



Your Guide to
United States and
Drexel University
2019-2020



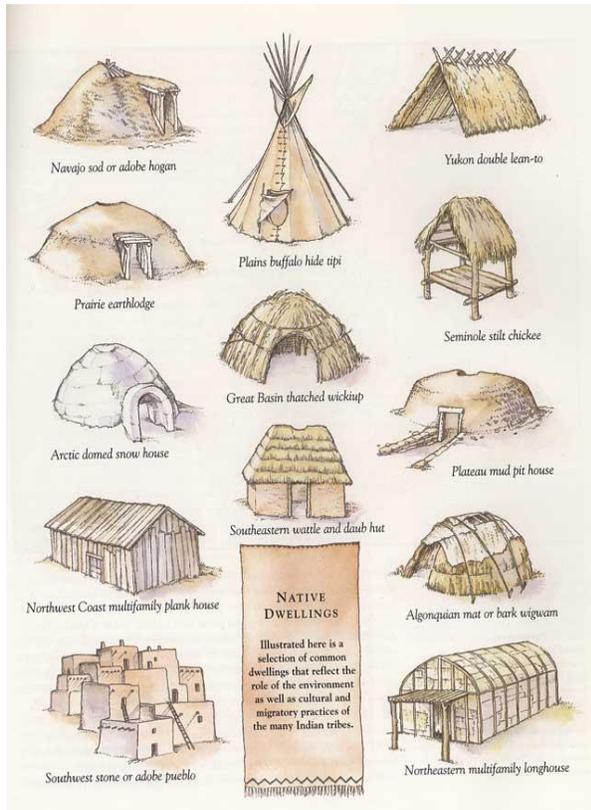
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I. About United States of America

Who Were the First North Americans?



The first North Americans were the indigenous Americans. Native Americans lived in the United States for an extensive period before Christopher Columbus discovered America. There were many different tribes, and their homes were often vary depending upon the geographical location. Some tribes had to endure severe winters, while others-built homes to stay cool in extreme hot temperature. No matter where they were located or the kind of climate they had, Native Americans were creative in constructing homes. Consider, for instance, in the *Great Lakes region*, where forests were abundant, they built homes called wigwams. In the Southern Plains, some tribes-built homes called grass houses. They look like wigwams but were made with different material. In the Southern Plains, some tribes-built homes called grass houses.

Following the discovery of Columbus, Europeans began to establish settlements in the area.

Voyagers from Spain, France, the Netherlands, and other countries came to see what the land had to offer. England, however, was the first country to send citizens to live there, establishing the first colony at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607.

North America entered the *twentieth Century* as one of the most progressive and advanced nations in the world, creating artists, engineers, scientists and many others who were leaders within their disciplines and fields. While the country participated in two World Wars and grieved through the Great Depression in the first half of the century, the freedoms offered in the United States continued to entice immigrants from all over the world. Even today, families travel to America with hopes of establishing a better life and a better future, supported by the idea of freedom.

United States of America is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world and migrants form a significant part of the population. **Here are some quick facts:**

- According to the US Census in 2013, the estimated population of the US was 315,568,000.
- The US is a diverse country with a multicultural society.
- The US has the world's largest economy.
- The most populated city in the US is New York City, followed by Los Angeles and Chicago.

- English is the most commonly spoken language in the US, followed by Spanish.
- The most popular team sports in the US are American football, baseball, basketball and ice hockey.

II. About Philadelphia



Philadelphia is widely known as *Philly* or the *City of Brotherly Love*. It is the largest city in Pennsylvania. From a statistical standpoint, it is the sixth most populous city in America and the fifth largest city area by population in the United States. Currently, there are about 1.5 million people in the city alone.

With over a million people, the city is a *melting pot* of races, traditions and immigrant cultures. It is also the home to the famous Liberty Bell and the Declaration of Independence, both tribute to the city's revolution. The vibrant city is modernized yet still possesses rich cultural history with unique

attractions and activities like the Eastern State Penitentiary, the Benjamin Franklin Bridge, and the United States Mint.

▪ Food



While visiting and residing in Philadelphia, you will never go hungry for quality food. There are a range of unique restaurants and food trucks to get an authentic feel of the city. In every corner of the city, you will find different neighborhoods and eateries like **Chinatown**, the **Italian Market**, the **Reading Terminal Market**, **South Street**, **Penn's Landing**, **Fishtown** and much more. If eating out is not your passion, there are other options as well. There is an array of American and ethnic supermarkets around the city. You will discover new foods, and new combinations of foods (Sriracha sauce, for instance, is a tangy hot sauce which goes with practically everything). Check Section VI for detailed options.

▪ Climate and Weather



In Philadelphia, the summers are warm and humid, the winters are very cold, and it is wet and partly cloudy year-round. Over the course of the year, the temperature typically varies from 26°F (-3.33°C) to 87°F (30.56°C) and is rarely below 13°F (-10.56°C) or above 94°F (34.44°C).

The hot season lasts for 3.6 months, from May 30 to September 16, with an average daily high temperature above 77°F (25°C). The hottest day of the year is July 21, with an average high of 87°F (30.56°C) and low of 70°F (20.11°C).

The cold season lasts for 3.1 months, from December 2 to March 7, with an average daily high temperature below 49°F (9.44°C). The coldest day of the year is January 30, with an average low of 26°F (-3.33°C) and high of 40°F (4.44°C).

Typically, rain falls throughout the year in Philadelphia. The most rain falls during the 31 days centered around July 27, with an average total accumulation of 3.8 inches.

Generally, the snowy period of the year lasts for 4.2 months, from November 22 to March 28, with a sliding 31-day liquid-equivalent snowfall of at least 0.1 inches. The most snow falls during the 31 days centered around January 25, with an average total liquid-equivalent accumulation of 0.7 inches.

Drexel University will post weather-related campus closing or delayed opening information on the University's [homepage](#). Students are also encouraged to call 215. 895.MELT (6358) for the latest weather-related information regarding the University City, Center City and Queen Lane Campuses. Drexel Public Safety will also utilize text messages through the emergency alert system to notify members of the Drexel community about campus weather alerts.

▪ Points of Interest



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania's largest city, is notable for its rich history, on display at the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall (where the Declaration of Independence and Constitution were signed) and other American Revolutionary sites. Also, other points of interest are the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, immortalized by Sylvester Stallone's triumphant run in the film "Rocky."

Here are some cultural places to visit:

- [Academy of Music](#)



<http://www.playbill.com/article/the-academy-of-music-celebrates-its-161st-birthday>

Philadelphia's Academy of Music, owned by The Philadelphia Orchestra Association, is one of the most treasured and legendary theaters in the world. Over 150 years old, the stunning and opulent "Grand Old Lady of Locust Street" is truly a grand dame, fascinating and elegant, full of history and mystery. She has yet to give up all her secrets.

- [Academy of Natural Science of Drexel University](#)



<https://ansp.org/>

Founded in 1812, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University is a leading natural history museum dedicated to advancing research, education, and public engagement in biodiversity and environmental science.

- [African American Museum of Philadelphia](#)



<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/the-african-american-museum-in-philadelphia/>

The African American Museum in Philadelphia is the first institution built by a major United States city to house and interpret the life and work of African Americans. The doors are open for your enjoyment and enlightenment. By visiting, you will experience the richness and vibrancy of African American heritage and culture come alive in four magnificent exhibition galleries filled with exciting history and fascinating art.

- [Betsy Ross House](#)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Betsy_Ross_House

The Betsy Ross House, the birthplace of the American flag, is alive with the sights and sounds of the 18th century. You can tour the house and then stay a while longer to learn more about Betsy and her exciting life and times through an interactive, historical program.

- [Eastern State Penitentiary](#)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_State_Penitentiary

Eastern State Penitentiary was once the most famous and expensive prison in the world, but stands today in ruin, a haunting world of crumbling cellblocks and empty guard towers. Its vaulted, sky-lit cells once held many of America's most notorious criminals, including "Slick Willie" Sutton and "Scarface" Al Capone.

- [Liberty Bell](#)



<https://www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/libertybellcenter.htm>

You will witness the original Liberty Bell displayed in a magnificent glass chamber with Independence Hall in the background. The building also offers a video presentation and exhibits about this now famous symbol of liberty.

- [Love Park](#)



<https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/LOVE-Park-Celebration-Center-City-Statue-Fountain-484053761.html>

Located near City Hall, LOVE Park serves as the grand entrance to the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The plaza was designed by famed city planner Edmond Bacon, father of actor Kevin Bacon, and originally constructed over an underground parking garage in 1965. The plaza expanded in 1969 with the addition of beautifully curved granite steps and a majestic fountain.

- [Independence Hall](#)



<https://www.nps.gov/inde/planyourvisit/independencehall.htm>

Let's travel back in time and see the room where the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution were both signed on July 4, 1776.

- [Mütter Museum](#)



<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/mutter-museum/>

This medical museum, located at The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, is one of the finest medical history museums in America. The Mütter Museum is a 19th century style cabinet museum displaying medical artifacts such as anatomical specimens and medical instruments.

- [Penn's Landing](#)



<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/attractions/blue-cross-riverrink-summerfest/>

Named honor of William Penn's historic landing in Philadelphia in 1682, **Penn's Landing** hosts events, classes, attractions and entertainment all year long. It is situated by the waterfront; this place offers an array of cultural activities to enjoy Philadelphia in the warmer and colder months.

- [Philadelphia Museum of Art](#)



<https://www.phillyvoice.com/philadelphia-museum-of-art-party-open-bar-fabulous-fashion/>

This is the cultural heart of a great city, where the place for creative play, with a surprise around every corner. First Sunday of the month is pay what you wish admission. The suggested fee is a penny but support them with whatever amount you wish to pay.

- [Philadelphia Zoo](#)



<https://patch.com/pennsylvania/roxborough/tickets-go-sale-philly-zoo-summer-ale-festival-0>

The Philadelphia Zoo, America's first zoo, is a 42-acre Victorian garden that is home to more than 1,300 animals, many of them rare and endangered. Special features include a children's petting zoo, a paddleboat lake, a rainforest themed carousel, a balloon ride, and many interactive and educational exhibits.

- [Reading Terminal Market](#)



<https://www.visitphilly.com/things-to-do/food-drink/reading-terminal-market/>

One of America’s largest and oldest public markets housed since 1893 in a National Historic Landmark building, the Market offers an incredible selection of locally grown and exotic produce, locally sourced meats and poultry, plus the finest seafood, cheeses, baked goods, and confections.

- [Rocky Steps](#)



<https://www.phillymag.com/news/2017/04/06/rocky-steps-closed-nfl-draft/>

Originally created for a scene in Rocky III, the sculpture is a real-life monument to a celluloid hero who endures as a favorite fictional son of the City of Brotherly Love. Visiting the statue, running up the steps and taking a picture at the top, arms-raised in victory is a must on any first visit to Philadelphia. Consider it a rite of passage.

III. Our Commitment to You



Drexel University, a private co-educational institution founded in 1891, is in the University City area of West Philadelphia, which abounds with a variety of cultural activities, museums, musical and theatrical centers. Under the leadership of Dean Elisabeth Van Bockstaele (photograph on left), the Drexel's [Graduate College](#) is one of many administrative offices committed to your academic and professional success. It is also the central administrative unit responsible for fostering interdisciplinary research and academic programs and for developing and disseminating changes in policies and practices.

The Graduate College also partners with different academic units, administrative offices and graduate student associations to provide you with academic assistance, counseling support, career guidance, and enrichment activities to all quarter graduate students through start-to-finish support, programs and services. We have a well-trained and experienced professional staff working closely in meeting your academic and professional needs.

The Graduate College supports graduate students through the entire lifecycle of their Drexel graduate experience:

- Doctoral fellowships
- New student orientations
- Teaching assistant training
- Health insurance subsidies for qualified doctoral students
- Professional development and academic programming
- Conference travel funding
- Special graduation receptions
- Graduate Student Lounge access

At this comprehensive university, we elevate scholarship and the Drexel experience by championing diversity. The Drexel's [Office of International Students and Scholars Services](#) serves the University's 5,000 international students from 117 countries with valuable academic, immigration, financial and personal guidance. International students also receiving ongoing support and social engagement from the International Graduate Student Association (IGSA) through educational webinars, airport pick-ups, dinners, receptions and cultural and recreational programs.

Sincerely,

Elisabeth Van Bockstaele, Ph.D.

Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies

Professor, Pharmacology and Physiology

Vice Provost for Graduate Education

IV. Message from *IGSA President, 2019-20*

Dear perspective and current international graduate students,

It is my great honor to address you all on behalf of the International Graduate Student Association (IGSA). Drexel University is home to nearly 3000 international students from more than 50 countries all over the world. Having been in Drexel for almost 3 years as an international graduate student from China, I received so much love and care from our international student community; I discovered my passion and vision in the various cutting-edge research opportunities; I found joy and comfort at all those social and sports activities. And I firmly believe you will also find this adventure worthwhile. Ambition can't wait. We can not wait to see you shine.

We welcome you again to take on the journey to Drexel and work together with us, to build a stronger bond within our international graduate students. IGSA will be your support all the way.

Regards,



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V. Travelling to America

▪ Before You Leave Home

Students tell us it is a lot easier to get started in America if you organize things before leaving home. We hope you can use the following tips and suggestions to help you prepare for the transition.

▪ Banking

You will need this account as soon as you arrive in American to pay utility bills (cell phone, gas, internet, electricity and water) and/or receive funds transfer from your employer. To sign up for a checking account, your bank will require you to appear in person, with the following documents to complete the procedure: Drexel photo identification card and authorized forms of ID such as a passport along with the I-20.

There are many financial institutions around University City, Philadelphia. It is important that you conduct a comprehensive research to see which bank works for you!

Here are some local banks in the university area:

- [PNC Bank](#)
- [TD Bank](#)
- [Franklin Mint Federal Credit Union](#)
- [Citizens Bank](#)
- [Wells Fargo](#)
- [Santander Bank](#)
- [Bank of America](#)

Some banks require no minimal deposit while, opening a new account compared to others, which requires a minimum balance. Also, some don't charge you anything while transferring money to other banks unlike all the other banks. Some regional banks have branches within and close to University City, convenient when you need to visit them, though most transactions can be completed online and using bank's mobile app.

▪ Housing

Finding a desirable place to live around campus can be challenging; however, if you start your search early, it will alleviate a lot of your stress. The University City and West Philadelphia areas surrounding the Drexel and UPenn neighborhoods offer an array of housing options with the population mostly being a student community. Choosing the right place depends on several factors like proximity to school (by walk), proximity to transit options (nearest Drexel free shuttle stop, subway/trolley stops etc.), the quality of neighborhood and safety, proximity to grocery stores/restaurants/shops; and you should make the right balance as per your own needs. Typically,

students having higher course loads in a quarter find less time to cook for themselves because of their packed schedules, so they choose apartments within walking distance to university. On the other hand, students who like to reduce their housing budget might prefer choosing housing option that needs commute time to university. Additionally, if you live with your family, you might enjoy living in a bigger space, further from city.

When you search your place online through Zillow, Craigslist, Drexel-off-campus housing etc., first eliminate areas which might be unsafe. Based on our experience, the north of Spring Garden St. up to 38th and north of Powelton Ave. from 38th to 44th St are places better avoided. In the west, it is recommended to avoid farther than 46th St., and in the South confine searching within Chester Ave up to 42nd St., and within Spruce St. from 42nd to 46th. In the mentioned region the farther you go from University, the cheaper it becomes in rent. The [Dragon Routes](#) (Mon-Fri) runs on Center City route (5:15 am to 11:06 pm), the Powelton/Spring Garden Route (6:00 am to 11:00 pm) and Queens Lane route (5:00 am to 10:30 pm). On the other hand, the [UPenn shuttle](#) also available to Drexel students (Mon-Fri, 5 pm to 12 am) runs on Walnut and Spruce up to 42nd (and farther west on Spruce up to 46th).

Keeping the shuttle stops in mind, and your walking habits, you can plan your weekly shopping trips. If you live on food trucks every day, the monthly cost can be \$300 to \$450. But, if you cook, costs can come as low as \$150 per month. Living in the northeast area of the region mentioned (Spring Garden/Powelton between 32nd and 36th) can be a good option, which is very close to University, but the nearest grocery is more than a mile away (Fresh Grocer). Additionally, with your experience you may find buying certain items from specific stores. Accessibility to many shopping stores makes such customization possible. All the good restaurants and Theatre are also in the region between 38th to 44th in the west. So, make your balance accordingly.

Laundry is another important thing you should consider before signing a lease (apartments with no laundries are little cheaper). However, even if it is in your own building/apartment, you might have to pay for it (need to insert coins to start it). Also, apartments which solely run on electricity (no gas for heating) attract \$30-\$40 more per month on utilities compared to those having gas for cooking and heating.

Lastly, check everything inside the apartment before you move in as per the lease document. If something is broken or has some stain, they will hold you responsible when you move out a year later and will not give your security deposit back. Hence, report damages beforehand and stay wise.

▪ **Transportation**

Transportation in Philadelphia

Transportation in Philadelphia involves the various modes of transport within the city and its infrastructure. In addition to facilitating intracity travel, Philadelphia's transportation system connects Philadelphia to towns of its metropolitan area and cities of the Boston-Washington megalopolis.

The city is crossed by the Delaware Expressway Interstate Highway (I-95) and the Schuylkill Expressway (I-76), which are the principal thoroughfares for intercity traffic. The Vine Street Expressway (I-676) travels between I-76 and I-95 in Center City Philadelphia, and the Roosevelt Boulevard (US 1) carries crosstown traffic in northern Philadelphia.

Philadelphia's public transit system is mainly operated by the Southeast Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA), which maintains an extensive system utilizing buses, rapid transit, commuter rail, trolleys, and the Philadelphia trackless trolley (trolleybus) system. The main rail intermodal transit station of Philadelphia is the 30th Street Station, which has access to 13 SEPTA Regional Rail routes and 11 Amtrak intercity rail routes. Philadelphia International Airport, the primary airport of Philadelphia is a hub for domestic and international aviation.

Transportation in Drexel University

To get to Drexel University, there is a wide selection of transportation for you to choose from. More excitingly, Drexel University provides enrolled students several kinds of discount programs. [View more information on transportation discount programs.](#)

Public Transportation

- **SEPTA**

If you are looking to get somewhere fast, public transportation is a great alternative. SEPTA offer a variety of transit services, including buses, trolleys, trackless trolleys, subways, and Regional Rail trains that are sure to get you where you need to go. Jump on board and get ready to enjoy all that Philadelphia has to offer. [View schedules, maps, fares, and alerts for all forms of SEPTA transportation.](#)

Below is the *Convenient SEPTA Routes to Campus*:

- **Market-Frankford Line (MFL)**

The Market-Frankford Line, popularly known as the Blue Line or the El, is a subway line that runs east and west along Market Street. The El is an easy way for Drexel students to get to Center City or further into West Philly. The El has two convenient stops for Drexel students on the University City Campus: 34th and Market street, and 30th and Market street. For Center City, students can take the El to 15th and Market street.

- **Broad Street Line (BSL)**

The Broad Street Line, also known as the Orange Line, is a subway line that runs north and south along Broad Street. This subway route is a fast and convenient way to check out any one of Philadelphia's major sports teams at the Sports Complex in South Philly. For Center City students, the Orange line makes stops at Market and Spring Garden streets, as well as Market and Vine streets. For both University City and Center City students, the Orange line also has a free transfer at 15th and Market street to the Market-Frankford Line.

- **Trolleys and Buses**

If you are looking to head somewhere else in the city or into one of the surrounding Philadelphia suburbs, you may want to check out one of the many trolleys and bus routes to

get you where you need to go. Going east, all trolleys lead to Center City. It does not matter what trolley you take if you are heading east into Center City. The trolley stop on the University City Campus is at 33rd and Market streets, while Center City students can take the trolley to 15th and Market streets or 13th and Market street.

- **Regional Rail Trains**

Students taking Regional Rail trains in from the suburbs should pay attention to the zone number from which they are commuting. On the train schedule, each stop on the route has a corresponding zone number. Please buy a train ticket, TransPass, or TrailPass that corresponds to that number. Day and evening fares may vary as well.

- **Airport Line**

[SEPTA's airport line](#) connects Philadelphia's International Airport Terminals to the major rail road transit hubs. The schedule is highly dependable and punctual and facilitates to plan your trip to and from airport at ease, especially with its fixed fare, in contrast to other taxi services whose fare and availability can vary based on demand.

- **NJ Transit**

With NJ Transit, commuting to and from Jersey can be a breeze. NJ Transit also provides a 25 percent discount to all full-time graduate and undergraduate students on their monthly passes. [View more information on NJ Transit.](#)

- **PATCO**

The PATCO (Port Authority Transit Corporation) Speedline serves southern New Jersey with nine rail stops between Lindenwold and City Hall in Camden, NJ. You can also take PATCO to four Philadelphia Rail Stops allowing you to transfer to the SEPTA Market-Frankford Line at 8th and Market. Students may take advantage of PATCO's Student Freedom Card offer by showing their DragonCard at the FREEDOM Card Service Center at the Broadway Station weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. [View more information on PATCO train schedules and fares.](#)

- **Amtrak**

If you are looking to travel to New York or even California, then you should check out Philadelphia's Amtrak station. Amtrak trains run daily from 30th Street Station, which is just blocks from Drexel's campus. [View more information and purchase tickets on Amtrak.](#)

- **Drexel Shuttle Services**

Do you have someplace to go, but no money to get there? If so, consider one of Drexel's shuttle services to get you where you need to go. The University offers three different shuttle routes that are free of charge to all Drexel students. Drexel also has a great partnership with the University of Pennsylvania that allows you to use their services too! All you need to ride is to show your DragonCard. [View more information, maps of the routes, and specific departure times.](#)

Ride Share Services

▪ Enterprise CarShare

Enterprise CarShare is expanding its program in University City with the addition of new Chevy Volt extended range vehicles and pod locations, as well as special discounted rates through a partnership with Drexel. Two Volts were added at a new pod location at 33rd and Cherry streets, and an existing pod at 34th and Market streets will add another vehicle. As part of the partnership with Drexel, Enterprise CarShare will waive the \$25 application fee and offer discounts on yearly plans for all student, faculty, and professional staff participants at Drexel, and free business accounts for any University department or group. [View more detailed information and register.](#)

▪ App-Taxi

Services like Uber and Lyft provide taxi through their mobile phone apps. These are highly convenient since the fare is fixed by the app and that the app searches for the available taxis near you. You can also call and talk to the driver in case the pick-up location is confusing. Additionally, these apps provide ride share and express pool options with which you can reduce the travel cost while sometimes faster than public transportation.

▪ Zipcar

Drexel has partnered with Zipcar, Inc., the world's leading car-sharing network, to offer a Zipcar car-sharing program on campus. This cost-effective and convenient transportation option is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all students ages 18 and older, as well as faculty and professional staff members.

Drexel members pay a \$35 annual fee, and rates on campus Zipcar vehicles start as low as \$7 per hour and \$69 per day. Gas, insurance, reserved parking spots, up to 180 miles of driving per day, and roadside assistance are included in the hourly and daily Zipcar rates. Cars can be reserved for as little as an hour or for multiple days. Drexel students, faculty, and staff can join [online](#).

Parking

▪ Drexel University Parking Service

Drexel Parking Services (DPS) offers a variety of options to choose from for your parking needs. DPS works to best meet the needs of students: anything from term passes to daily parking rates. [View more information about the location of Drexel parking lots, pricing, and how to sign up for parking.](#)

▪ Campus Park and Ride

Located at 16th and Warfield in the Graduate Hospital neighborhood of Philadelphia, the Campus Park and Ride offers affordable daily and monthly parking deals, as well as a shuttle to take you to the University City Campus. [View more information and pricing.](#)

- **Parking on Local Streets**

Here at Drexel, not only do we have parking garages and lots, but we also have a multitude of ways and places you can park on the street — from directly on campus and continuing all the way into Powelton Village. Both purchased and free options are available.

- From the University City Campus starting on Chestnut Street and ending on Race Street south to north and from 32nd to 34th, you will find many parking kiosks, updated versions of meters. [View more information about the exact location and prices.](#)
- Once you pass over Race Street going toward Powelton Village, you will begin to encounter what's known as 2HR parking: from 6 a.m.–6 p.m./permit parking. It is considered both because once you get into this area of University City, it becomes residential. This means that if you are a resident of the area you must obtain a parking permit from the Philadelphia Parking Authority to bypass the 2-hour parking limit that results in tickets if your car is there past the time limit. Make sure you pay for parking when required! Parking tickets are expensive! Residents can obtain [permits online.](#)
- If you drive farther into Powelton Village toward Mantua approximately past Hamilton Street, you will begin to find non-limited parking. This means that there is no time limit to parking in these areas. However, students parking here should be aware that this area is also residential, and they are expected to be respectful of residents parking in front of their homes.

Biking

- **Drexel Bike Share**

Drexel Bike Share is open to all students and employees with a valid Drexel University ID who are in good standing with the University. There is no rental fee to use a Drexel Bike Share bike. The general share time is two days or one weekend. All Bike Share equipment is picked up from the Bike Share Hub at the Drexel Parking Services Garage Office (33rd and Market streets). [View more information.](#)

- **Indego**

[Indego is a city bike sharing service in Philadelphia.](#) They have bike stations at several locations all around the city. You can find one of the stations in front of Drexel Gym, opposite to Hagarty Library, at Market street. With few preliminary registration details, you can pick a bike from one station, ride to your destination and leave the bike to the nearest available station. Indego has a phone app where you can keep track of bike and space availability at the stations and find the nearest station to your location. Though the bikes can feel heavy, they are very well balanced and has good shock absorption. This is a great option if you want to occasionally bike around the city for leisure or for transit, and with an additional monthly pass advantage.

- **Philadelphia Bicycle Coalition**

The Philadelphia Bicycle Coalition provides bikers with opportunities to get involved with riding groups, safety information, biking events, and much more! [Learn more.](#)

VI. Lunch and Dining Options Around Campus

There are many options around campus in case someone is famished. There are outlets of Starbucks, Subway, Dunkin Donuts located all around campus. Students mostly cook their own food yet during busy schedule of quarter there are times when it's not possible to cook.

- **Food Truck**

There are food trucks behind the Main Building area, Hagerty library, Recreational Center, 34th Market street and other areas. Halal food, Indian food, Chinese food, Vietnamese food and, vegetarian and non-vegetarian options are available. Most of them accept card payment or Venmo payment yet there are few who only accept cash.



- **Landmark Americana**

Landmark Americana has happy hours on every week (Saturday through Monday) from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Just show your Drexel student ID they offer 50% discount per head. It's located next to Drexel's Recreational center.

- **Indian Restaurants**

- [New Delhi \(Buffet\)](#)
- [Sitar India \(Buffet\)](#)
- [Indian Sizzler \(Buffet option available\)](#)
- [Ekta Indian Cuisine \(Buffet\)](#)
- [Dana Mandi](#)
- [Masala Kitchen \(Kati Rolls and lassi\)](#)
- [Indeblue \(Lunch thali\)](#)

- [Karma](#)
 - [Veda](#)
 - [Mumbai Bistro](#)
 - [Café Spice Express](#)
- **Chinese Restaurants**
 - [Han Dynasty](#)
 - [Bo sing](#)
 - [Chengdu Famous food](#)
 - [A Mandarin](#)
 - [Ramen's](#)
 - [Trans Chinese Food Truck](#)
- **Middle Eastern Cuisine Restaurants**
 - [Hummosology \(Middle Eastern cuisine\)](#)
 - [Dizengoff](#)
 - [Zahav](#)
 - [Renata's Kitchen](#)
 - [Sahara Grill](#)
 - [Suraya](#)
 - [Apricot stone](#)
 - [Cedar's](#)
 - [Hadramout](#)
- **Other Restaurants**
 - [Kabobeesh](#)
 - [Klimandjaro Restaurant \(African Cuisine\)](#)
 - [Bernie's](#)
 - [Koreana](#)
 - [Erawan Thai Cuisine](#)
 - [Lemon grass Thai Restaurant](#)
 - [Kaffa crossing \(Ethiopian cuisine\)](#) Cozara (Japanese)
- **Café and places to hangout**
 - [Shake Shack](#)
 - [Saxbys](#)
 - [Chipotle](#)
 - [Starbucks](#)
 - [Blaze](#)
 - [Insomniac cookies](#)
 - [Franklin Fountain](#)
 - [Spruce street harbor park](#)
 - [Wahoo's](#)
 - [Savas](#)
 - [Ed's Buffalo wings and Pizza](#)
 - [Five guys](#)
 - [Popeyes](#)
 - [Taco Bell](#)
 - [Brexel](#)
- **Night Life**

After a busy schedule and a long week, Center City which is few blocks away from main campus offers many places where you can relax for some time.

 - [Slainte Pub and Grill \(Irish Pub\)](#)
 - [Bridgewater's Pub](#)
 - [Hard Rock Café](#)
 - [Liberty Bar and Grill](#)
 - [Parkway Pub](#)
 - [Rumor](#)
 - [National Mechanics](#)
 - [Morgan's pier](#)
 - [Raven Lounge](#)
 - [Blarney Pub and Grill](#)
 - [New Deck Tavern](#)

VII. Wireless Carriers

There are 4 major wireless carriers in the United States:

1. Nationwide wireless services: [AT&T](#), [T-Mobile](#), [Verizon](#), [Sprint](#), often called the Big Four.
2. Regional services: US Cellular is a self-sufficient regional network that doesn't cover every city, but it's a good option if you mostly stay within its network footprint.
3. [Check US Cellular coverage](#) information before you go ahead and choose your carrier. Being in urban campus there are high chances whichever network you choose will perform well.
4. Resellers: Mobile Virtual Network Operators -- Republic Wireless, Straight Talk, Ting, GIV Mobile, Google Fi and so on -- leases network capacity from at least one of the Big Four, so you're riding on their network, either solely or in combination with Wi-Fi (Google Fi and Republic Wireless).
5. Prepaid services like [Ultra-mobile](#), [Lycamobile](#) can be useful with their options of free calling service to many countries.

You can buy the sim cards at their company shops or receive them via post, if you register online. The costs of the sim cards are low and sometimes free for some network when subscribed with certain monthly prepaid plans.

Four questions you need to consider before choosing your carrier

1. Do you need to buy a new phone? Or already have one?
 - a) If you need to buy a new phone, many carriers provide monthly installment plans. Also, some providers accept trade-in for your old device.
 - b) If you already have a phone, you need to make sure your device is unlocked (unlocked GSM) and works on your network (GSM, such as AT&T and T-Mobile versus CDMA, like Sprint and Verizon). If you have doubts, contact the carriers' customer service.

2. Individual or family plan?

A shared plan or family plan, which splits a monthly bucket of data among two to more phone lines, usually cheaper than going solo. However, you get a smaller amount of data for yourself, and you can't predict how many GBs everyone else will use. The Big Four carriers now offer different tiers of unlimited plans but usually expensive.

3. Big four or others?

Mobile Virtual Network Operators (MVNOs) tend to offer service at lower rates than the major US wireless networks directly. The drawback is that MVNOs usually have higher pings than going with big four. There is a [List of United States mobile virtual network operators](#)

4. Check carrier coverage in your area.

[Check your carrier coverage](#). If you use Mobile Virtual Network Operators, check your host network coverage.

VIII. Sports

Sports are an integral part of American culture and lifestyle. The United States is one of the most dominant nations in both the Summer and Winter Olympics, and are known for non-Olympic sports as well, such as Football (NFL), Baseball (MLB), Basketball (NBA), and Ice Hockey (NHL). The U.S. has multiple tiers in its sports system: Professional, College, High School, and Club / Recreational.



Most people play sports for their High School team, and some practice and compete additionally for YMCA or club teams. After high school, most athletes attend a college for at least one year before becoming a professional athlete. Professional leagues include the NBA (Basketball), NHL (Hockey), NFL (Football), and MLB (Baseball). The table below summarizes the major tournaments in each men’s sport, last year’s winner and dominant teams, dominant players, and the corresponding Philadelphia team.

Sport	Major Tournament	2017 Winner / Dominant Teams	Current Dominant Players	Philadelphia Team
Football	Superbowl	Eagles (Philadelphia) / Patriots (Boston)	Tom Brady, Peyton Manning	Eagles
Basketball	NBA Playoffs	Golden State Warriors (San Francisco)	Michael Jordan, LeBron James	76ers (“Sixers”)
Hockey	Stanley Cup	Washington Capitals (D.C.)	Patrick Kane, Jeff Skinner	Flyers
Baseball	MLB Finals	Houston Astros (Houston)	Derek Jeter, Aaron Judge	Phillies

College Sports

The U.S. has a unique college sport system, which often offers scholarships to talented athletes from around the world. It has also brought out world-class professional athletes, like Katie Ledecky (Swimming), Kevin Durant (Basketball), and Odell Beckham Jr (Football). This system is governed by the NCAA and NAIA. The former has three divisions, while the latter has two. As a rule of thumb, Division I schools tend to be larger, more prestigious, and more competitive

(though not always!). NCAA Division III schools do not give athletic scholarships but can still be competitive. NAIA Division I can be compared to NCAA Division II.

Each division is again split up into conferences with approximately 8-15 schools each. Drexel is a NCAA Division I school competing in the [Colonial Athletic Association \(CAA\)](#). Every conference has its own championships. After those championships, some players/teams qualify for the NCAA Divisional Championships. Depending on the sport, those championships can be very prestigious and competitive. For example, the swimming NCAA Division I championships are the “fastest meet in the world.” For Men’s Basketball (MBB), NCAA Division I championships happen in March. Due to their popularity and the craze around them, the event has the nickname “[March Madness](#).” People around the country fill out [brackets](#) to guess who will make it how far in the tournament and who will win. Drexel has not participated in this tournament since 1996. However, last year’s champion was Villanova University, another Philadelphia School. College Football (as opposed to professional football, which hosts the Superbowl) is also popular, among alumni and current students, and often televised. The 2017 version of football NCAA’s D1 champion was the University of Alabama.

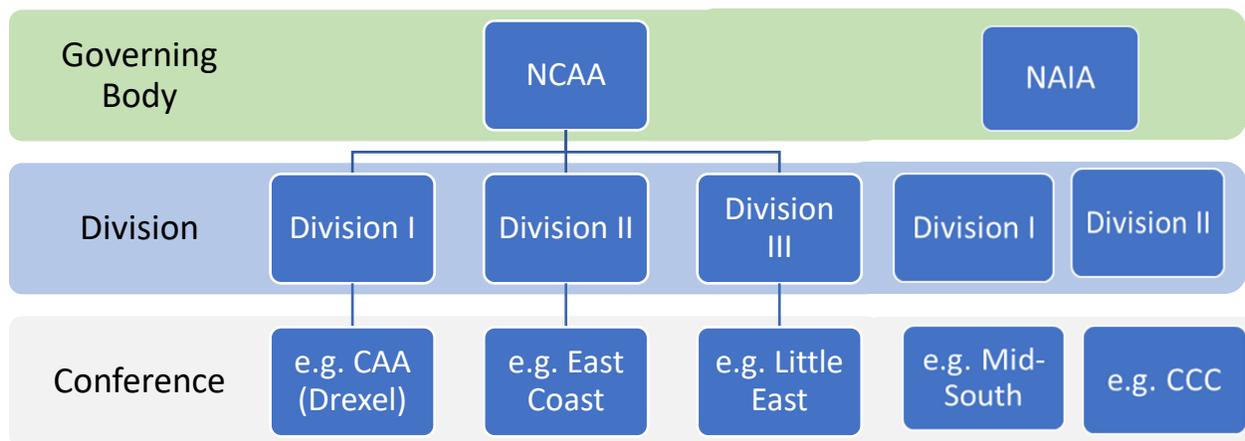


Figure: Graphical representation of sports bodies and Divisions.

Altogether, NCAA sports are very popular to watch, they require significant commitment from its athletes, with up to 20 hours of practice every week, regular travels to tournaments and competitions, and extensive regulations by the NCAA, while also being a full-time student. It is not possible to play for a college NCAA team and professionally (e.g., have a sponsor). [This makes it difficult to become an NCAA athlete.](#)

In contrast, colleges also offer club and intramural sports, which are less competitive and require less commitment. Club sports practice approximately 4-6 hours per week on average and typically encompass all or even more sports than are offered by the NCAA. For example, Drexel offers a

club field hockey and a basketball team, but also Quidditch, Karate, and E-sports. Club sports vary in their organizational structure and the tournaments they attend, but they are a great way to stay fit and make friends. They are significantly less regulated. Similarly, intramural sports are focused on making friends and staying in shape, but usually do not compete against other schools. Intramural sports teams require little commitment and practice approximately 2 hours per week. Drexel offers a variety of intramural sports, like Volleyball, Baggo, and Soccer.

Check out the website of the [DAC](#) and [Dragonlink](#), as well as the IGSA sports presentation at IGSA DragonLink (<https://dragonlink.drexel.edu/organization/igsa>) for more information! Make sure to login with Drexel ID in DragonLink to view the presentations.

Contributors' Team



***Dr Tsz Kwok** is currently the Associate Director of Graduate College and an adjunct professor at the Westphal College of Media Arts and Design at Drexel University. With his background in research and passion for international students, he is committed to making their transition from home country to the host country as smoothly as possible.*



***Zhouquan (Harry) Fu** is a PhD candidate in department of Mechanical Engineering and Mechanics. He serves as the president of IGSA 19-20. Harry has been in Drexel for 3 years and has been passionate about leading the IGSA to bring comfort, convenience and success to all members of the international community.*



***Md Rasheduzzaman** is a PhD student in Environmental Engineering. In his current position of vice-president at IGSA, Rashed is dedicated to supporting the organization with various events for the International graduate students' community. With his 2.5 years of experience at Drexel, he is passionate about helping new students to familiarize with Drexel and expedite their adaptation in the new environment.*



Jingyi Li is currently a master's student in Business Analytics and Finance from LeBow College of Business, Drexel University. With her experience as an international student, she is committed helping new students to getting acquainted to Drexel and have a pleasurable experience in Philadelphia.



Dicle Ozel is currently a master's student in Arts and Sciences, Psychology at Drexel University. With her broad international experiences, she is committed to bring the sense of unity into a diverse international community of Drexel. She currently holds the position of Treasurer in the International Graduate Students Association, being responsible for managing budget planning and allocations among several of IGSA events.



Madhura Muley is currently a Master's student at the College of Computing & Informatics at Drexel University. As the Event Coordinator at IGSA, her aim is to provide support to international students to be well and really thrive during their stay in the USA. Madhura focuses on helping international students to navigate and adjust to campus life and the new academic culture.



Saurajyoti Kar is a PhD Candidate in Environmental Engineering and a Teaching Fellow for the Freshmen Engineering Laboratory at the College of Engineering. With his international Masters' background, and his former IGSA President's position, Saurajyoti is committed to collaborating and organizing several events for international graduate students, while supporting the Graduate College in several volunteer activities.



Tanja Kirmse is a second-year Finance PhD student at Drexel and she is from Germany. As a former Division I swimmer for Drexel, she is passionate about sports and hopes to share that passion with other international graduate students. Tanja, as the current IGSA Director of Sports, is assisting international graduate students with participating in various sports while making friends, staying active, de-stressing, and exploring the unique landscape of American college and professional sports.