

Off-Campus Costs

Many students believe that living off-campus is cheaper than living on-campus. Studies show that students underestimate their cost to live off campus by 25-50%. University Housing researched the average costs that renters are paying in the Moscow area to give you a better understanding of the true cost of living off campus.

How much is the average monthly rent in the Moscow, Idaho area? \$344.80

We calculated the average monthly rent (1 to 4 bedrooms) from 10 different property management companies around the Moscow, Idaho area.

What is the average monthly cost of an electric bill? \$85.80

(Total monthly amount for a household)

AVISTA estimated a total monthly electrical bill in March to be around \$85.80 using approximately 1000 KWH of electricity. It is important to note that this bill can fluctuate throughout the lease and you need to expect to pay the high amounts as well as the low amounts.

What is the average monthly cost of a gas bill? \$64.37

(Total monthly amount for a household)

AVISTA estimated a total monthly gas bill in March to be around \$64.37 using approximately 100 Therms of gas. It is important to note that this bill can fluctuate throughout the lease and you need to expect to pay the high amounts as well as the low amounts.

What is the average monthly cost of water, sewer, and garbage? \$23.65

(Total monthly amount for a household)

What is the average monthly cost of wireless internet? \$50.00

(Total monthly amount for a household)

This does not include a wireless router (\$50-\$100), a wireless network adapter (\$40-\$100), or a DSL modem (\$60). All three of these devices are needed in most cases to set up wireless internet.

What is the average monthly cost of cable TV? \$24.99

(Total monthly amount for a household)

Cable TV (60 channels +local channels)

What is the average cost of a housing deposit? \$380

An average security deposit cost based on 10 property management companies around the Moscow, Idaho area is \$380. Many property management companies also require a credit check and an average \$30 non-refundable application fee before being accepted. Having good or any credit can be hard when

you are a college student. Other considerations include the extra cost students incur if they sign a 12 month lease of \$1,034.40 (3 months x \$344.80 monthly rent).

What is the average cost of doing laundry every month? \$17.33 or \$12.05

If using Laundromat: We stipulated that you will do 1 load of laundry a week. The website calculated that it costs roughly \$17.33 a month to do laundry. (<http://www.csgnetwork.com/laundrycostcalc.html>)

If using in-home laundry: We stipulated that you will pay \$150 on a used washing machine and do 1 load of laundry a week. The website calculated that it costs roughly \$12.05 a month to do laundry. (<http://www.csgnetwork.com/laundrycostcalc.html>)

If I drive a car during college, what is the average monthly cost of a parking permit? \$9.83

The annual cost for a Red permit is \$172 (\$14.33 a month). The annual cost for a Blue permit is \$64 (\$5.33 a month).

If I drive a car during college, what is the average monthly cost of transportation and gas for travel only related to the University? \$64.38

(<http://www.investopedia.com/articles/pf/08/cost-car-ownership.asp#axzz1rC244IGv>)

The American Automobile Association (AAA) compiled statistics on investopedia.com that calculates a person's average monthly cost of driving a car. Based on a medium sized sedan and commuting 5 miles round trip daily, the monthly cost equals \$64.38 (\$.618/mile). This calculation assumes the average gasoline cost to be \$2.256 per gallon.

*fun fact: Students can save up to 28% of the cost of their education by not owning a car while attending the university. (*Based on Out of State Tuition and low income earners*)

How much does it cost for computer services? \$100.00

(computergeeksonline.net/cost/index.asp)

Flat rate computer fix: \$75.00, Flat rate general tune up: \$100.00, Flat rate full virus clean up: \$125.00

How much does it cost to eat each month? \$305

(<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/usdafoodcost-home.htm>)

Depending on your eating habits, the cost of food can fluctuate dramatically. The USDA charts out the monthly cost of food dependent on age group and eating style. See the link above to budget how much it costs you to eat each month.

Apart from the monetary costs associated with off-campus living, it is also important to look at intangible expenses that you could incur.

Safety/Security: You will lose the safety and security that the on-campus housing offers including; LLC 24-hour help desk, card building access, escort services, and campus security.

Academics: Studies show that students who live on campus are more likely to graduate, have higher grade point averages, and have a higher satisfaction with their college experience than students that live off campus. Additionally graduation rates for students who live on campus are 10% higher than students who live off campus.

Social Life: Students that live off campus can feel a sense of detachment with the University. There is a large sense of community at the University of Idaho. When you live on campus you are more aware of campus activities and how to get involved in them. Residence life also gives you the opportunity to live around a large group of friends and meet new people. Students who are involved and live close to the center of campus are 13% more likely to stay in college than students who live off campus.

Money Hassles: You need to be aware of not only utility bills and transportation costs but also the hassle of paying rent on a monthly basis, dealing with multiple companies (cable, internet, electric, etc.), and buying things like furniture, kitchen essentials, lawn care equipment, and cleaning supplies.

Summer Expense and Stress: Students that go home during summer months run into issues with the home/apartments they are renting on a 12 month lease. Landlords want their homes/apartments to be kept in good working order which could mean that you need to be living there at all times. Apart from having to hassle with paying utilities and rent when you may be away, you also need to be aware of the commitment of renting a home over the summer months.

Maintenance (lawn, plumbing, snow removal, lights, etc): The great thing about living on campus is that the University offers free maintenance. If you live off campus, you do not have these University resources and the burden can fall on you.

There is a large range of pricing options in the Moscow area. In some cases you may find off-campus living to be a cheaper option than on campus living. When choosing between living options, think about what is important to you. You may want to put together a list of pros and cons.

Living on campus can be cost effective and convenient. We want to make sure that you are as successful as possible throughout your University experience. By knowing ALL of the costs of living off-campus we hope that we can empower you with smart decision making when it comes to housing options.