and internet may be separately billed.
- Renewal & Rent Increases:
 - Landlords must provide written notice (typically 30-60 days) before lease renewal or rent changes.

2. Tenant Rights in Michigan

Michigan law protects tenants from unfair practices, ensuring fair treatment and habitable living conditions.

Security Deposit Protections

- Landlords must provide a move-in checklist to document existing damages.
- Deposits must be returned within 30 days of move-out.
- If deductions are made, landlords must provide an itemized list of charges.

Right to a Habitable Home

- Landlords must keep the unit safe and livable (working plumbing, heating, no infestations).
- Tenants can request repairs in writing, and landlords must respond within a reasonable time frame.

Protection from Illegal Evictions

- Landlords cannot evict tenants without a court order.
- A 7-day notice is required for non-payment of rent, and tenants can avoid eviction by paying before the deadline.
- Lockouts and utility shutoffs as eviction methods are illegal.

Privacy & Entry Rights

- Landlords must provide reasonable notice (usually 24 hours) before entering for inspections or

repairs.

- Emergency entry is allowed without notice.

Rent Increases & Lease Termination

- Rent increases require advance notice (usually 30-60 days for month-to-month leases).
- Tenants on fixed-term leases cannot have rent raised until renewal.
- Tenants can break a lease without penalty for valid reasons (e.g., military duty, uninhabitable conditions).

3. Common Lease Disputes & Resolutions

- **Unreturned Security Deposits:** Tenants can file a claim in small claims court if unfair deductions are made.
- **Unresolved Maintenance Issues:** Tenants can withhold rent in extreme cases but must follow legal procedures.
- **Lease Break Fees:** Some leases allow early termination with a penalty, while others require subleasing.

4. Resources for Tenants

- University of Michigan Off-Campus Housing (offcampushousing.umich.edu)
- Michigan Legal Help (michiganlegalhelp.org)
- Washtenaw County Housing Bureau for Seniors (for senior renters)
- Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid-Michigan (fhcmichigan.org)

Understanding lease terms and tenant rights helps renters avoid legal issues, protect their security deposits, and ensure fair treatment in Ann Arbor's rental market.

5.3. University-Affiliated Housing Options

The University of Michigan offers limited housing options for faculty, staff, and visiting scholars through its Northwood Community Apartments and other university-affiliated resources. These options provide convenience, affordability, and proximity to campus, making them ideal for those transitioning to Ann Arbor.

1. Northwood Community Apartments (**University-Owned Housing**)

Northwood housing is located on North Campus, providing a quiet, residential environment with easy access to the university via the U-M Blue Bus system (free for faculty, staff, and students).

Features

- Available for faculty, staff, graduate students, and postdocs.
- One- to three-bedroom units, some furnished.
- Utilities included (varies by unit type).
- On-site parking, laundry, and community facilities.
- Leases typically start in August, but availability may vary.

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Eligibility & Application

- Priority is given to graduate students and postdocs, but faculty/staff may be eligible based on availability.
- Applications can be submitted through University Housing Services at housing.umich.edu.

2. Temporary & Short-Term Housing for Faculty & Staff

For faculty or staff needing short-term accommodations while securing permanent housing, the university provides resources for short-term stays.

University Guest Housing

- Furnished apartments available for short-term stays.
- Located near campus and university facilities.
- Reservation required through the U-M Housing Office.

Hotel Partnerships & Extended-Stay Options

The university has preferred rates with local hotels, including:

- Residence Inn Ann Arbor Downtown
- Graduate Ann Arbor
- TownePlace Suites by Marriott

These hotels offer discounted faculty rates for short stays.

3. Off-Campus University-Affiliated Resources

U-M's Off-Campus Housing Office assists faculty, staff, and graduate students in finding rental properties near campus.

- Off-Campus Housing Database (offcampushousing.umich.edu) lists available apartments, shared housing, and subleases.
- U-M Housing Referral Service connects new faculty and staff with rental options near Central and North Campus.

4. Housing Assistance for New Faculty & Staff

Some U-M departments offer relocation assistance for faculty and research staff, including:

- Temporary housing stipends (varies by department).
- Assistance with local real estate agents for home buying or renting.
- Guidance on family housing and school enrollment.

Faculty should check with U-M Human Resources to explore available relocation benefits.

5. Alternative University-Affiliated Housing Options

- Munger Graduate Residences – Primarily for graduate students, but sometimes available to faculty/postdocs.
- SabbaticalHomes.com – A platform for academic professionals to find furnished housing.

- Colleague Housing Network – Some faculty and staff offer short-term rentals to new employees.

Key Takeaways

- Northwood Community Apartments is the primary university-affiliated housing for faculty/staff.
- Short-term housing options are available through U-M Guest Housing and hotel partnerships.
- The Off-Campus Housing Office provides rental resources for faculty and staff.
- Relocation assistance may be available through individual U-M departments.

Faculty and staff should apply early, as university-affiliated housing is limited and fills quickly.

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6. Essential Services Setup

6.1. Utilities and Internet Providers

Ann Arbor's primary utility providers vary by service type and housing location.

- Electricity & Natural Gas – DTE Energy (www.dteenergy.com)
 - Provides electricity and natural gas for most Ann Arbor properties.
 - New customers can start service online or by calling (800) 477-4747.
 - Average monthly costs: \$50–\$150, depending on unit size and season.
 - Budget billing available to spread seasonal cost fluctuations evenly.
- Water & Sewer – City of Ann Arbor Water Utilities (www.a2gov.org)
 - Water, sewer, and stormwater services provided by the city.
 - Service can be set up through the Ann Arbor Customer Service Center: (734) 794-6333.
 - Average monthly cost: \$30–\$80, based on usage.
- Trash & Recycling – City of Ann Arbor Solid Waste Services (www.a2gov.org/solidwaste)
 - Trash, recycling, and compost pickup provided weekly.
 - Service is included in property taxes or rental fees for most homes and apartments.

Internet & Cable Providers

Ann Arbor has multiple internet and cable providers, with fiber-optic, cable, and DSL options.

- Xfinity (Comcast) (www.xfinity.com)
 - Cable internet, TV, and phone service.
 - Speeds range from 100 Mbps to 1 Gbps.
 - Prices start around \$40/month for internet-only plans.
- AT&T Fiber (www.att.com)
 - Fiber-optic internet with speeds up to 5 Gbps in some areas.
 - Plans start at \$55/month.
- WOW! Internet (www.wowway.com)
 - Cable and fiber internet with competitive pricing.
 - Speeds up to 1 Gbps, with plans starting at \$30/month.
- Metronet Fiber (www.metronet.com)
 - Expanding fiber-optic service in Ann Arbor.
 - High-speed plans starting at \$50/month.
- Satellite Internet (Rural Areas) – Starlink, HughesNet, and Viasat are available in areas outside Ann Arbor where fiber or cable service is limited.

Getting Set Up Quickly

- Most rental properties include water/sewer and trash services in the rent.
- Landlords or property managers may have preferred internet providers for certain buildings.
- Northwood Community Apartments include some utilities—residents should check their lease for details.

- Faculty and staff moving into a home should set up electric, gas, and water services at least 3–5 days before move-in to avoid service delays.

6.2. Driver’s License and Vehicle Registration

Michigan Driver’s License

New residents must obtain a Michigan driver’s license within 30 days of establishing residency. The Michigan Secretary of State (SOS) office handles all licensing and vehicle registrations.

How to Obtain a Michigan Driver’s License

- Visit a Michigan Secretary of State (SOS) office (appointments available at www.michigan.gov/sos).
- Bring the following documents:
 - Proof of identity (passport or current driver’s license).
 - Proof of Michigan residency (utility bill, lease agreement, or bank statement).
 - Social Security Number (SSN) or proof of ineligibility if not applicable.
- Pass a vision test and have a new photograph taken.
- Out-of-state license holders may not need to take a written or road test if their license is valid.
- Pay a \$25 fee for a standard driver’s license (REAL ID-compliant version available at no extra charge with additional documentation).

Michigan State ID Option

- Those without a vehicle can apply for a Michigan state ID card instead of a driver’s license.
- The process is similar but does not require a driving test.

Vehicle Registration & Title Transfer

New residents must register their vehicle in Michigan immediately upon establishing residency.

Registration Requirements

- Visit a Michigan SOS office with:
 - Out-of-state vehicle title and registration.
 - Proof of Michigan No-Fault auto insurance (out-of-state insurance is not valid).
 - Valid driver’s license or state ID.
- Pay the required registration fee (varies by vehicle type, age, and weight).
- Receive Michigan license plates (temporary registration available if necessary).

Renewing Vehicle Registration

- Michigan vehicle registrations must be renewed annually, either online, by mail, or in person.
- Renewal notices are sent out before expiration, and fees vary based on vehicle age and type.

Parking Permits & University Regulations

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- City of Ann Arbor Parking – Residents in some areas may need a Residential Parking Permit (RPP), available through the Ann Arbor City Clerk’s Office (www.a2gov.org).
- University of Michigan Parking – Faculty and staff can apply for U-M parking permits through U-M Logistics, Transportation & Parking (ltp.umich.edu). Permit availability and pricing vary by lot and permit type.

Key Considerations

- Out-of-state insurance must be replaced with Michigan No-Fault insurance before registration.
- SOS offices in Ann Arbor and nearby cities may require appointments for faster service.
- International faculty and staff may be eligible for a Michigan driver’s license with additional visa documentation.
- Some Ann Arbor neighborhoods have parking restrictions, especially near campus.

For more details, visit the Michigan Secretary of State website: www.michigan.gov/sos.

6.3. Banking and Financial Services

Major Banks & Credit Unions

Ann Arbor offers a variety of banking options, including national banks, local credit unions, and online banking services.

National Banks (**Full-service branches with ATMs across the city**)

- Chase Bank – Multiple locations near campus and downtown.
- Bank of America – Branch on Main St. with full-service banking.
- Wells Fargo – ATM locations but limited branch services.
- PNC Bank – U-M’s preferred banking partner, with student and faculty financial services.

Local Banks & Credit Unions

- University of Michigan Credit Union (UMCU) – Special accounts for U-M faculty and staff, low-fee banking, and loan services (www.umcu.org).
- Lake Trust Credit Union – Competitive rates for auto and home loans.
- Huntington Bank – Midwest-focused bank with a strong Ann Arbor presence.

Setting Up a Bank Account

To open an account, visit a branch or apply online with:

- Valid government-issued ID (passport or driver’s license).
- Proof of address (lease agreement or utility bill).
- Social Security Number (SSN) or Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN).

International Faculty & Staff Banking Options

- U-M Credit Union and PNC Bank offer accounts for non-U.S. residents with a valid visa and U-M affiliation.
- Some banks accept a passport and I-94 form instead of an SSN.
- Wire transfer services are available at most banks for international transactions.

Online & Mobile Banking

- Most banks offer mobile banking apps with check deposit, bill pay, and budgeting tools.
- Ally Bank and Chime offer fully online banking with high-interest savings accounts.

Credit Cards & Loans

- Faculty and staff relocating to Ann Arbor may qualify for low-interest credit cards and personal loans through UMCU or major banks.
- Auto loans and mortgages are available through banks and credit unions, with special financing options for U-M employees.

Financial Planning & Investment Services

- TIAA & Fidelity – U-M partners with these firms for retirement planning and 403(b) contributions.
- Local financial advisors offer investment guidance, tax planning, and wealth management services.

Key Considerations

- Some banks require a minimum balance to avoid monthly fees.
- International faculty may need an ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number) to open certain accounts.
- Direct deposit for U-M payroll is available—faculty should provide their banking details through Wolverine Access.

For more details, visit U-M Payroll Services (www.finance.umich.edu/finops/payroll) or check with individual banks.

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7. Campus and Workplace Essentials

7.1. University Facilities and Offices

U-M ID Card (Mcard)

The Mcard serves as an official University of Michigan identification card, providing access to campus buildings, libraries, dining facilities, and transportation.

- Faculty and staff can obtain an Mcard at the Key Office (525 Church St.) or designated U-M ID stations.
- Required documents: University employment verification and a government-issued ID.
- Mcards also offer discounts at local businesses and transit benefits.

Campus Navigation & Transportation

- U-M Blue Bus System – Free campus bus service connecting Central, North, and Medical Campuses. Real-time tracking available via the Magic Bus app.
- Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority (TheRide) – Public transit with U-M employee discounts; routes extend beyond campus.
- Parking Permits – Faculty and staff can apply for parking through U-M Logistics, Transportation & Parking (ltp.umich.edu).
- Bike Lanes & Rentals – U-M offers bike racks, lockers, and the Blue Bikes rental program for easy campus commuting.

Key Offices & Services

- Human Resources (HR) – Manages payroll, benefits, and onboarding. Location: Wolverine Tower, 3003 S. State St.
- IT Support (ITS Help Desk) – Provides tech assistance, Wi-Fi setup, and security services. Contact: (734) 764-4357 or its.umich.edu.
- Faculty & Staff Counseling (FASCCO) – Offers wellness and work-life balance support. Location: 2072 Administrative Services Building.
- Campus Safety & Security (DPSS) – 24/7 campus safety services, including emergency alerts and building access. Contact: (734) 763-1131 or dpss.umich.edu.

Libraries & Workspaces

- Hatcher Graduate Library – Largest U-M library with faculty research support.
- Duderstadt Center – North Campus facility with tech labs, study spaces, and 3D printing.
- Weiser Hall Faculty Workspaces – Shared office and collaboration areas for faculty.
- Ann Arbor District Libraries: 5 locations with excellent events and activities for all ages.

Dining & Campus Conveniences

- U-M Dining Halls & Cafés – Available for faculty with Mcard access. Popular spots include Michigan Union, Pierpont Commons, and Medical Campus eateries.
- Recreational Facilities – Faculty memberships available for U-M Rec Sports, including the CCRB, NCRB, and IM Building.
- Childcare & Family Resources – U-M offers early childhood education centers, backup childcare, and family-friendly policies through HR Services.

Key Considerations

- Faculty should activate their U-M email and Duo two-factor authentication before accessing internal systems.
- Parking permits and workspace access often require advance application.
- Most campus offices operate Monday–Friday, 8 AM–5 PM, with some services offering extended hours.

For more details, visit www.umich.edu or check specific department websites.

7.2. IT and Administrative Support

U-M Information & Technology Services (ITS)

U-M's ITS Help Desk provides faculty and staff with technical support for email, Wi-Fi, software, and security services.

- Help Desk Contact: (734) 764-HELP (764-4357) | its.umich.edu
- Walk-in Support: Shapiro Library (Central Campus) & Duderstadt Center (North Campus)
- U-M Wi-Fi (MWireless, eduroam, and MGuest): Secure campus-wide internet access for faculty and staff.

U-M Email & Cloud Services

- Faculty receive a U-M Google email account (@umich.edu) with access to Google Drive, Calendar, and Meet.
- Microsoft Office 365 is available for faculty at no cost through ITS.
- Duo Two-Factor Authentication is required for accessing most U-M systems, including Wolverine Access and payroll services.

Device & Software Support

- Computer & Software Discounts – Faculty can purchase discounted Apple, Dell, and Lenovo products through the Tech Shop (Michigan Union & Pierpont Commons).
- Remote Access & VPN (Virtual Private Network) – U-M's VPN allows secure off-campus access to university resources.
- Classroom & Research Technology Support – Faculty can request tech support for lecture halls, online courses, and research computing.

Administrative Support

U-M Human Resources (HR) & Payroll Services

- HR Contact: (734) 615-2000 | hr.umich.edu
- Payroll & Benefits: Faculty can manage direct deposit, tax forms, and retirement contributions via Wolverine Access.
- Work Authorization & Visa Services – International faculty can seek assistance through U-M's International Center.

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Facilities & Office Support

- **Keys & Building Access:** Faculty can request office keys and card access through their department's administrative office.
- **Mail & Package Services:** Campus mail services operate between university buildings, and USPS, FedEx, and UPS have locations nearby.
- **Printing & Copying:** U-M offers MPrint for faculty, with networked printers and copy centers available across campus.

Faculty Governance & Support Offices

- **Office of the Provost** – Oversees academic policies, faculty appointments, and tenure.
- **Center for Research on Learning & Teaching (CRLT)** – Provides teaching resources and faculty development programs.
- **Office of Research (UMOR)** – Supports faculty grant applications and research funding.

Key Considerations

- New faculty must activate their U-M account and enroll in Duo authentication before accessing payroll and HR services.
- ITS offers personalized tech support for faculty at designated campus locations.
- Administrative offices operate Monday–Friday, 8 AM–5 PM; some services are available remotely.

For more details, visit www.umich.edu or check individual department websites.

7.3. Parking and Transportation Options

University of Michigan Parking Permits

Faculty and staff can apply for parking permits through U-M Logistics, Transportation & Parking (LTP). Parking is available on a tiered system based on employment status, location, and permit type.

Permit Types & Costs (2025 Rates Estimated)

- **Gold Permit (\$1,100/year)** – Closest to campus buildings, limited availability.
- **Blue Permit (\$780/year)** – Access to central campus and medical center parking.
- **Yellow Permit (\$312/year)** – Peripheral parking with shuttle service to campus.
- **Orange Permit (\$163/year)** – Economy parking for remote lots with bus service.
- **Daily Parking Passes (\$3–\$10/day)** – Available for occasional use.
- **Motorcycle Permits (\$75/year)** – Designated motorcycle parking.

Application & Availability

- Faculty and staff can apply online at ltp.umich.edu or visit the LTP Office (523 S. Division St.).
- Gold and Blue permits have waitlists due to high demand.
- Some U-M departments offer parking subsidies for faculty.

Public Transportation

U-M Blue Bus (Free for Faculty & Staff)

- Serves Central, North, and Medical Campuses with frequent service.
- Real-time tracking available via the Magic Bus app.

TheRide (Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority - AAATA)

- Public bus system serving Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and surrounding areas.
- U-M employees receive free rides with an Mcard on Routes 4 & 5.
- Monthly bus passes available for \$60/month.

Michigan Flyer (Airport Shuttle)

- Shuttle service between Ann Arbor and Detroit Metro Airport (DTW).
- Tickets cost \$15–\$22 one way and can be booked online.

Biking & Alternative Transportation

Bike & Scooter Rentals

- Blue Bikes – U-M bike rental program for short-term use.
- Spin & Bird Scooters – App-based electric scooters available on campus.

Bike Parking & Storage

- Over 4,000 bike racks across U-M's campuses.
- Indoor bike storage available at select locations for a small fee.
- Showers & lockers available for bike commuters at U-M recreation centers.

Carpool & Vanpool Programs

- U-M's GreenRide program offers carpool matching and discounted parking permits.
- Enterprise Vanpool provides shared rides for faculty commuting from outside Ann Arbor.

Key Considerations

- **Parking permits sell out quickly** – Apply as early as possible.
- Car-free commuting is feasible due to extensive bus, bike, and walking options.
- U-M provides emergency ride-home services for faculty using sustainable commuting methods.

For more information, visit ltp.umich.edu.

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8. Navigating Ann Arbor and Beyond

8.1 Commuting to Campus and Nearby Cities

Commuting to the University of Michigan

Driving & Parking

- Campus Parking Permits – U-M offers Gold, Blue, Yellow, and Orange parking permits for faculty and staff.
- Downtown & Campus Parking Garages – Ann Arbor has public parking garages with rates of \$2/hour, daily max \$28.
- Park-and-Ride Lots – Free parking at designated lots with bus service to campus.
- Traffic Considerations – Peak congestion occurs 7:30–9:00 AM and 4:00–6:00 PM, especially on US-23, I-94, and M-14.

Public Transit Options

- U-M Blue Bus – Free for faculty and staff, connects Central, North, and Medical Campuses.
- TheRide (AAATA) – Ann Arbor’s public transit system, offering free rides on Routes 4 & 5 with an Mcard.
- Commuter Express Buses – Park-and-Ride locations allow commuting from areas like Plymouth, Chelsea, and Saline.
- Michigan Flyer – Shuttle to Detroit Metro Airport (DTW) with fares from \$15–\$22 one way.

Commuting from Nearby Cities

Detroit (40–50 minutes, 44 miles)

- Driving – Via M-14 or I-94, traffic congestion is common during peak hours.
- Public Transit – No direct commuter train; options include Michigan Flyer to DTW, then SMART buses.

Ypsilanti (15–20 minutes, 8 miles)

- Driving – Accessible via Washtenaw Ave (M-17) or I-94.
- Public Transit – TheRide Routes 3, 4, and 5 connect Ypsilanti to Ann Arbor.
- Biking – The Border-to-Border Trail offers a bike-friendly commute.

Dexter (15–25 minutes, 10 miles)

- Driving – Accessible via Dexter-Ann Arbor Rd or I-94.
- Park-and-Ride – Commuters can park at Baker Rd Park-and-Ride lot and take TheRide.

Saline (20–30 minutes, 11 miles)

- Driving – Via Ann Arbor-Saline Rd.
- Public Transit – Limited bus service, but some carpooling options available.

Plymouth/Canton (25–35 minutes, 20 miles)

- Driving – Via M-14 or I-275 to US-23.
- Public Transit – No direct bus routes, but vanpools are available.

Chelsea (25–40 minutes, 16 miles)

- Driving – Via I-94 or Jackson Rd.
- Public Transit – Limited public transit, but Enterprise Vanpool is an option.

Alternative Commuting Options

Carpool & Vanpool

- U-M GreenRide – Carpool matching system for faculty with discounted parking permits.
- Enterprise Vanpool – Shared rides for long-distance commuters with employer subsidies.

Biking & Walking

- Bike Lanes & Trails – Ann Arbor is bike-friendly, with designated bike lanes and paths like the Border-to-Border Trail.
- Bike Parking & Showers – Available at U-M buildings and Rec Sports centers.

Rideshare Services

- Uber & Lyft – Widely available in Ann Arbor and surrounding areas.
- Zipcar – Car-sharing service for short-term rentals, with U-M campus locations.

Key Considerations

- Traffic congestion is heaviest during rush hours – Plan for delays on major highways.
- Public transit is reliable within Ann Arbor – Best for those living near bus routes.
- U-M faculty can access commuter benefits – Discounted parking, transit passes, and rideshare options.
- Car-free commuting is feasible – Many faculty bike, walk, or use TheRide and Blue Bus services.

For more details, visit ltp.umich.edu or theride.org.

8.2 Bike-Friendly and Walkable Areas

Biking in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor is consistently ranked as one of Michigan’s most bike-friendly cities, offering dedicated bike lanes, shared-use paths, and bike parking across the city and campus.

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Bike Lanes & Paths

- Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) – A scenic 35-mile trail connecting Ann Arbor to Ypsilanti, Dexter, and Chelsea.
- William & Division Bike Lanes – Protected bike lanes running through downtown Ann Arbor.
- North Campus & Fuller Road Bike Routes – Dedicated paths connecting North Campus, the Medical Center, and Central Campus.
- Washtenaw Avenue Corridor – Bike lanes and shared paths between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti.

Bike Parking & Storage

- Over 4,000 bike racks on U-M campuses and in downtown Ann Arbor.
- Indoor bike storage & lockers available at select university buildings.
- Bike repair stations located at Duderstadt Center, Michigan Union, and Gallup Park.

Bike Rental & Sharing Programs

- Blue Bikes – U-M’s bike rental program, available by the semester or for short-term use.
- Spin & Bird Scooters – App-based electric scooters available throughout campus and downtown.
- Local Bike Shops – Ann Arbor has multiple bike shops for purchases, repairs, and rentals, including:
 - Common Cycle (Community Bike Co-op) – Free bike repair and education workshops.
 - Wheels in Motion & Ann Arbor Cyclery – Full-service bike sales and repairs.

Winter Biking Considerations

- The city plows some bike paths, but winter tires or fat-tire bikes are recommended.
- U-M offers indoor bike storage to protect bikes from snow and ice.

Walkability in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor is one of the most walkable cities in Michigan, with pedestrian-friendly streets, crosswalk signals, and car-free zones near campus.

Highly Walkable Areas

- Downtown Ann Arbor (Main St. & State St.) – Restaurants, cafés, and shops all within a short walk from U-M’s Central Campus.
- Kerrytown District – Historic area with walkable markets, boutiques, and the Ann Arbor Farmers Market.
- University of Michigan Campus – Easily walkable with well-maintained sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, and car-free areas like the Diag.
- Gallup Park & Nichols Arboretum – Scenic walking trails along the Huron River.

Pedestrian Safety Features

- Flashing crosswalk signals at major intersections (Liberty, State, Huron, Washtenaw).
- Car-free pedestrian zones in parts of campus.
- Winter sidewalk maintenance – The city prioritizes snow clearing in high-traffic walking areas.

Key Considerations

- Ann Arbor is bike-friendly, but some streets have heavy **traffic** – Use designated bike lanes where available.
- Most downtown areas and U-M campuses are highly walkable – No car needed for daily activities.
- Winter walking and biking can be challenging – Plan for icy sidewalks and snow-covered bike paths.
- U-M provides commuter benefits for cyclists – Faculty can access showers, lockers, and secure bike parking.

For more information, visit b2btrail.org or ltp.umich.edu.

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9. Schools and Education

9.1. Public and Private School Options

Ann Arbor offers top-rated public schools, private schools, and charter schools, making it an attractive location for faculty and staff with children.

Public Schools (Ann Arbor Public Schools - AAPS)

The Ann Arbor Public Schools (AAPS) district serves over 17,000 students and is one of the highest-rated districts in Michigan.

- Website: www.a2schools.org
- Student-Teacher Ratio: ~17:1
- Graduation Rate: ~93%
- Curriculum: AP, IB, STEM, and arts-focused programs

Top-Ranked Public Schools in Ann Arbor

- **Elementary Schools:**
 - Burns Park Elementary (Central Ann Arbor)
 - King Elementary (Northeast Ann Arbor)
 - Wines Elementary (West Ann Arbor)
- **Middle Schools:**
 - Tappan Middle School (East Ann Arbor)
 - Clague Middle School (Northeast Ann Arbor)
 - Slauson Middle School (Downtown Ann Arbor)
- **High Schools:**
 - Huron High School – Strong STEM and IB programs
 - Pioneer High School – AP courses, music, and athletics
 - Skyline High School – AP Courses, Project-based learning and Magnet programs
 - Community High School – Alternative, small-school model with flexible learning

Public School Enrollment & Residency Requirements

- Families must reside within AAPS district boundaries to enroll.
- Proof of residency (lease, mortgage, or utility bill) required.
- School of Choice may be available for select grades based on openings.

Charter and Magnet Schools

Ann Arbor has several charter and magnet schools offering specialized curricula.

- Ann Arbor Open School – Project-based learning, K–8.
- Washtenaw International High School & Middle Academy – IB curriculum, ranked among Michigan’s top high schools.
- Honey Creek Community School – Small, progressive K–8 charter school with a hands-on curriculum.

Private Schools in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor has highly rated private schools offering secular, religious, and Montessori-based education.

Top Private Schools

- Greenhills School (Grades 6–12) – College prep, rigorous academics, and small class sizes.
- Emerson School (Grades K–8) – Project-based learning, gifted education focus.
- St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School (Grades K–8) – Faith-based curriculum, strong academics.
- Rudolf Steiner School (PreK–12) – Waldorf-based education with arts and experiential learning.
- Clonlara School (K–12) – Flexible, hybrid homeschooling programs.

Private School Tuition

- Annual tuition varies from \$10,000 to \$30,000+, depending on grade level and school.
- Financial aid and scholarships available at many institutions.

Higher Education & Special Programs

- University of Michigan – Offers faculty families access to research-based educational resources.
- Washtenaw Community College (WCC) – Affordable dual enrollment and continuing education options.
- Early College Alliance (ECA) – High school students can earn college credit at Eastern Michigan University.

Key Considerations

- AAPS is highly rated, but some schools have limited capacity – Apply early if considering School of Choice.
- Private schools have waitlists – Admissions may require entrance exams or interviews.
- Public schools follow a neighborhood-based system – Housing location determines school assignment.
- Charter and magnet schools require separate applications – Enrollment is often lottery-based.

For more details, visit www.a2schools.org or individual school websites.

9.2. Higher Education Institutions and Continuing Education

Ann Arbor and the surrounding region offer a range of higher education institutions, continuing education programs, and professional development opportunities for faculty, staff, and their families.

University of Michigan (U-M)

As a top-ranked public university, the University of Michigan provides opportunities for continuing education, research collaboration, and faculty development.

- Website: www.umich.edu
- Enrollment: ~50,000 students
- Top-Ranked Programs: Engineering, Business, Medicine, Law, and Public Policy

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- Continuing Education:
 - Lifelong Learning Program – Non-credit courses for personal and professional development.
 - Faculty & Staff Tuition Support – Some departments offer tuition reimbursement or tuition benefits for employees.

Professional Development for Faculty & Staff

- Center for Research on Learning & Teaching (CRLT) – Offers workshops on teaching strategies, technology, and pedagogy.
- U-M Office of Research (UMOR) – Provides funding and grant-writing support for faculty research.
- Michigan Online – Free or low-cost online courses, including U-M MOOCs on Coursera and edX.

Washtenaw Community College (WCC)

A two-year community college offering affordable classes, workforce training, and transfer pathways to U-M.

- Website: www.wccnet.edu
- Location: 10 minutes from U-M's campus
- Programs:
 - Associate degrees & transfer programs
 - Career training in IT, healthcare, and business
 - Dual enrollment for high school students
- Tuition:
 - ~\$100/credit for in-district residents
 - Tuition discounts for U-M employees and families

Eastern Michigan University (EMU)

Located in nearby Ypsilanti (15 minutes from U-M), EMU offers graduate programs, teacher certification, and research opportunities.

- Website: www.emich.edu
- Popular Programs: Education, Business, Health Sciences, and Technology
- Continuing Education:
 - Online and evening courses for working professionals
 - Specialized teacher certification programs

Continuing Education & Lifelong Learning

Michigan Language Center (MLC)

- Website: www.englishclasses.com
- English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for international faculty, students, and families.

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at U-M

- Website: www.olli-umich.org
- Non-credit courses, lectures, and cultural programs for adults 50+.

Online & Professional Certifications

- U-M Coursera & edX Courses – Free and paid online courses in business, data science, healthcare, and more.
- Michigan Works! Southeast – Workforce development and career transition support.
- Ann Arbor District Library (AADL) Workshops – Free educational workshops, lectures, and skill-building classes.

Key Considerations

- U-M employees may qualify for tuition benefits – Check with HR for eligibility.
- WCC and EMU offer affordable alternatives to traditional university programs.
- Continuing education is available in multiple formats – online, evening, and part-time programs cater to working professionals.

For more details, visit umich.edu, wccnet.edu, or emich.edu.

9.3 Childcare and Early Learning Centers

Ann Arbor offers a variety of childcare options, including university-affiliated childcare centers, private daycare providers, Montessori schools, and in-home childcare services. Many programs have wait lists, so early enrollment is recommended.

University of Michigan Childcare Options

U-M provides priority childcare enrollment for faculty, staff, and students through its affiliated early learning centers.

U-M Early Childhood Education Centers

- Towsley Children's House (Central Campus)
- North Campus Children's Center (North Campus)
- Health System Children's Center (Near U-M Medical Center)
- Children's Centers at Wolverine Tower (South Campus)
- Website: hr.umich.edu/childcare

Features & Eligibility

- Programs for infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children (ages 6 weeks–5 years).
- Highly trained educators and low student-teacher ratios.
- Full-time and part-time options, with priority for U-M faculty and staff.
- Tuition varies by program, with financial aid available for eligible families.

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Backup Childcare & Emergency Care

- U-M Kids Kare at Home – Provides subsidized in-home childcare for U-M employees during work-related emergencies.
- Bright Horizons Backup Care – U-M-affiliated program offering short-term childcare solutions.

Private Childcare Centers & Preschools

Ann Arbor has numerous private childcare centers offering full-day, part-time, and Montessori-based programs.

Top-Rated Childcare & Preschool Centers

- Annie’s Children’s Center (Multiple Locations) – Infant through preschool programs.
- Gretchen’s House (Several Locations) – Play-based, NAEYC-accredited childcare.
- St. Paul Early Childhood Center – Christian-based early learning for ages 2–5.
- Children’s Creative Center – Small class sizes, play-based learning.
- Apple Playschools – Progressive, multilingual programs with an emphasis on diversity.
- Daycroft Montessori School – Montessori curriculum for preschool and early elementary.

Tuition & Availability

- Full-time daycare: \$1,200–\$2,200 per month, depending on age and program.
- Part-time and half-day programs available at select centers.
- Many private centers have waitlists of 6–12 months, so early application is advised.

In-Home & Family Childcare Providers

Licensed home-based childcare options offer smaller group sizes and flexible hours.

- Michigan Department of Licensing & Regulatory Affairs (LARA) provides a searchable database of licensed home childcare providers: www.michigan.gov/lara.
- Costs range from \$800–\$1,500 per month, often lower than center-based care.

Preschool & Pre-K Programs

Ann Arbor offers publicly funded and private preschool programs for early childhood education.

Free & Low-Cost Preschool Programs

- Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) – Free preschool for income-eligible families.
- Head Start Washtenaw County – Federally funded early learning program for low-income families.
- Ann Arbor Public Schools Young Fives Program – A bridge between preschool and kindergarten.

Private Preschool Options

- Montessori Programs: Daycroft, Allen Creek, and Emerson School.

- Faith-Based Preschools: St. Francis, Genesis Christian Academy.
- Play-Based Learning Centers: Gretchen’s House, Apple Playschools.

Key Considerations

- University childcare centers fill quickly – Faculty and staff should apply early.
- Backup care services are available for U-M employees through Kids Kare and Bright Horizons.
- Montessori and private preschools have varied tuition rates – Some offer financial aid or scholarships.
- Public preschool programs have income and age requirements – Early application is recommended.

For more details, visit hr.umich.edu/childcare or a2schools.org.

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10. Community, Lifestyle, and Recreation

10.1. Local Shopping, Dining, and Entertainment

Ann Arbor offers a vibrant mix of shopping, dining, arts, and entertainment, catering to a diverse university community.

Shopping in Ann Arbor

Downtown & Local Boutiques

- Kerrytown Market & Shops – Home to Ann Arbor Farmers Market, artisan shops, and specialty food stores.
- Nickels Arcade – Historic shopping corridor featuring bookstores, boutiques, and specialty gift shops.
- State Street & Main Street Districts – Independent shops offering fashion, home goods, and souvenirs.

Grocery Stores & Specialty Markets

- People’s Food Co-op – Organic, locally sourced groceries and bulk foods.
- Plum Market – High-end grocery store with a focus on fresh, natural foods.
- Trader Joe’s & Whole Foods – Popular for organic and gourmet selections.
- Argus Farm Stop – Year-round farmers market-style grocery store supporting local farmers.
- H-Mart & Tsai Grocery – Asian markets with international ingredients.
- Euro Market & Mediterranean Market – European and Middle Eastern specialty food shops.
- Meijers, Kroger and Aldi

Shopping Centers & Malls

- Briarwood Mall – Home to major retailers like Apple, Macy’s, and Lululemon.
- Arbor Hills Shopping Center – Outdoor shopping area with Anthropologie, Madewell, and luxury retailers.
- Meijer, Kroger, & Target – Large supermarkets with everyday essentials.

Dining in Ann Arbor

Top-Rated Restaurants

Ann Arbor is a culinary hot spot, with a mix of local, global, and fine-dining experiences.

- Zingerman’s Delicatessen – Famous for gourmet sandwiches and baked goods.
- Sava’s – Modern American cuisine with a great brunch menu.
- The Chop House – Upscale steakhouse with an extensive wine list.
- Frita Batidos – Cuban street food-inspired burgers and milkshakes.
- Mani Osteria & Bar – Highly rated Italian food and wood-fired pizza.
- Taste Kitchen – Farm-to-table fine dining.
- Miss Kim – Korean-inspired small plates from the Zingerman’s family.

Casual & Late-Night Eats

- Fleetwood Diner – 24-hour greasy spoon famous for its hippie hash.
- Blank Slate Creamery – Locally made ice cream with seasonal flavors.
- Jerusalem Garden – Affordable and authentic Middle Eastern food.
- Crazy Jim’s Blimpy Burger – Classic build-your-own burger joint.
- No Thai! – A local favorite for quick Thai food.

Vegetarian & Vegan Dining

- The Lunch Room – 100% vegan café in Kerrytown.
- Seva – Vegetarian comfort food with creative, healthy dishes.

International Cuisine

- Tomukun Noodle Bar – Highly rated for ramen and Korean BBQ.
- Cardamom – Authentic Indian food with modern touches.
- Ayse’s Turkish Café – Cozy, family-owned restaurant serving Turkish specialties.

Arts, Culture & Entertainment

Live Music & Performing Arts

- Hill Auditorium – Hosts major concerts, UMS performances, and classical music.
- Michigan Theater – Historic theater featuring indie films and live performances.
- The Ark – Intimate venue known for folk, jazz, and acoustic concerts.
- Blind Pig – A legendary music venue for local and national bands.

Museums & Galleries

- University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA) – One of the largest university art museums in the U.S.
- Kelsey Museum of Archaeology – Features artifacts from ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt.
- Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum – Interactive science exhibits, great for kids.
- Exhibit Museum of Natural History – Home to dinosaur fossils and planetarium shows.

Festivals & Annual Events

- Ann Arbor Art Fair (July) – One of the largest outdoor art fairs in the U.S.
- Ann Arbor Film Festival (March) – Celebrating independent and experimental films.
- Top of the Park (June–July) – Free outdoor movies, concerts, and food vendors.
- Kerrytown Book Festival (September) – Highlights local and national authors.
- Hash Bash (April) – A famous Ann Arbor tradition supporting cannabis reform.

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Key Considerations

- Downtown Ann Arbor is walkable, with many restaurants and shops near campus.
- Farmers markets and local food co-ops offer fresh, locally sourced produce.
- The city has a strong arts and live music scene, with year-round performances.
- Dining options are diverse, with many vegetarian, vegan, and international cuisines.

For more details, visit visitannarbor.org.

10.2. Parks, Outdoor Activities, and Fitness Centers

Parks & Outdoor Activities

Ann Arbor is known for its expansive park system, nature trails, and outdoor recreation opportunities. With over 160 parks, the city offers everything from hiking and kayaking to winter sports.

Popular Parks & Nature Areas

- Nichols Arboretum ("The Arb") – 123-acre preserve with scenic trails, gardens, and riverfront paths.
- Gallup Park – 69-acre park along the Huron River with kayaking, canoeing, and fishing.
- Matthaei Botanical Gardens – U-M's free conservatory and outdoor gardens with nature trails.
- Bird Hills Nature Area – Largest hiking-only park in Ann Arbor, with hilly wooded trails.
- Waterworks Park & Bandemer Park – Great for disc golf, birdwatching, and picnic spots.
- County Farm Park – Features a children's farm-themed playground and walking trails.
- Argo Park – Best for kayaking, paddleboarding, and tubing along the Argo Cascades.
- Lillie Park – Wooded trails, a fishing pond, and open fields for walking and running.

Water Activities & Kayaking

- Argo & Gallup Canoe Liveries – Rent kayaks, canoes, stand-up paddleboards, and tubes.
- Huron River Water Trail – A 104-mile scenic paddling route through Washtenaw County.
- Fishing & Boating – Popular spots at Gallup Park, Barton Pond, and Ford Lake.

Hiking & Biking Trails

- Border-to-Border Trail (B2B) – 35-mile paved trail connecting Ann Arbor to nearby cities.
- Dixon Woods & Scio Woods Preserve – Secluded nature trails just outside Ann Arbor.
- Waterloo State Recreation Area – 50,000-acre park with camping, hiking, and mountain biking.
- Rolling Hills Park – Great for hiking in summer and sledding in winter.

Winter Sports & Activities

- Buhr Park Outdoor Ice Rink – Open-air ice skating from November to March.
- Rolling Hills & Huron Hills Golf Course – Offers sledding and cross-country skiing in winter.

Fitness Centers & Gyms

Ann Arbor has a variety of fitness facilities, ranging from university recreation centers to boutique

gyms and yoga studios.

University of Michigan Recreation Centers (**Open to Faculty & Staff**)

- Central Campus Recreation Building (CCRB) – Features a large gym, weight rooms, pools, and fitness classes.
- North Campus Recreation Building (NCRB) – Newly renovated state-of-the-art facility with indoor courts, climbing wall, and strength training.
- Intramural Sports Building (IM Building) – Offers basketball courts, racquetball, and free weights.
- Membership: Faculty and staff can purchase memberships at discounted rates.

Local Gyms & Fitness Centers

- YMCA Ann Arbor – Full-service gym, pool, fitness classes, and childcare options.
- Planet Fitness – Affordable 24-hour gym with locations across Ann Arbor.
- Orangetheory Fitness – Group HIIT and cardio training sessions.
- Vie Fitness & Spa – High-end personal training, Pilates, and massage services.
- Burn Fitness – Local weightlifting and functional fitness gym.

Yoga & Specialty Fitness Studios

- A2 Yoga – Vinyasa and restorative yoga classes.
- The Barre Code – Strength and flexibility-focused barre workouts.
- Maven Fitness – Cycling and HIIT studio.
- Title Boxing Club – Kickboxing and boxing training.

Running Clubs & Community Sports

- Ann Arbor Track Club – Weekly group runs and training programs for marathons.
- Washtenaw Road Runners – Social running group with meetups at Gallup Park.
- Ann Arbor Ultimate (AAU) – Community ultimate frisbee league for all skill levels.
- Ann Arbor Soccer Association – Recreational and competitive adult soccer leagues.

Key Considerations

- Ann Arbor has year-round outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, paddling, and winter sports.
- University recreation facilities offer discounted memberships for faculty and staff.
- Boutique fitness studios and community sports leagues provide a range of exercise options.
- Many parks and trails connect to the Huron River, making outdoor recreation highly accessible.

For more details, visit a2gov.org/parks or recreports.umich.edu.

10.3. Cultural and Social Events in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor is a vibrant cultural hub, hosting year-round festivals, performing arts events, and community gatherings. From music and film to food and academic lectures, the city offers diverse

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experiences for residents, faculty, and visitors alike.

Annual Festivals & Major Events

Ann Arbor Art Fair (July)

- One of the largest outdoor art fairs in the U.S.
- Features over 1,000 artists, live music, and street performances.
- Held across Main Street, State Street, and South University areas.

Ann Arbor Film Festival (March)

- The oldest experimental film festival in North America (since 1963).
- Showcases independent, avant-garde, and documentary films.
- Hosted at Michigan Theater and other downtown venues.

Top of the Park & Ann Arbor Summer Festival (June–July)

- Outdoor entertainment series featuring live music, movies, food trucks, and performances.
- Free concerts and activities held at Ingalls Mall (Central Campus).

Kerrytown Book Festival (September)

- Celebrates literature and local authors.
- Features book signings, author talks, and publishing workshops.
- Hosted in the Kerrytown District and Ann Arbor Public Library.

Hash Bash (April)

- A longstanding pro-cannabis legalization event held on the U-M Diag.
- Features music, speakers, and advocacy organizations.

Ann Arbor Folk Festival (January)

- Two-day concert featuring local and national folk musicians.
- Hosted at Hill Auditorium, organized by The Ark.

Cider & Donut Fest (October)

- A celebration of Michigan's fall traditions, featuring local cider mills and bakeries.
- Held at various downtown Ann Arbor locations.

Detroit Jazz Festival (Labor Day Weekend)

- One of the largest free jazz festivals in the world.
- While not in Ann Arbor, it's a popular event for residents (45-minute drive to Detroit).

Performing Arts & Music

University Musical Society (UMS)

- World-class performances in classical music, dance, and theater.
- Hosts events at Hill Auditorium, Power Center, and Rackham Auditorium.
- Past performers include Yo-Yo Ma, the Berlin Philharmonic, and Alvin Ailey Dance Theater.

The Ark (Live Music Venue)

- Ann Arbor's premier folk, roots, and acoustic music venue.
- Hosts 400+ live performances annually.

Michigan Theater & State Theatre

- Historic theaters showing independent films, concerts, and classic movie screenings.
- Home to live talks, comedy shows, and community film series.

Performance Network Theatre

- Local professional theater company showcasing contemporary plays and classic productions.

Hill Auditorium

- U-M's premier concert venue, hosting symphonies, choirs, and global music performances.

Cultural & Community Events

Ann Arbor Farmers Market (Year-Round, Saturdays & Wednesdays)

- One of Michigan's oldest farmers markets (since 1919).
- Offers fresh produce, baked goods, artisan crafts, and food trucks.

U-M Penny Stamps Speaker Series (Thursdays, Fall & Winter Terms)

- Free public lectures by renowned artists, designers, and creative thinkers.
- Hosted at Michigan Theater, featuring guests like Ai Weiwei and Marina Abramović.

Taste of Ann Arbor (June)

- Food festival featuring local restaurants and gourmet vendors.
- Hosted on Main Street, with live music and family-friendly activities.

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A2 Tech Trek (September)

- Celebrates Ann Arbor’s growing tech industry.
- Features startups, innovation showcases, and networking events.

Día de los Muertos Festival (November)

- Latino cultural celebration with traditional altars, dance, and storytelling.
- Hosted by Riverside Arts Center and Ann Arbor District Library.

Academic & Intellectual Events

U-M Campus Lectures & Panel Discussions

- Open to the public, featuring leading scholars, politicians, and industry experts.
- Hosted by U-M’s Ford School of Public Policy, LSA, and Law School.

TEDxUofM (March)

- Annual TEDx event, featuring U-M faculty, students, and guest speakers.
- Focuses on innovation, research, and social change.

U-M Museum Nights & Gallery Openings

- Free after-hours events at the University of Michigan Museum of Art (UMMA).
- Includes art tours, live performances, and artist talks.

Key Considerations

- Many cultural events are free or low-cost, especially those hosted by U-M.
- Downtown Ann Arbor and campus venues are the main hubs for performances and festivals.
- Seasonal events like the Ann Arbor Art Fair and Summer Festival draw large crowds—plan ahead for parking.
- U-M faculty and staff get discounted tickets for select music and theater performances.

For more details, visit annarbor.org/events or ums.org.

11. Family and Employment Resources

11.1. Spousal/Partner Employment Resources

The University of Michigan and Ann Arbor provide career support for spouses and partners of faculty and staff, helping with job placement, networking, and professional development.

University of Michigan Dual Career Program

The Dual Career Program assists spouses and partners of U-M faculty with job search guidance, networking, and career coaching.

- Website: hr.umich.edu/dual-career
- Eligibility: Available to spouses and partners of faculty with full-time tenure-track or executive-level positions.
- Services Offered:
 - Personalized career coaching for job searches.
 - Networking connections with U-M departments and local employers.
 - Resume and interview assistance.
 - Information on academic and non-academic job opportunities.

Job Opportunities in Ann Arbor & Southeast Michigan

Top Employers in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor has a strong job market, with opportunities in education, healthcare, technology, and business.

- University of Michigan – The largest employer in Ann Arbor, with jobs in administration, research, healthcare, and IT.
- Michigan Medicine – U-M’s healthcare system, hiring for medical, administrative, and research roles.
- Washtenaw Community College (WCC) & Eastern Michigan University (EMU) – Hiring for teaching, staff, and technical positions.
- Tech Industry & Startups – Companies like Duo Security (Cisco), KLA, and LLamasoft provide roles in software engineering, cybersecurity, and data science.
- Automotive & Engineering – Nearby Detroit offers positions at Ford, GM, and Stellantis.

Job Search Resources

- U-M Careers Portal: careers.umich.edu
- Ann Arbor SPARK (Economic Development & Job Board): annarborusa.org
- Washtenaw County Jobs: ewashtenaw.org
- LinkedIn Ann Arbor Jobs Board: Frequent postings for local positions in tech, education, and healthcare.

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Ann Arbor has a thriving startup community, with resources for entrepreneurs and remote workers.

- Ann Arbor SPARK – Provides grants, coworking space, and startup funding assistance.
- Centrepolis Accelerator – Supports tech startups and early-stage businesses.
- Michigan Small Business Development Center (SBDC) – Offers free business coaching and financial planning.

Coworking Spaces for Remote Work & Freelancers

- Workantile – Member-based coworking community in downtown Ann Arbor.
- Ann Arbor SPARK Central Innovation Center – Provides free startup consulting.
- Regus & Cahoots – Flexible office space with networking opportunities.

Work Authorization & Visa Support for International Spouses

For spouses and partners requiring work authorization, U-M's International Center offers visa assistance and employment resources.

- Common visa categories & employment options:
 - H-4 (Dependent Visa) – Spouses of H-1B visa holders can apply for work authorization (EAD) under certain conditions.
 - J-2 Visa Holders – Eligible to apply for work authorization (EAD) through USCIS.
 - F-2 Visa Holders – Cannot legally work but may volunteer or take classes.
- International Center Website: internationalcenter.umich.edu

Networking & Professional Organizations

Spouses and partners looking to expand their professional networks can join local business and professional groups.

- Huron Valley Women's Business Group – Supports women entrepreneurs and professionals.
- Ann Arbor Women's Networking Group – Career-focused events and mentorship.
- Ann Arbor Entrepreneurs Meetup – Startup-focused networking for business owners.
- SPARK Talent Meetup – Events connecting job seekers with hiring companies.

Key Considerations

- The U-M Dual Career Program is the best starting point for job-seeking spouses.
- Tech, healthcare, and education are the strongest job sectors in Ann Arbor.
- International spouses may need work authorization – Consult U-M's International Center early.
- Coworking spaces and remote work hubs provide great options for freelancers and remote professionals.

For more details, visit hr.umich.edu/dual-career or annarborusa.org.

11.2. Healthcare and Wellness Services

Ann Arbor offers world-class healthcare facilities, primary care providers, mental health services, and wellness resources for faculty, staff, and their families.

University of Michigan Health System (Michigan Medicine)

U-M's Michigan Medicine is consistently ranked among the top hospitals in the U.S., offering primary, specialty, and emergency care.

- Website: www.uofmhealth.org
- Main Campus Location: U-M Medical Center, 1500 E. Medical Center Dr.
- Specialties: Cancer care, cardiology, orthopedics, neurology, women's health, and pediatrics.
- Emergency Services: U-M Hospital has a Level 1 Trauma Center and 24/7 emergency care.

Primary & Specialty Care Clinics

U-M faculty and staff can access primary care providers (PCPs), internal medicine, and specialty clinics at:

- U-M Health Centers (Multiple Locations) – Briarwood, Brighton, Chelsea, and Northville.
- Taubman Center – Home to advanced specialty care in dermatology, cardiology, and gastroenterology.
- Domino's Farms Clinic – Offers family medicine, pediatrics, physical therapy, and integrative medicine.
- UHS (University Health Service) – Provides care for faculty, staff, and dependents.

U-M Employee Health Benefits

- U-M offers comprehensive health insurance plans for faculty and staff through Blue Care Network (BCN), Michigan Care, and PPO options.
- Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) and Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) are available.
- Preventive care, annual checkups, and mental health services are covered under most U-M health plans.

For benefits details, visit hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness.

Urgent Care & Emergency Services

For non-life-threatening medical issues, urgent care clinics provide faster, lower-cost alternatives to emergency rooms.

Top Urgent Care Centers in Ann Arbor

- U-M Health West Ann Arbor Urgent Care – 380 Parkland Plaza.
- IHA Urgent Care – Domino's Farms – Walk-in care for minor injuries and illnesses.
- St. Joseph Mercy Urgent Care – Part of Trinity Health, offering extended hours.

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Emergency Care

- U-M Hospital Emergency Room (Level 1 Trauma Center) – Best for critical or severe medical emergencies.
- St. Joseph Mercy Hospital ER – Alternative emergency room option east of downtown Ann Arbor.

Mental Health & Counseling Services

Mental wellness is a priority at U-M, with services available through university programs, private practices, and employee benefits.

U-M Faculty & Staff Counseling and Consultation Office (FASCCO)

- Confidential counseling for faculty, staff, and their families.
- Services include stress management, work-life balance support, and crisis intervention.
- Website: fascco.umich.edu

U-M Psychiatry & Psychological Services

- Comprehensive therapy and psychiatric care for anxiety, depression, and other conditions.
- Location: Rachel Upjohn Building, 4250 Plymouth Rd.
- Website: medicine.umich.edu/dept/psychiatry

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

- U-M employees have access to free short-term counseling and referrals for long-term mental health support.
- Teletherapy and virtual mental health services available through U-M's insurance plans.

Community Mental Health Resources

- Washtenaw County Community Mental Health (WCCMH) – Offers sliding-scale therapy and support groups.
- Ann Arbor Center for Mindfulness – Meditation and stress-reduction programs.

Dental & Vision Care

Dental Clinics

- U-M School of Dentistry – Offers general, pediatric, and specialty dental care at reduced rates.
- IHA Dental & Family Care – General family dentistry with multiple locations.
- Ann Arbor Smiles & Pure Dental – Highly rated private dental practices.

Vision Care

- U-M Kellogg Eye Center – Top-ranked ophthalmology and optometry care.
- Ann Arbor Optometry & SEE Eyewear – Private clinics offering glasses, contacts, and eye exams.

- U-M Vision Plan Benefits – Covers annual eye exams and discounts on glasses and contacts.

Wellness & Preventive Health Programs

U-M offers wellness incentives, preventive care, and fitness programs to support faculty and staff health.

MHealthy Wellness Program

- Free health coaching, fitness programs, and smoking cessation support.
- Flu shots and annual health screenings provided for U-M employees.
- Discounts on local gyms, weight-loss programs, and wellness activities.
- Website: hr.umich.edu/mhealthy

Fitness & Recreational Facilities

- U-M Recreational Sports – Offers gym memberships to faculty and staff at CCRB, NCRB, and IM Building.
- Ann Arbor YMCA – Full-service gym with wellness programs and family fitness classes.

Alternative & Integrative Medicine

- U-M Integrative Medicine (Domino's Farms) – Holistic treatments including acupuncture, nutrition counseling, and mindfulness therapy.
- Ann Arbor Wellness Collective – Yoga, massage therapy, and holistic health services.

Pharmacies & Prescription Services

U-M faculty and staff have access to on-campus and local pharmacies for prescriptions and medical supplies.

U-M Health Pharmacies

- Locations: Taubman Center, East Ann Arbor, and Brighton Health Center.
- Employees may receive reduced-cost prescriptions through U-M's pharmacy benefits.

Major Pharmacies in Ann Arbor

- CVS, Walgreens, and Rite Aid – Multiple locations for prescriptions and over-the-counter medication.
- Costco & Meijer Pharmacies – Offer discounted prescription medications.

Key Considerations

- Michigan Medicine is the top-ranked healthcare provider in Ann Arbor, offering world-class medical services.
- U-M employees receive comprehensive health benefits, including dental, vision, and mental health coverage.
- Urgent care centers are a faster, cost-effective option for minor injuries and illnesses.

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- Wellness and preventive care services are widely available, including MHealthy programs and integrative medicine.
- International faculty and staff should check U-M's international health insurance options for specific coverage details.

For more information, visit hr.umich.edu/benefits-wellness or uofmhealth.org.

11.3. Local Government and Support Services

Ann Arbor has a well-structured local government and a variety of support services for residents, covering public safety, community resources, and civic engagement.

City of Ann Arbor Government

Ann Arbor operates under a Council-Manager system, with an elected Mayor and City Council overseeing policies, and a City Administrator managing daily operations.

- Website: www.a2gov.org
- City Hall: 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104
- City Council Meetings: Held twice a month, open to the public.

Essential City Services

- Water & Utilities: Managed by the Ann Arbor Water Utility. Service setup at a2gov.org.
- Public Works: Includes waste collection, recycling, and road maintenance.
- Elections & Voter Registration: Residents can register to vote, request absentee ballots, and find polling locations at mVIC.sos.state.mi.us.

Public Safety & Emergency Services

Ann Arbor Police Department (AAPD)

- Non-Emergency: (734) 794-6920
- Emergency: 911
- Services: Community policing, crime prevention, and safety programs.

Ann Arbor Fire Department (AAFD)

- Fire & Rescue Services: Responds to fires, hazardous materials, and emergency medical situations.
- Fire Station Locations: Five stations across Ann Arbor.

Washtenaw County Sheriff's Office

- Provides law enforcement for areas outside Ann Arbor.
- Website: www.washtenaw.org/1121/Sheriff

Emergency Alerts & Disaster Preparedness

- Ann Arbor residents can sign up for A2 Alerts, a city-wide emergency notification system.
- Website: www.washtenaw.org/Alerts

Social & Community Support Services

Housing & Homeless Assistance

- Shelter Association of Washtenaw County (Delonis Center) – Provides emergency housing, case management, and job support.
- Ann Arbor Housing Commission (AAHC) – Offers affordable housing and rental assistance programs.
- Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley – Provides homeownership assistance and low-cost home repairs.

Food Assistance Programs

- Food Gatherers – Ann Arbor’s largest food bank and pantry network, distributing meals and groceries to residents in need.
- Ann Arbor Meals on Wheels – Delivers meals to seniors and homebound individuals.
- Ann Arbor Farmers Market & SNAP Benefits – Accepts food assistance programs like SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks.

Family & Child Support Services

- Washtenaw County Health Department (WCHD) – Provides maternal health services, WIC (Women, Infants & Children), and immunization clinics.
- Ozone House – Offers youth and family crisis intervention services.
- United Way of Washtenaw County – Provides financial assistance, career development, and housing resources.

Senior Citizen Services

- Ann Arbor Senior Center – Hosts fitness classes, social programs, and Medicare counseling.
- Jewish Family Services (JFS) of Washtenaw County – Offers transportation, home care, and community engagement for older adults.

Legal Aid & Immigrant Support

- Michigan Immigrant Rights Center (MIRC) – Provides legal assistance for immigrants and refugees.
- Legal Services of South Central Michigan (LSSCM) – Offers free legal aid for low-income residents in areas such as housing, family law, and public benefits.

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Public Transportation & Accessibility Services

TheRide (AAATA)

- Ann Arbor’s public bus system, serving Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Washtenaw County.
- Offers reduced fares for seniors, students, and individuals with disabilities.
- Website: www.theride.org

A-Ride Paratransit Service

- Provides door-to-door transportation for individuals with disabilities.
- Requires application approval through AAATA’s Accessibility Program.

SafeRide & Night Ride

- SafeRide (U-M Program) – Free late-night rides for faculty, staff, and students within campus areas.
- NightRide (AAATA) – Low-cost evening transportation service for city residents.

Community Engagement & Civic Organizations

Neighborhood Associations

- Ann Arbor has many active neighborhood groups that focus on community events, safety, and local advocacy.
- Examples:
 - Old West Side Association – Historic preservation & neighborhood events.
 - Burns Park Neighborhood Association – Family-friendly community with local initiatives.

Civic Engagement & Volunteering

- Volunteer Ann Arbor – Connects residents with local nonprofit organizations and community service opportunities.
- Ann Arbor League of Women Voters – Provides voter education and civic engagement programs.

Libraries & Community Centers

- Ann Arbor District Library (AADL) – Offers free community programs, technology access, and research resources.
- Neutral Zone (Teen Center) – Provides mentorship and creative arts programs for young adults.

Key Considerations

- Ann Arbor has strong public safety services, with dedicated police, fire, and emergency response teams.
- The city provides robust social services, including housing, food assistance, and senior care.
- Public transportation options are accessible, with discounts for students, seniors, and individuals with disabilities.
- Local government meetings are open to the public, and civic engagement opportunities are widely available.

For more details, visit www.a2gov.org or www.washtenaw.org.

12. Legal and Administrative Considerations

12.1. Understanding Local Taxes (Property, Income, Sales Tax)

Ann Arbor residents and University of Michigan faculty are subject to local, state, and federal taxes, including property tax, income tax, and sales tax. Understanding these obligations helps with budgeting, homeownership, and financial planning.

Income Tax in Ann Arbor & Michigan

State Income Tax (Michigan)

- Flat Tax Rate: 4.05% (2024 rate) on all taxable income.
- No Local (City) Income Tax in Ann Arbor – Unlike some Michigan cities, Ann Arbor does not levy a city income tax.
- U-M Faculty & Staff Withholding: Taxes are automatically deducted from U-M employee paychecks.

Filing State Income Tax

- Due Date: April 15 (same as federal tax deadline).
- E-Filing Available: Through the Michigan Department of Treasury (www.michigan.gov/taxes).
- Deductions & Credits:
 - Retirement income exclusions for eligible residents.
 - Homestead Property Tax Credit for qualifying low-income homeowners and renters.

Property Taxes in Ann Arbor

Washtenaw County & City of Ann Arbor Property Taxes

- Property taxes fund schools, public services, parks, and infrastructure.
- Average Effective Property Tax Rate in Ann Arbor: 1.68% of assessed home value.
- Due Dates:
 - Summer Property Tax Bills: Due July 31.
 - Winter Property Tax Bills: Due December 1.

Calculating Property Taxes

- Formula: Taxable Value × Millage Rate = Annual Tax Bill.
- Millage Rate in Ann Arbor (2024): ~45–50 mills (varies by district).
- Example: A home with a \$400,000 market value and a \$200,000 taxable value at 45 mills pays:
 - $\$200,000 \times 0.045 = \$9,000$ per year in property taxes.

Principal Residence Exemption (PRE)

- Homeowners who use their property as a primary residence qualify for a homestead exemption, reducing the school tax portion of their bill.
- Apply through the Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office.

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Appealing Property Assessments

- If property owners believe their home is over-assessed, they can file an appeal with the Ann Arbor Board of Review.
- Appeals must be filed in March during the annual assessment review period.

Where to Pay & More Information

- Ann Arbor City Treasurer's Office: 301 E. Huron St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104.
- Website: www.a2gov.org → Property Tax Lookup Tool.

Sales Tax in Ann Arbor & Michigan

Michigan State Sales Tax

- Flat Rate: 6% on most goods and services.
- No Local (City) Sales Tax in Ann Arbor – The state rate applies uniformly across Michigan.
- No Sales Tax on Groceries & Prescription Medications – Essential food items and medications are tax-exempt.

Additional Taxes & Fees

- Vehicle Sales Tax: 6% state tax on car purchases (paid at registration).
- Short-Term Lodging Tax: 5% tax on hotel stays in Washtenaw County.
- Liquor & Alcohol Tax:
 - Liquor: Additional specific per-gallon tax.
 - Beer & Wine: Lower excise tax compared to liquor.

Key Considerations

- Ann Arbor does not have a city income or sales tax, making it tax-favorable compared to other Michigan cities.
- Property taxes in Ann Arbor are higher than the state average due to school and municipal funding.
- U-M faculty and staff should review tax benefits, including homestead exemptions and state deductions.
- State income taxes must be filed annually, and property tax payments are split between summer and winter bills.

For more details, visit www.michigan.gov/taxes or www.washtenaw.org.

12.2. Tenant and Homeowner Rights in Michigan

Ann Arbor residents, whether renting or owning, are protected by Michigan state laws and local ordinances governing lease agreements, eviction processes, homeownership rights, and fair housing protections.

Tenant Rights in Michigan

Lease Agreements & Security Deposits

- Written leases are recommended for all rental agreements longer than one year.
- Security deposit limit: Landlords cannot charge more than 1.5 months' rent as a deposit.
- Deposit return timeline:
 - Landlords must return the deposit or provide a written explanation of deductions within 30 days after the lease ends.
 - Tenants have 7 days to dispute charges.

Lease Termination & Renewal

- Early Termination:
 - Tenants may terminate leases early without penalty in cases of:
 - Military deployment.
 - Domestic violence (with proper documentation).
 - Unsafe or uninhabitable living conditions (after written notice to the landlord).
- Month-to-Month Leases:
 - 30-day written notice is required before moving out or lease termination.
- Automatic Renewal:
 - Leases must specify if they automatically renew; otherwise, landlords cannot assume renewal.

Rent Increases & Late Fees

- No rent control laws in Michigan – Landlords can increase rent at the end of a lease term with proper notice.
- Required Notice for Rent Increases:
 - Month-to-Month Leases: 30 days' notice required.
 - Fixed-Term Leases: No increase allowed during the term unless specified in the lease.
- Late Fees:
 - Must be stated in the lease agreement and cannot be excessive.

Repairs & Maintenance Responsibilities

- Landlord Responsibilities:
 - Maintain safe, habitable, and code-compliant housing.
 - Ensure working plumbing, heating, and electrical systems.
 - Respond to urgent repairs in a reasonable timeframe.
- Tenant Rights:
 - If a landlord fails to make necessary repairs, tenants can:
 - Withhold rent until repairs are made (if permitted in lease).
 - Pay for repairs and deduct the cost from rent (only if pre-approved in writing).
 - File a complaint with the City of Ann Arbor Rental Inspection Office.
- Mold, Lead, or Pest Issues: Landlords must address health hazards, and tenants can request city inspections.

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Eviction Laws & Tenant Protections

- Legal Eviction Process Required – Landlords cannot forcibly remove tenants without a court order.
- Valid Reasons for Eviction:
 - Nonpayment of Rent – Landlords must give a 7-day notice to pay or vacate.
 - Lease Violations – A 30-day notice is required for most lease violations.
 - Illegal Activity or Property Damage – Can lead to immediate eviction with court approval.
- Tenant Defenses:
 - Tenants can challenge evictions in court if:
 - The landlord did not follow the legal notice process.
 - The eviction is retaliatory (e.g., after a tenant requested repairs).

Fair Housing Protections

- Michigan law prohibits housing discrimination based on:
 - Race, religion, national origin, disability, sex, family status, or marital status.
- Complaints can be filed with:
 - Michigan Department of Civil Rights: www.michigan.gov/mdcr.
 - Fair Housing Center of Southeast & Mid-Michigan (fhcmichigan.org).

Homeowner Rights & Responsibilities in Michigan

Property Taxes & Homestead Exemptions

- Homeowners are responsible for paying property taxes to their local municipality.
- Principal Residence Exemption (PRE):
 - Owners who use their home as a primary residence can reduce school taxes.
 - Must apply through the Washtenaw County Treasurer's Office.

HOAs & Local Ordinances

- Homeowners in subdivisions or condo associations must follow HOA rules and regulations.
- HOAs can issue fines for violations, but they cannot evict homeowners.
- Ann Arbor has local property codes, including:
 - Lawn & Property Maintenance Requirements.
 - Noise & Occupancy Limits in Rental Homes.
 - Snow Removal Ordinances (sidewalks must be cleared within 24 hours of snowfall).

Foreclosure Protections

- Michigan law requires a foreclosure notice at least 120 days before proceedings begin.
- Homeowners can request a loan modification or repayment plan to avoid foreclosure.
- Legal Aid Resources: Homeowners facing foreclosure can seek help through Michigan Legal Help (www.michiganlegalhelp.org).

Key Considerations

- Ann Arbor has strong tenant protections, but rent control is not allowed in Michigan.
- Security deposits are strictly regulated, and tenants have a right to dispute unfair deductions.
- Homeowners must comply with local property maintenance laws and HOA rules if applicable.
- Evictions must follow a legal process, and tenants have the right to challenge unfair removals.

For more details, visit www.legislature.mi.gov or www.a2gov.org.

12.3. Voter Registration and Civic Engagement in Ann Arbor

Voter Registration Process in Ann Arbor

Michigan offers multiple ways to register to vote, including online, by mail, and in person.

1. Online Registration (Up to 15 Days Before Election Day)

- Residents can likely register online through the Michigan Secretary of State website.
- Requires a valid Michigan driver's license or state ID.

2. Mail or In-Person Registration (Up to 15 Days Before Election Day)

- Registration forms can probably be mailed or submitted to the Ann Arbor City Clerk's Office.
- Likely requires proof of residency (e.g., Michigan ID, utility bill, or lease agreement).

3. Same-Day Registration (Up to and Including Election Day)

- Voters may be able to register in person at the Ann Arbor City Clerk's Office until 8 PM on Election Day.
- Must provide proof of residency.

Civic Engagement Opportunities in Ann Arbor

Voting Methods

- In-Person on Election Day – Polls likely open from 7 AM to 8 PM.
- Early In-Person Voting – Michigan recently expanded early voting, so Ann Arbor likely offers several days of in-person early voting before Election Day.
- Absentee Voting (Mail-In Ballots) – Any registered voter may be able to request an absentee ballot without providing a reason.

Local Civic Engagement

- Ann Arbor City Council Meetings – Residents can likely attend and voice concerns on local policies.
- Neighborhood Associations – Many neighborhoods have civic groups focusing on local issues.
- University of Michigan Public Events – Frequent lectures and town halls on policy, law, and governance.

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Key Considerations

- Registration deadlines and procedures are set by the state of Michigan.
- Same-day voter registration may be available at the City Clerk's Office.
- Michigan is likely to offer no-excuse absentee voting and early voting options.
- Civic engagement opportunities are widely available through local government and U-M programs.

For official voter registration details, visit nass.org/can-I-vote.

13. Weather and Seasonal Living

13.1. Preparing for Michigan Winters

Michigan winters, including in Ann Arbor, can be cold, snowy, and unpredictable, with temperatures often ranging from 20°F to 35°F (-7°C to 2°C) and occasional drops below 0°F (-18°C). Snowfall averages 60–70 inches per year, requiring proper preparation for commuting, home maintenance, and outdoor activities.

Winter Clothing & Gear Essentials

Having proper winter clothing is key to staying comfortable and safe.

- Outerwear:
 - Insulated, waterproof winter coat (down or synthetic).
 - Thermal gloves, scarves, and hats (windproof materials recommended).
 - Waterproof, insulated boots (with good traction to prevent slipping).
- Layering System:
 - Base Layer: Moisture-wicking fabric (wool or synthetic).
 - Mid Layer: Fleece or insulated sweaters for warmth.
 - Outer Layer: Waterproof, wind-resistant shell.
- Cold-Weather Accessories:
 - Hand and foot warmers for extreme cold days.
 - Thermal socks (avoid cotton, which absorbs moisture).
 - Ice cleats or traction spikes for walking on icy sidewalks.

Home Winterization & Heating

Ensuring your home is warm, energy-efficient, and prepared for winter storms is essential.

Heating & Insulation

- Check heating systems – Furnaces should be serviced annually before winter.
- Seal windows and doors – Use weather stripping and plastic film insulation to reduce heat loss.
- Programmable thermostats – Set temperatures lower at night (around 62°F/16°C) to save on heating costs.

Preventing Frozen Pipes

- Keep indoor temperatures above 55°F (13°C), even when away.
- Let faucets drip slightly during extreme cold to prevent freezing.
- Insulate exposed pipes in basements and attics.

Snow & Ice Removal

- Shovel driveways and sidewalks regularly – Ann Arbor requires homeowners to clear sidewalks within 24 hours of snowfall.
- Stock up on de-icing salt – Use pet-safe ice melt when possible.
- Consider hiring a snow removal service if unable to shovel regularly.

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Winter Driving & Vehicle Preparation

Driving in Michigan winters requires extra caution due to snow, ice, and reduced visibility.

Vehicle Winterization

- Winter tires – Recommended for better traction on ice and snow.
- Check battery life – Cold weather drains batteries faster.
- Keep antifreeze & windshield wiper fluid full – Use winter-rated fluids.
- Carry an emergency kit – Include a blanket, flashlight, jumper cables, extra gloves, and snacks.

Safe Winter Driving Tips

- Allow extra travel time – Roads can be icy and congested after snowfall.
- Keep a safe following distance – Braking takes longer on ice and snow.
- Use lower gears on icy roads to avoid skidding.
- Check road conditions before traveling – Use MDOT’s Mi Drive website for updates.

Staying Active & Enjoying Winter in Ann Arbor

Michigan winters offer plenty of cold-weather activities to make the season enjoyable.

Outdoor Activities

- Sledding & Snow Tubing: Rolling Hills Park, Leslie Park.
- Ice Skating: Buhr Park Outdoor Rink, Yost Ice Arena.
- Cross-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing: Nichols Arboretum, Hudson Mills Metropark.
- Winter Hiking: Bird Hills Nature Area, Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

Indoor Winter Activities

- U-M Recreational Sports Centers – Indoor tracks, pools, and fitness facilities.
- Ann Arbor District Library Events – Free lectures, book clubs, and craft activities.
- Michigan Theater & The Ark – Film screenings and live performances.

Key Considerations

- Prepare for fluctuating winter conditions – Ann Arbor experiences freezing rain, heavy snow, and occasional thaws.
- Winter storms can cause power outages – Keep flashlights, blankets, and backup heat sources ready.
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is common – Consider light therapy and vitamin D supplements.
- Public transportation and remote work options are useful – TheRide bus system operates year-round, and U-M allows flexible work arrangements during severe weather.

For more information on winter safety and preparedness, visit a2gov.org or michigan.gov/winter.

13.2. Seasonal Activities and Events in Ann Arbor

Ann Arbor offers year-round events and activities, with each season bringing unique outdoor and cultural experiences. From spring wildflower hikes to fall cider mill visits and winter ice skating, there's always something happening in the city.

Spring (March – May)

Outdoor Activities

- Nichols Arboretum (The Arb) Wildflower Walks – Best time to see blooming magnolias, cherry blossoms, and native wildflowers.
- Hiking & Birdwatching – Popular spots: Bird Hills Nature Area, Matthaei Botanical Gardens, and Barton Nature Area.
- Kayaking & Canoeing Season Opens – Argo and Gallup Canoe Liveries open in April for paddling along the Huron River.
- Biking the Border-to-Border Trail – Warmer weather makes it ideal for long-distance cycling.

Spring Events

- Ann Arbor Film Festival (March) – Oldest experimental film festival in North America, held at Michigan Theater.
- Festifools (April) – A giant puppet parade on Main Street featuring handmade, whimsical art displays.
- Ann Arbor Farmers Market (Reopens Fully in April) – Fresh produce, flowers, and artisan goods in Kerrytown.
- Earth Day Festival (April) – Held at Leslie Science & Nature Center, featuring eco-friendly exhibits and activities.

Summer (June – August)

Outdoor Activities

- Tubing & Paddleboarding at Argo Cascades – One of the best summer activities in Ann Arbor.
- Huron River Water Trail – Canoeing and fishing along the Huron River.
- Music & Outdoor Movie Nights at Top of the Park – Part of the Ann Arbor Summer Festival, featuring live music, outdoor movies, and food trucks.
- Outdoor Yoga & Fitness Classes – Many local parks host free yoga and group workouts.

Summer Events

- Ann Arbor Summer Festival & Top of the Park (June–July) – Free outdoor concerts, movies, and family-friendly entertainment.
- Fourth of July Fireworks at Rolling Hills Park – Fireworks display and family activities in Ypsilanti.
- Ann Arbor Art Fair (July) – One of the largest outdoor art fairs in the country, showcasing thousands of artists.
- Shakespeare in the Arb (June–July) – Outdoor theatrical performances at Nichols Arboretum.
- Food Truck Rallies & Taste of Ann Arbor (June) – Showcases the best of local dining in downtown Ann Arbor.

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Fall (September – November)

Outdoor Activities

- Cider Mills & Apple Picking – Popular spots include Dexter Cider Mill, Wiard’s Orchards, and Plymouth Orchards.
- Fall Color Hikes – Peak foliage in October at Hudson Mills Metropark, Nichols Arboretum, and Stinchfield Woods.
- Haunted Corn Mazes & Pumpkin Patches – Wiard’s Orchard offers a Haunted Thrill Park and Halloween hayrides.
- College Football Saturdays (Go Blue!) – Michigan Stadium is packed with over 100,000 fans on game days.

Fall Events

- University of Michigan Football Season (September–November) – Home games at The Big House.
- Kerrytown Book Festival (September) – Celebrates literature and Michigan authors.
- Ann Arbor Oktoberfest (September) – Traditional beer, music, and German food downtown.
- Halloween Events & Zombie Run (October) – Downtown Halloween parades, haunted houses, and costumed 5K runs.
- Homecoming & U-M Pep Rally (October) – Annual event for alumni and students, featuring a huge parade and game-day festivities.

Winter (December – February)

Outdoor Activities

- Ice Skating at Buhr Park & Yost Ice Arena – Outdoor and indoor public skating rinks open seasonally.
- Sledding at Leslie Park & Huron Hills Golf Course – Top spots for family-friendly sledding.
- Cross-Country Skiing & Snowshoeing – Best locations: Hudson Mills Metropark, Nichols Arboretum, and Rolling Hills Park.
- Holiday Lights in Downtown Ann Arbor – Kerrytown and Main Street transform with festive lights and holiday markets.

Winter Events

- Midnight Madness & Holiday Shopping (December) – Downtown shops stay open late with holiday deals and entertainment.
- Winter Art Fair (December) – Held at the U-M Union, featuring local artists and handmade crafts.
- Ann Arbor Folk Festival (January) – Two-night music festival at Hill Auditorium.
- Ice Carving & Winter Carnival at U-M (February) – Includes ice sculptures, broomball, and winter sports competitions.
- Ann Arbor Restaurant Week (January & June) – Special prix-fixe menus at top local restaurants.

Key Considerations

- Summer & Fall are peak seasons for outdoor events, while winter offers unique cold-weather activities.
- College football home games create a lively atmosphere, but also increase traffic downtown.
- Many events are free or low-cost, including Top of the Park, Shakespeare in the Arb, and the Ann Arbor Farmers Market.
- Weather can vary significantly by season, so dressing appropriately is important.

For event details, visit visitannarbor.org/events.

13.3. Home and Vehicle Maintenance Tips for Cold Weather

Michigan winters can be harsh on homes and vehicles, with freezing temperatures, heavy snowfall, and ice accumulation. Proper winterization ensures safety, efficiency, and prevents costly repairs.

Home Preparation Tips

Heating System Maintenance

- **Furnace Check-Up:** Schedule a professional HVAC inspection before winter.
- **Replace Furnace Filters:** Change filters every 1–3 months to maintain efficiency.
- **Install a Programmable Thermostat:** Set it to lower temperatures at night (62°F/16°C) to save energy.

Preventing Frozen Pipes

- **Keep Heat On:** Never let indoor temperatures drop below 55°F (13°C), even when away.
- **Drip Faucets:** Running water prevents freezing in extreme cold.
- **Insulate Pipes:** Use foam pipe insulation for exposed pipes in basements, attics, and garages.

Window & Door Insulation

- **Weatherstripping & Caulking:** Seal gaps around doors and windows to prevent drafts.
- **Plastic Window Film:** Apply insulation film to reduce heat loss.
- **Use Heavy Curtains:** Keeps heat inside and blocks cold air.

Roof & Gutter Maintenance

- **Inspect the Roof:** Check for loose or missing shingles that could lead to leaks.
- **Clean Gutters:** Remove leaves and debris to prevent ice dams.
- **Install Heated Roof Cables:** Prevents snow buildup and ice dam formation.

Chimney & Fireplace Prep

- **Schedule a Chimney Cleaning:** Avoid creosote buildup, which can cause chimney fires.
- **Use a Fireplace Damper:** Close when not in use to prevent heat from escaping.

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Snow & Ice Removal

- Shovel Driveways & Sidewalks Promptly: Ann Arbor requires sidewalks to be cleared within 24 hours after snowfall.
- Use Pet-Safe Ice Melt: Reduces slip hazards without harming pets or plants.
- Keep a Snowblower or Ice Scraper Handy: Makes clearing large snowfalls easier.

Vehicle Preparation & Maintenance

Winter Tires & Tire Pressure

- Switch to Winter Tires: All-season tires lose traction below 45°F (7°C).
- Check Tire Pressure Weekly: Cold temperatures reduce air pressure, affecting handling and fuel efficiency.

Battery & Engine Care

- Test Battery Strength: Cold weather weakens batteries—replace if older than 3 years.
- Keep Gas Tank Above Half-Full: Prevents condensation from freezing in the fuel line.
- Use Winter-Grade Oil: Synthetic oil performs better in sub-freezing temperatures.

Windshield & Visibility

- Use Winter Wiper Fluid: Prevents freezing and improves visibility.
- Replace Wiper Blades: Install heavy-duty winter wipers for better snow removal.
- De-Icer Spray & Scrapers: Keep an ice scraper and de-icer spray in your vehicle.

Emergency Kit for Winter Driving

- Blankets & Extra Warm Clothing
- Flashlight & Batteries
- Jumper Cables
- Non-Perishable Snacks & Water
- Shovel & Ice Scraper
- First Aid Kit
- Sand or Kitty Litter (for traction on ice)

Safe Winter Driving Tips

- Slow Down on Icy Roads: Drive at least 10 mph below the speed limit in slick conditions.
- Avoid Sudden Braking or Acceleration: Helps prevent skidding.
- Leave Extra Stopping Distance: Stopping takes 2–3 times longer on ice and snow.

Key Considerations

- Michigan's cold weather can damage homes and vehicles, so preventative maintenance is essential.
- Winter tires significantly improve safety, especially on Ann Arbor's snowy and icy roads.
- Snow and ice removal is required by law, and failing to clear sidewalks can lead to fines or liability issues.
- Emergency preparedness is crucial, especially for long winter drives.

For more information, visit michigan.gov/winter.

14. Settling In and Next Steps

14.1. Getting Involved on Campus and in the Community

Moving to Ann Arbor offers many opportunities to connect with colleagues, explore the city, and engage in social, professional, and volunteer activities. Whether you're looking for networking events, cultural groups, or community service opportunities, Ann Arbor provides numerous ways to get involved.

Getting Involved on Campus

University of Michigan Faculty & Staff Organizations

- U-M Faculty Senate – Represents faculty in university policy discussions and academic governance.
- U-M Staff Advisory Councils – Department-based groups for professional development and networking.
- Association of Women in Science (AWIS) – U-M Chapter – Supports women faculty and researchers.
- Postdoctoral Association at U-M (PDA) – Connects postdocs for career development and mentoring.
- LGBTQ+ Faculty & Staff Group – Provides networking and advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community at U-M.

Professional Development & Networking

- U-M Center for Research on Learning & Teaching (CRLT) – Offers workshops on teaching innovation and faculty development.
- Rackham Professional Development – Programs for early-career faculty, postdocs, and researchers.
- Michigan Leadership Collaborative – Training and seminars on university leadership.
- U-M Learning & Professional Development – Provides courses in management, communication, and technology.

Student Mentorship & Advising

- U-M Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP) – Faculty can mentor undergraduate students in research projects.
- Wolverine Pathways – Faculty and staff can help mentor underrepresented high school students interested in U-M.
- First-Year Experience Programs – Opportunities to support new students through mentorship and networking events.

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Exploring Ann Arbor's Community & Social Groups

Volunteer & Service Opportunities

- United Way of Washtenaw County – Opportunities for community service, fundraising, and mentoring.
- Food Gatherers – Local food bank where volunteers can help pack and distribute food to families in need.
- Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley – Volunteer to build homes or support affordable housing initiatives.
- Washtenaw Literacy – Tutors needed for adult literacy programs and ESL learners.
- Ann Arbor Natural Area Preservation (NAP) – Volunteers help with trail restoration, wildlife conservation, and tree planting.

Civic Engagement & Local Government

- Ann Arbor City Council & Public Meetings – Residents can attend meetings and participate in local decision-making.
- Neighborhood Associations – Many neighborhoods have community groups organizing events, safety initiatives, and advocacy projects.
- League of Women Voters – Ann Arbor Chapter – Hosts candidate forums, voter registration drives, and civic education programs.

Cultural & Arts Organizations

- Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra – Faculty & staff can attend concerts or volunteer at events.
- University Musical Society (UMS) – Brings world-class performances to Ann Arbor, including classical music, theater, and dance.
- Ann Arbor Civic Theatre (AACT) – Local theater group open to actors, directors, and volunteers.
- Ann Arbor Art Center – Offers art classes, gallery exhibits, and hands-on creative workshops.

Joining Social & Recreational Groups

Sports & Outdoor Activities

- Ann Arbor Running Company & Washtenaw Road Runners – Local running clubs for all skill levels.
- Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society – Organizes group rides and cycling events.
- U-M Recreational Sports & Intramural Leagues – Offers basketball, soccer, volleyball, and pickleball leagues for faculty & staff.
- Ann Arbor Hiking & Outdoor Adventure Meetup – Hosts local and regional hiking trips.

Faith & Spiritual Communities

Ann Arbor has diverse places of worship, interfaith groups, and spiritual organizations.

- Interfaith Council for Peace & Justice (ICPJ) – Promotes social justice and community engagement.
- First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor – Progressive faith community.
- Chabad House & Hillel at U-M – Jewish community and cultural events.
- Muslim Community Association of Ann Arbor – Hosts Islamic services, educational programs, and interfaith dialogues.

Social & Networking Groups

- Newcomers Club of Ann Arbor – Helps new residents connect through social outings and interest groups.
- Ann Arbor Women’s Group – Social, networking, and community service opportunities for women in the area.
- Ann Arbor Young Professionals – Organizes networking events, social meetups, and career workshops.
- Spouses & Partners of U-M Faculty & Staff – Social and professional groups for faculty families.

Next Steps for Settling In

1. Stay Connected with University Events

- Check U-M’s event calendar (events.umich.edu) for academic lectures, networking events, and performances.
- Subscribe to U-M faculty and staff newsletters for campus updates.

2. Explore Ann Arbor’s Neighborhoods & Local Businesses

- Visit Kerrytown, Main Street, and State Street for unique shops and dining.
- Check out local farmers markets, bookstores, and coffee shops to get familiar with the community.

3. Build a Social Network

- Join a campus organization, neighborhood group, or volunteering program.
- Attend community events, public lectures, and social meetups to meet people with similar interests.

4. Learn About Ann Arbor’s Seasonal Activities

- Take part in fall cider mill visits, winter ice skating, summer kayaking, and spring nature walks.
- Keep an eye on local event listings (visitannarbor.org) for seasonal festivals and community gatherings.

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Key Considerations

- U-M offers extensive resources for faculty and staff to connect professionally and socially.
- Ann Arbor has a vibrant volunteer scene, making it easy to give back to the community.
- Outdoor, cultural, and sports organizations provide year-round activities for all interests.
- Attending neighborhood meetings and city events helps newcomers integrate into local life.

For more details, visit umich.edu or a2gov.org.

14.2. Final Checklist and Helpful Contacts

Final Checklist for Settling in Ann Arbor

Housing & Utilities

- Secure housing (University-affiliated, rental, or home purchase).
- Set up electricity & gas (DTE Energy).
- Activate water service (Ann Arbor Water Utilities).
- Choose an internet provider (Xfinity, AT&T, WOW!, or Metronet).

Legal & Administrative

- Update driver's license & vehicle registration at the Michigan Secretary of State (SOS) office.
- Register for property tax exemptions (if applicable).
- Understand tenant or homeowner rights in Michigan.
- Review local taxes (income, property, and sales tax).

Healthcare & Wellness

- Enroll in a health insurance plan through U-M or a private provider.
- Select a primary care physician, dentist, and eye doctor.
- Identify the nearest urgent care and hospital (Michigan Medicine, St. Joseph Mercy).
- Review mental health and wellness resources available through U-M and Ann Arbor community services.

Transportation & Commuting

- Obtain a U-M parking permit if needed.
- Learn about public transit options (TheRide, U-M Blue Bus, Michigan Flyer).
- Prepare for winter driving (winter tires, emergency kit, vehicle maintenance).
- Explore bike-friendly routes and pedestrian paths.

Education & Family Resources

- If applicable, enroll children in Ann Arbor Public Schools, private schools, or daycare centers.
- Explore continuing education and professional development opportunities.
- Research after-school programs, extracurricular activities, and summer camps.

Community & Campus Engagement

- Attend U-M orientation sessions and faculty networking events.
- Join local organizations, volunteer groups, or professional associations.
- Explore arts, cultural events, and recreational activities in Ann Arbor.

- Learn about neighborhood associations and local government meetings.

Emergency Preparedness

- Sign up for Ann Arbor emergency alerts (A2 Alerts).
- Know the locations of the nearest fire stations, police stations, and hospitals.
- Prepare for power outages, winter storms, and severe weather conditions.

Helpful Contacts

University of Michigan Resources

- U-M Housing Office: housing.umich.edu | (734) 763-3164
- U-M Parking & Transportation: ltp.umich.edu | (734) 764-8291
- U-M Human Resources (Benefits & Payroll): hr.umich.edu | (734) 615-2000
- U-M International Center (for visa and immigration services): internationalcenter.umich.edu | (734) 764-9310

City of Ann Arbor Services

- Ann Arbor City Hall: a2gov.org | (734) 794-6000
- Ann Arbor Water & Utility Services: (734) 794-6333
- Ann Arbor Police Department (Non-Emergency): (734) 794-6920
- Ann Arbor Fire Department: (734) 794-6961

Transportation & Commuting

- Michigan Secretary of State (Driver's License & Vehicle Registration): michigan.gov/sos | (888) 767-6424
- Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority (TheRide): theride.org | (734) 996-0400
- Michigan Flyer (Detroit Metro Airport Shuttle): michiganflyer.com | (517) 333-0400

Healthcare & Emergency Services

- Michigan Medicine (U-M Health System): uofmhealth.org | (734) 936-4000
- St. Joseph Mercy Hospital: stjoeshealth.org | (734) 712-3456
- Washtenaw County Health Department: washtenaw.org/1124/Health | (734) 544-6700
- U-M Faculty & Staff Counseling Services (FASCCO): fascco.umich.edu | (734) 936-8660

Community & Civic Engagement

- Ann Arbor Public Schools: a2schools.org | (734) 994-2200
- Washtenaw County Clerk (Voter Registration & Elections): washtenaw.org | (734) 222-6730
- Ann Arbor District Library (AADL): aadl.org | (734) 327-4200
- United Way of Washtenaw County (Volunteer Opportunities): uwwashtenaw.org | (734) 971-8200

This checklist and contact list should help new faculty and staff settle into Ann Arbor smoothly. For additional updates, visit umich.edu or a2gov.org.

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