



## So We Hear That You're Moving to Houston...

Houston is unlike any other big city. It's population without the price, culture without the clutter, and small-town hospitality with the big-city perks! Finding a GREAT apartment that fits your budget is what we do. Here some basic things that you should know when you start looking:

Apartment complexes in Houston can range in size anywhere from 100 to 1000 units. Most of the properties are garden-style communities, but there are also quite a few lofts, mid-rises, and high-rises available. The apartments vary from one-room efficiencies (studio apartments) to larger two and three bedroom units. Most apartments come equipped with all major kitchen appliances including microwaves. Other standard amenities typically include central AC and heating, maintenance and parking. Almost all of the properties in Houston also include exercise facilities and community business centers.

All apartment complexes have a swimming pool (one of the perks of the Houston heat!). Many of the complexes include a washing machine and dryer in the individual units or connections for those who are renting or bringing their own machines. In those complexes that do not provide individual w/d machines or connections, coin operated laundry facilities are available on property. If you need to lease furniture, we work with several companies that provide a 10% discount.

Apartment rental rates vary depending upon location, neighborhood, amenities, and condition of the complex. The **starting prices** in the Houston area for unfurnished apartments are:

Efficiency/Studio.....	\$500 per month + electric, water
One-Bedroom/One Bath .....	\$600 per month + electric, water
Two-Bedroom/One Bath .....	\$800 per month + electric, water
Two-Bedroom/Two Bath .....	\$900 per month + electric, water
Three-Bedroom/Two Bath.....	\$1100 per month + electric, water

The standard apartment lease is for a period of six or 12 months. Most complexes require a security deposit ranging from \$100 to \$600. If you have a pet, a minimum \$300 pet deposit is required. There are weight and breed restrictions at most properties.

Last but not least, we want to thank you for choosing to use **Houston Apartment Insiders**.

- Our personalized service is 100% free
- Our apartment locators are experienced and licensed professionals
- We have an extensive database of thousands of apartments in the Houston area
- We're completely dedicated to working for YOU!



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This is more than a job to us and we are truly invested in what we do. But most importantly, we really care about our clients and want to do the best job we possibly can in order to assist you in finding your new apartment.

## Know Your City: Houston Fun Facts!

- Houston is the fourth most populous city in the nation (trailing only New York, Los Angeles and Chicago), and is the largest in the southern U.S.
  - The Houston-Galveston-Brazoria Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (Houston CMSA) consists of eight counties: Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller.
  - Founded in 1836, the City of Houston has a 2006 estimated population of 2.14 million, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.
  - The metro area's population of 5.54 million in 2006 is 6th largest among U.S. metropolitan statistical areas, according to [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov).
  - More than 38 million people each year fly in and out of Houston's two major airports: Bush Intercontinental and William P. Hobby.
  - Houstonians eat out more than any other city. Houston has more than 11,000 restaurants.
  - Houston has a Theater District second only to New York City in terms of a concentration of seats in a single geographic area. Located downtown, the 17-block Theater District is home to eight performing arts organizations with more than 12,000 seats.
  - Houston has a unique museum district offering a range of museums, galleries, art and cultural institutions, including the Houston's major museums.
  - Houston has more than 500 cultural, visual and performing arts organizations, 90 of which are devoted to multicultural and minority arts.
  - More than 90 languages are spoken throughout the Houston area.
  - The Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo is the largest rodeo in the world, and it attracts more than 1.8 million visitors each year.
  - Houston has a young population; 37 percent of Houstonians are 24 years old or younger and 34 percent are between the ages of 25 and 44.
  - Houston boasts more than 40 colleges, university and institutions - offering higher education options to suit all interests.
  - Houston is home to the Texas Medical Center, the largest medical center in the world, with a local economic impact of \$10 billion. More than 52,000 people work within its facilities, which encompass 21 million square feet. Altogether 4.8 million patients visit them each year.
  - Home to 18 Fortune 500 companies and more than 5,000 energy related firms, Houston is considered by many as the Energy Capital of the world.
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- Houston has the most affordable housing of 10 most populated metropolitan areas; Houston housing costs are 39 percent below the average of 26 U.S. urban populations of more than 1.5 million.
- If Houston were an independent nation, it would rank as the world's 30th largest economy

<http://www.houstontx.gov/about/houston/houstonfacts.html>

## Getting Around Town

The City of Houston is roughly 600 square miles of highways and bi-ways. While there is a public transportation system ([www.ridemetro.com](http://www.ridemetro.com)), most Houstonians prefer to drive the city on their own. That's why it's important to make sure your vehicle registration and driver's license is up to date!

## Vehicle Registration

Are you new to Texas? New residents are required to do the following within 30 days:

- Get a vehicle inspection
- Register and title your vehicle, and
- Get a Texas driver's license.

New Texas residents must have their vehicles pass inspection before having it registered and titled. After having it inspected, take the following to the Harris County Tax Office at 1001 Preston Houston, TX 77002

- Inspection certification,
- Proof of liability insurance
- Vehicle's odometer reading if it is less than 10 years old
- An original out-of-state title, proof of registration, proof of sales tax payment or current foreign/military ownership document,
- Completed Form VTR 130-U (Can be found at [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov)), and
- **The following fees:**

Registration fee (Found on [www.txdot.gov](http://www.txdot.gov))

Title application fee of \$28 or \$33, depending on the county, and

New resident tax of \$90.

Additional fees may also be due at the time of registration. For more information, contact the Harris County Tax Office at (713) 368-2000 Active duty members of the U.S. Armed Forces and non-resident, full-time students attending a Texas college or university are not required to title or register their vehicles in Texas.

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**If you're new to Harris County but not to Texas, you can register your vehicle one of three ways:**

**Online:** [http://www.txdot.gov/drivers\\_vehicles/vehicle\\_registration/default.htm](http://www.txdot.gov/drivers_vehicles/vehicle_registration/default.htm)

**Mail:** Send renewal notice (keep the vehicle owner's section for your records) proof of current liability insurance, and registration fee plus \$1 mail-in fee, to:

**Tax Assessor-Collector Leo Vasquez P.O. Box 4089 Houston, TX 77210-4089**

**In Person:** Take your registration renewal notice and proof of current liability insurance to your Harris County Tax Office at 1001 Preston Houston, TX 77002. The registration fee is due at this time

## Driver's License

If you moved to Texas and have a valid driver's license from another state, you, have 30 days to get a Texas driver's license. To apply for a Texas driver's license, you will be required to:

- Provide proof of Identity.
- Provide proof of Social Security Number.
- Provide proof of Texas vehicle registration and proof of liability insurance on all vehicles owned.
- Complete required forms available at any Texas Driver's License Office.
- Pay the required fee. (Check fees at [www.txdps.state.tx.us/administration/driver\\_licensing\\_control/dlfees.htm](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/administration/driver_licensing_control/dlfees.htm))
- Pass a vision exam.
- Surrender your current valid driver's license at the driver's license office.

If you have never been licensed or have an expired out-of-state license, you will be required to pass both the written and driving exams, in addition to a vision test.

### Visit your nearest DMV to get your license:

4545 Dacoma (Northwest Houston)  
Houston, TX 77092-8613  
713-683-0541

12220 South Gessner (Southwest Houston)  
Houston, TX 77071-2831  
713-219-4100

1601 Townhurst (West Houston)  
Houston, TX 77043-3226  
713-465-8462

10503 Grant Road  
Houston, TX 77070-4407  
281-890-5440

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9206 Winkler  
Houston, TX 77017  
713-943-0631

8825 Tidwell  
Houston, TX 77078-3300  
713-633-9872

15403 Vantage Pkwy E Ste 300  
Houston, TX 77032  
281-449-2685

## Make Houston Your City of Lights

Did you know that Texas has a deregulated energy market? That means you have a choice in who provides your apartment with electricity. Below you can get a taste of which providers you can choose from. Visit [www.electricitytexas.com](http://www.electricitytexas.com) to learn more!

### Power Providers

#### **TXU**

[www.TXU.com](http://www.TXU.com)  
1-800 350-6044

#### **Reliant**

[www.Reliant.com](http://www.Reliant.com)  
877-524 5231

#### **BounceEnergy**

[www.BounceEnergy.com](http://www.BounceEnergy.com)  
1-888 45 BOUNCE or 1-888 452 6862

#### **First Choice Power**

[www.FirstChoicePower.com](http://www.FirstChoicePower.com)  
866 520 3547

#### **Green Mountain Energy**

[www.GreenMountainEnergy.com](http://www.GreenMountainEnergy.com)  
866-301 3120

#### **Direct Energy**

[www.DirectEnergy.com](http://www.DirectEnergy.com)  
1-888 305 3828

#### **Cirro Energy**

[www.CirroEnergy.com](http://www.CirroEnergy.com)  
1-800 MY CIRRO or 1-800 692 4776

#### **Amigo Energy**

[www.amigoenergy.com](http://www.amigoenergy.com)  
1-888 4MY AMIGO or 1-888 469 2644

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## Stay Connected with Cable and Internet

To find out which cable provider is best for your location, visit <http://locator.go2broadband.com> or call **866 49-Cable**. Here are a few popular providers:

### **ATT U-Verse**

[www.att.com/uverse](http://www.att.com/uverse)  
1 888 333 6651 or local: 713 526-4716

### **DIRECTV**

[www.directv.com](http://www.directv.com)  
1 888 663 4611

### **Comcast**

[www.comcast.com](http://www.comcast.com)  
1 866 886 6838

### **Dish Network**

[www.DishNetwork.com](http://www.DishNetwork.com)  
1.888.825.255

## Are you looking for some local fare with flair? These restaurants help give Houston its flavor!

### **Goode Company Texas BBQ**

[www.goodecompany.com](http://www.goodecompany.com)  
5109 Kirby Dr 77098  
713-522-2530

You're not truly a Houstonian until you're a regular at one of the Goode Company restaurants. Located along Kirby in the West University neighborhood, Goode Co. BBQ, Seafood, and Taqueria are three establishments true to the Texan taste. Stop at the Armadillo Palace for drinks, dancing and live music when you're done eating!

### **Chuy's**

[www.Chuys.com](http://www.Chuys.com)  
2706 Westheimer Rd 77098  
713-524-1700

Tex-Mex isn't just a variation of Mexican cuisine at Chuy's, it's a new flavor and style altogether. Sit inside or on the covered patio to enjoy your fajitas. If you need your tacos to go, Chuy's has a take out menu for your convenience. Located between River Oaks and Montrose, Chuy's is a hop, skip and jump away from the Galleria, Highland Village and vintage stores. It's perfect for a family fiesta, or to grab a margarita with your date.

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### **Papas Burgers**

[www.papasburgers.com](http://www.papasburgers.com)  
5815 Westheimer Rd. (at Bering) 77057  
713-975-6082

Think you've had the best burger in the world? Think again. Until you've been to Papas, you haven't even come close. While "burger" is half of the name, it's only a fraction of the menu. Chow down on a Cajun Catfish Sandwich or sip a hand-spun milkshake. No matter what you get, you're sure to be pleased with this Galleria-area eatery.

### **Cedar Creek Café Bar & Grille**

[www.cedarcreekcfebargrill.com](http://www.cedarcreekcfebargrill.com)  
1034 W. 20th Street 77008  
713-808-9623

If you're looking for a casual atmosphere where you can grab a few drinks and watch any given sports event with your buddies, visit Cedar Creek- the newest edition to The Creek Group restaurants in Houston's Heights neighborhood. Like Dry Creek and Onion Creek, the atmosphere is enjoyable and uniquely Texan; both inside and out. Eat a burger, drink a Shiner, and leave with a smile.

## **Houston Happenings**

There is always something to do in Houston, no matter the time of year. Just see for yourself:

### **JANUARY**

- Chevron Houston Marathon: Houston's largest single-day sporting event. More than 20,000 participants, 200,000 spectators and 5,000 volunteers will take to the streets.

### **MARCH**

- Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo: This is a MUST. The annual 20 day rodeo and concert event is the biggest rodeo in the world.
  - Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston: Open course bike ride of 20, 40, and 70 miles throughout the City
  - Azalea Trail: These showy flowers flourish at six Houston locations in the River Oaks neighborhood.
  - Bayou City Art Festival (Spring): The annual fine art event boasts a stress-free outdoor gallery brimming with 300 artists working in 19 artistic media at Memorial Park.
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- H-E-B Children's Festival: Designated as "Houston's Official Family Celebration," the H-E-B Houston Children's Festival, offers six stages of music and entertainment and more than 350 exciting activities, music, crafts, exhibits, games, sports and rides.

## APRIL

- U.S. Men's Clay Court Championships: The 2009 U.S. Men's Clay Court Championships returns to the River Oaks Country Club, keeping the second longest-running USTA National Championship in Houston. Only the US Open has a longer history.
- Friends of the Houston Public Library Book Sale: Friends of the Houston Public Library invite the community to the Bargain Book Sale at the George R. Brown Convention Center. More than 80,000 books will be available to the public at "bargain" prices, with proceeds benefiting the Houston Public Library.
- Houston International Festival: Annual major outdoor event around City Hall and Sam Houston Park, over two weekends.
- Worldfest Houston International Film Festival: WorldFest will screen 55-60 feature film premieres, with a continuing annual spotlight on an individual country and its films.

## MAY

- Houston Water Festival: Fifty local, county and regional environmental agencies and non-profit organizations will be providing hands-on activities and take-home materials for all ages.
- Art Car Parade: Art Car Weekend is non-stop celebration featuring the nation's largest parade of decorated automobiles, a.k.a. Art Cars. Parade begins at 1:00 p.m. at Taft @ Allen Parkway and goes to Bagby before going back outbound along Allen Parkway

## JULY

- Houston's Official July 4th Festival: Along Buffalo Bayou and Eleanor Tinsley Park, Houston's Official July 4th Celebration, celebrates America's Birthday with a live concert featuring a nationally known and recognized recording artist, and one of the largest fireworks displays in the United States!

## AUGUST

- Theater District Open House: The free, family-friendly Theater District Open House will take place in the heart of the Theater District at the Alley Theatre (615 Texas Ave.), Hobby Center for the Performing Arts (800 Bagby), Wortham Theater Center (500 Texas Ave.), Angelika Film Center (510 Texas Ave.), and Jones Hall (615 Louisiana Ave.).

## OCTOBER

- Texas Renaissance Festival: A 50-acre 16th-century English kingdom comes to life for seven consecutive weekends. The merriment amidst the marketplace and gardens includes jousting, falconry exhibitions, magic shows, juggling and great food. Weekends, from 9:00 a.m. to dusk.
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- Wings Over Houston Air Show: Takes place at Ellington Field, about 20 miles southeast of downtown Houston, via I-45 South.
- Bayou City Art Festival (Fall): Held each year the second weekend of October, the Bayou City Art Festival Downtown welcomes the fall season and has created a new Houston Fine Art tradition. Fall art festival takes place at City Hall Reflection Pond.

## NOVEMBER

- Thanksgiving Day Parade: In downtown Houston
- Uptown Tree Lighting Ceremony: When half a million holiday lights simultaneously illuminate 80 Christmas trees lining Post Oak Boulevard, it signals the start of the season. Choirs, bands and a huge fireworks show help stir up holiday spirit the evening of Thanksgiving.

## DECEMBER

- Mayor's Official Downtown Houston Holiday Celebration: Watch the famous skyline come alive with music, lights and fireworks!
- Christmas Candlelight Tour: Candles and decorations reminiscent of the 19th century brighten the eight historic structures in downtown's Sam Houston Park. Stroll down memory lane at The Heritage Society's Candlelight Tour. Come tour Houston's most historic homes decorated for the season. Enjoy food, entertainment and more.
- Holiday Lights in Hermann Park: Elegant light displays along a one-mile stretch of Hermann Park.

For more information, visit [www.houstontx.gov/about/houston/annualevents.html](http://www.houstontx.gov/about/houston/annualevents.html)

## Need a Number? Here are a few to keep handy!

Southeast Texas Poison Center: **800 764 7661**  
Texas Dept. of Public Safety: **713 681 1761**

### Emergency Assistance

Disaster Relief- Red Cross: **713 526 8300**  
Emergency Ambulance: **911**  
Houston Fire Department: **911**  
Houston Police Department (non-emergency): **713 222 3131**  
Harris County Sherriff: **713 221 6000**

### Utilities

City of Houston: **713 247 1000**  
Houston Sewer Department: **713 247 1000**  
Houston Water Department: **713 754 9884**

### Voter Information



Voter Registration & Info: **713 224 1919**  
Harris County Democrats: **713 739 7785**  
Harris County Republicans: **713 838 7900**  
League of Women Voters: **713 784 2923**

#### **Pets**

Emergency Clinic- Galleria: **713 693 1100**  
Emergency Clinic- Katy Fwy: **713 932 9589**  
Houston Humane Society: **713 433 6421**  
Rabies Control Center: **713 247 1000**  
SPCA: **713 869 7722**

#### **Auto**

Harris County Registration: **713 368 2000**  
Fort Bend County Registration: **281 342 4311**  
Department of Public Safety: **713 681 1761**  
Car Share & Van Share: **713 227 0003**  
Metro Bus Information: **713 635 4000**

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#### **Taxes**

Harris County Tax Assessor: **713 224 1919**  
City of Houston Property Taxes: **713 892 7700**  
Income Tax Information: **800 829 1040**

#### **Miscellaneous**

Better Business Bureau: **713 868 9500**  
Greater Houston Partnership: **713 844 3600**  
Citizens Assistance Office: **713 247 1888**  
Community Legal Services: **713 313 7275**  
Consumer Credit Counseling: **713 923 2227**  
Crime Stoppers: **713 222 8477**  
Governor's Hotline: **800 843 5789**  
Greater Houston Convention and Visitor's Council: **713 227 3100**  
Harris Co. Information Services: **713 755 5000**  
Harris Co. Marriage License: **713 755 6405**  
Houston Apartment Insiders **713 581 1055**  
Houston Chronicle: **713 362 7171**  
Houston City Hall: **713 247 1000**  
HISD: **713 556 6005**  
Municipal Court: **713 247 5100**  
Veterans Administration: **800 827 1000**