A Gift from your
Vanderbilt Alumni Association

Advice from Young Alumni to the Vanderbilt Class of 2020

With contributions from:

Vanderbilt Chapters
Vanderbilt Career Center
The Annual Giving Office

Alumni Association
Class of 2020,

Congratulations on your forthcoming graduation from Vanderbilt University. Commencement ceremonies honor your personal accomplishments and provide an opportunity to celebrate with your families and friends—it’s a well–deserved recognition of your academic achievement, and it marks the beginning of the next exciting phase of your life.

While you may not realize it, you’re already a member of the Vanderbilt Alumni Association. There are more than 140,000 of us around the world who have already transitioned to “life after college.” We have a vested interest in your success, too. You see, the more successful you become, the more valuable our Vanderbilt degree becomes. Many alumni have contributed useful tips and helpful advice for post–graduation success in this book. Please accept this “Life After Vanderbilt” guide as a gift from your Alumni Association. One day soon you may have tips of your own to add!

The Alumni Association plays an active role in the life of the university and its alumni, and I hope you’ll take advantage of the many opportunities it offers to extend and deepen your lifelong relationship with Vanderbilt, including:

• There are Vanderbilt chapters in more than 40 cities across the U.S. and around the world, so be sure to check in and sign up in your next location. Chapters are a great way to plug into the alumni network in your city. Update your home and email address in VUconnect to receive invitations for game–watching parties, happy hours, networking, community service, wine tastings, tailgates and educational events with professors and alumni.

• Register on VUconnect.com—it’s a great way to keep in touch and network with alumni worldwide as you move into the world of work, volunteer service, or further education. It also ensures you’ll receive regular updates via Alumni eXclusive, our e–newsletter.

• Become an Alumni CoRPs Interviewer to help recruit new students, volunteer to create chapter events, or help with your class Reunion committee.

• Explore our new alumni career resources where you’ll find job postings, a resume/cover letter/interview preparation program, career coaching, webinars, and more. Also check out the official Vanderbilt Alumni LinkedIn group.

However you choose, stay connected—you’re the living brand of Vanderbilt, and your fellow Commodores are proud of your achievement. You now join the global Vanderbilt alumni network in 141 countries around the world. Whether you’re studying, traveling, looking for work, or finding friends in a new city….think Vanderbilt, because we’re there.

Think Vanderbilt for life!

Dan Lovinger, BA’87
President, Vanderbilt Alumni Association
#VU4LIFE
7 WAYS TO BE VANDERBILT FOR LIFE

1 Connect with Fellow Commodores in Your New City
Moving to a new city can be daunting; getting plugged into your local Vanderbilt alumni chapter can help. Just visit www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni to see what your city’s alumni chapter has planned for the month and show up! It really is as easy as that. From supper clubs to game watching, there’s something for everyone!

2 Be Social!
Follow the Vanderbilt Alumni Association on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook to stay up-to-date on all things Vanderbilt!

www.facebook.com/VanderbiltAlumni
@vanderbiltalum
@vanderbiltalumni

3 #AnchorDown at Homecoming
It’s the perfect excuse to visit Nashville, and you’ll have a blast tailgating and cheering on the ‘Dores at Dudley Field!

4 Get LinkedIn with Alumni
Join the official Vanderbilt Alumni Group on LinkedIn – there are over 15,000 members just waiting to network with you.

Congratulations to the Class of 2014 from your

5 Recruit the Next Generation of ‘Dores
Want to shape Vanderbilt’s future? Volunteer with CoRPs – Commodore Recruitment Programs. As a CoRPs volunteer, you’ll interview applicants for undergraduate admission, represent Vanderbilt at college fairs near you, and encourage admitted students to “go gold” by being in touch post-acceptance. Visit www.vanderbilt.edu/alumni/volunteer to learn more.

6 Pay it Forward: Give Back
Vanderbilt gave you an extraordinary four years: a world-class education, access to outstanding professors, lifelong friendships, and so much more. Help maintain the Vanderbilt experience by giving back to the university each year.

7 Gear Up!
No need to retire your Vandy gear after graduation. Keep those t-shirts, polos, and tote bags in rotation and let the world know you’re proud to be Vanderbilt for Life!
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## The Vanderbilt Alma Mater
On the city’s western border,
Reared against the sky,
Proudly stands our Alma Mater,
As the years roll by.
Forward ever be thy watchword,
Conquer and Prevail!
Hail to thee our Alma Mater,
Vanderbilt, All Hail!
Setting Out into the Real World

ON THE CITY’S WESTERN BORDER ... or anywhere you go!

Transitioning to Life on Your Own

Everyone has different hopes and plans for this part of your life. Decide on yours, and go for them. And don’t stress if it’s not the same as your friends’ plans. It’s about what makes you happy. Benjamin Jacobi, ’15

Sometimes life may throw things at you, and you may begin to second guess your decision. It happens to the best of us. The important thing to remember is that you made the decision for a reason, and it is and will be worth it. Onye Okeke, ’16

Prayer, faith and meditation have been THE most important aspects of my life which have kept me grounded even when transition has been difficult. Caroline Walker, ’15

Weekends can be more fun than in college. Weekdays are horrible. Garner Gentry, ’16

Just go for it. If you’ve done the work, the transition won’t be so bad. If you know no one else in the area, try to find a roommate or join Facebook groups that will help you at least find some people to start out with. And if that fails, you always have coworkers! Alanna Pahnke, ’17

Find a way to build community. Life after college can be super lonely when all of your best friends are in different cities. Stay in touch any way you can because those relationships are important and they are having many of the same experiences as you. At the same time, you need to start building community where you are, because as great as your friends are, they can’t fly in every time you need them. Start with your new coworkers. You probably won’t click with all of them, but you will click with some. If you’re a super extrovert you can even try meeting strangers. Just don’t be alone. It’s not good for your mental health. Ekom Eyoh, ’16

It can take six or twelve months to feel adjusted after starting your job, so don’t feel upset if you don’t feel like you have it figured out right away. Hilary Horvatits, ’17

Prioritize! Megan Schneir, ’14

Give yourself six months at minimum to settle in before you start evaluating how much you actually enjoy your new city and what you’re doing. Just like college, the first bit can be quite the whirlwind and therefore not appropriate to assess just yet. Anonymous, ’16

Don’t worry if you feel a little lonely after starting a new job and moving to a new city. Take those first weekends by yourself to explore your city and do things that only you would want to do. Emily Rolen, ’15

Everyone’s trajectory is different, so be wary of comparing yourself to your peers. Some people will go to grad school, some have amazing jobs, some might have negative job experiences yet post amazing things on social media. No graduate’s next steps are better than another’s—they are what they are! Be proud of what your next steps are, no matter what they are. Erin Vernbeck, ’16
Try not to look back and think about everything you miss from college. That will only
make you sad. It is best to just remember this is a new chapter and with that will come
new fun experiences.  *Becca, ‘16*

It’s really hard at the beginning. I didn’t have much time to settle in before starting my
job, so the worst part of it for me was having to do things like setting up utilities or
running errands when I came home from a day of work. It’s tough at first, but I, and most
people I know, enjoy post grad life more than being in college (even though we loved
college).  *Anonymous, ‘17*

I’m not going to sugarcoat it—postgrad life can be really tough at the start. You’re
starting from scratch with pretty much everything. My advice — don’t compare yourself
to everyone else’s Instagram. If YOU are happy with yourself, don’t let Social Sally’s post
about clubbing last weekend make you feel bad about staying in bed with Netflix for 12
hours straight after a tough week.  *Anonymous, ‘16*

Make friends in your new city as quickly as you can. A social group makes all the
difference in feeling at home.  *Anonymous, ‘17*

In college you’re surrounded by people. Afterward you’re more or less alone—enjoy it! It’s
a great time to set your own personal goals and strive to achieve them without a whole
lot of social pressure.  *Mitch Masia, ‘16*

Travel while you can!! If you have time before starting your job, go explore the world
because unfortunately you’ll be tied down for some time after.  *Samantha Clark, ‘17*

Don’t feel weird about reaching out to people that you kind of know and seeing if they
want to hang out. They’re probably just as lonely as you are and will be so happy to hear
from you.  *Anonymous, ‘15*

If you feel lost, don’t have strong career goals, and you’re not ready to go back to
school, then go live where you’ve got a few friends! It’s better to live in an interesting
city with a solid social network than at your parents’ house. This way, you won’t feel
like a failure. And by putting yourself out there in the world, your next steps may reveal
themselves to you!  *Katie Alley, ‘18*

Real life is not the same as college. Expect difficulties, and understand that failure, while
painful, is an extremely powerful catalyst for growth.  *Christopher Xin, ‘14*

Remember when all of the adults kept telling you that growing up is not so easy? Well,
they weren’t totally wrong. No one gets excited about buying new tires for Christmas.
Finding ways to treat yourself every now and then will really help you stay positive and
ensure that you’ve got something to look forward to. While saving and budgeting is
important, set aside the money for a monthly treat—a movie or a sushi dinner can be a
great way to self–care!  *Sadie Andros, ‘16*

It will be hard to make new friends, and you may feel isolated at first. Find a social hobby
to help you meet new people and give you something to do other than work. For me
that meant joining a rock climbing gym, for others that meant joining dance groups, book
clubs, etc... Even if you have to pay a membership fee, it’s usually worth the investment!
*Jad El Harake, ‘18*

What helps me the most is being honest with myself and my loved ones about my
difficulty, and owning up to the fact that it is okay that I don’t have it all figured out quite
yet – and that’s okay.  *Morgan Franklin, ‘16*
Learn to love that alone time and quiet that voice of FOMO. And if you’re really struggling, learn to ask for help and consider seeing a therapist. This is a truly tumultuous time in your life, and if you know that you are consistently unhappier than you’ve ever been before, there’s no shame in finding a professional that will listen to you talk and cry and obsess. Everyone needs a little extra support from time to time, and this will probably be one of those times. **Anonymous, ’15**

Your 20–somethings are really hard and it’s difficult to not have a four–year “frame” to embark on. But also, now is the time to meet new people, try new things, be adventurous! Also, surround yourself with people who you know will have your back – your true friends. Everyone is too old for drama, so don’t have it in your life. **Christine Ko, ’13**

Get used to spending time alone with your own thoughts. Ponder who you want to be and how you want to arrive there. Find hobbies and outlets for social, physical and intellectual engagement. Get out of your comfort zone and learn something new about yourself. **John I. Schember, ’16**

The transition is hard. You find that your friend group goes from 20 to two in the matter of a few weeks. Don’t be discouraged by this because believe me, you’re not the only one who is looking for a friend post–grad. It’s the perfect time to reach out to those Vandy grads staying in the area you didn’t know very well. **Katie White, ’13**

You won’t get everything right the first time, and that is ok. Don’t be afraid to ask for help from parents or other more experienced adults in your life. They can offer you practical advice and wisdom that only comes from true experience. **Ali Von Deylen, ’16**

There aren’t as many extracurriculars after college, so you have to work a little harder to form a sense of community. Whether it’s an intramural sports team, weekly volunteering, or a social group, make the effort to work an activity into your schedule early on in the transition. **Kacie Dunham, ’18**

Especially if you’re moving to a new city, just say yes, especially for the first couple months. Even if you only know one person at an event or you get a random invite, don’t be afraid to put yourself out there. Those first encounters go a long way. **Haley Stuligross, ’15**

Take it one day at a time and don’t be afraid to ask for help when you need it. **Sarah Staples, ’14**

Don’t be afraid to step outside of your comfort zone. I took a job at a climbing gym, and now I’m hooked on recreational climbing! It’s so much fun and I never would have discovered it if I hadn’t taken a chance. **Mae Mosley, ’15**

Life on your own is pretty different. You will understand why your parents fall asleep at 9 every night. **Julian White, ’13**

Make sure you seek to find community. It will take time, but that is such an essential part of transitioning out of college. It will also take longer because you will not be able to see them as much as your friends at Vandy because of work and living farther apart, but find friends. It will make life much more enjoyable. Also, note that your definition of fun may change. **Emily Barker, ’17**

Plug into your local VU Alumni Chapter! These groups not only offer great networking opportunities, but also let you indulge in some nostalgia for your alma mater even when you are not able to physically be on campus. **Brian McGrath, ’13**
It could be hard because you might lose that community of same-age/similar background friends, but it’s always fun to meet new people from various backgrounds and learn their perspectives on life. So stay open and positive! Mingyun Zhao, ’14

Just realize that no one has any idea what they’re doing. That’s the secret to adulthood. We’re all just figuring it out as we go along. Anonymous, ’15

**Achieving your Goals: Professionally and Personally**

It can be easy to start working, get comfortable, and then lose sight of your larger professional trajectory, so be sure to reflect regularly to make sure you’re on the right track for wherever you’d like to go personally and professionally. Matt Genova, ’13

Set up a monthly professional development one-on-one with your manager or another mentor at work. You’d assume those conversations would happen naturally, but carving out specific time for it allows you to set goals with someone more experienced and measure progress on them on a consistent basis. Kendall Johnston-Legg, ’17

Make sure you always have your basics covered before you try for more. Don’t overstretch yourself until you have a routine established, at that point you’ll be itching for more! Alanna Pahnke, ’17

You do not need to plan your entire life. If you have, that’s great, but be OK with that plan changing lots of times. I went from being a teacher to a public affairs consultant in three years. Never would have thought that was going to happen. Life has a way of pulling you to where you need to go without your Leslie Knope style 30-year-plan binder. Christopher Fink, ’14

I set small deadlines along the way to the larger goal. I have occasionally used a web software called Trello to track my progress towards a big goal. Kacie Dunham, ’18

I am glued to my planner. Anonymous, ’17

Find a new hobby where you can set personal goals for yourself. Professionally, don’t get too bogged down in your plan. Your life can change course so quickly and sometimes without you even noticing. Pay attention to your level of happiness, and don’t be afraid to jump ship if you’re consistently miserable in your field. Always keep an open mind to new opportunities. Anonymous, ’15

Set goals every month or every quarter. Give yourself grace in achieving them, but try to stick to them if you can. Emily Barker, ’17

Have a meeting with your boss about growth within your job. I did this within the first few weeks so that my boss knew I was hoping to grow within my position. Becca, ’16

Have a side hustle. Something that helps advance your career that is unrelated to your current job. Steven Spens, ’18

Read a book like *What Color is Your Parachute?* that will help you make a personal mission statement and identify some of your key weaknesses and strengths. Get started! Emmie Arnold, ’15

Try not to tackle too much at a time. I know that’s hard to say to a bunch of Vandy grads, where overachieving was everyone’s silent minor. Start small. Anonymous, ’16

Do not depend on your boss to handle your professional development. Anonymous, ’14
Write down your goals, then work on breaking them out into actionable steps. Put those steps on a tentative timeline, or even on a physical calendar, and push yourself to take action when the time is right. *Anonymous, ’16*

Be realistic in terms of how much time it will take to progress on your career path. Your actions will speak for themselves so always present your best self while working. *Anonymous, ’15*

Share your goals with your manager or supervisor so they can help you achieve them. *Allie Fan, ’14*

Time has really flown since graduating. Trying to keep measurable goals with deadlines can help slow it down. *John Tian, ’15*

At the start of each month I make a few simple, achievable goals. For example, I’ve gotten really lazy about working out, so one of my December goals is to work out four times. Then maybe my January goal will be five times. Basically I make mini goals that add onto each other until I get to the main objective. Plus the repetition really helps turn goals into habits. *Anonymous, ’16*

Set your own motivation. It can be a good deal, a nice bag, a vacation...anything that will motivate you. *Mingyun Zhao, ’14*

Write them down. *Sarah Staples, ’14*

It’s all about discipline. You can’t really trust motivation by itself—there will be so many times when you’re just not motivated. It’s difficult, but just force yourself to take the steps that are necessary to reach your goals. *Anonymous, ’17*

**Advice on Moving Home with Mom and Dad**

It’s an adjustment for both you and your parents, so be considerate. *Marie Elise Casares, ’15*

Your parents are doing you a favor by letting you stay in their house so let them know you appreciate it by helping out around the house, especially if you’re not paying for room and board. Your siblings aren’t the same people they used to be so don’t treat them like they’re babies. Otherwise, your argument for being an adult sort of becomes moot when you’re trying to get more privileges with your parents. *Ekom Eyoh, ’16*

It’s ok. You’re not a failure, or a loser, if you have to move back in with your parents. Not everyone gets a cool high-powered job in NYC or into the graduate school of their dreams on their first try. It happens to WAY more people than you think! Regroup, reorganize, make a plan, and enjoy the free food while you can. YOU WILL BE OK!! *Lauren Mitchell, ’16*

I lived at home for my first year after graduation to kick-start paying off my car and student loans. Don’t take shame in it – the opportunity to live at home and set yourself up financially is a generous gift from your parents. If it’s right for you, the choice to live at home for a bit can be a mature and thoughtful decision that sets you up for long-term financial success. *Anonymous, ’14*

Make a budget and stick to it. Not paying rent is an incredible privilege while working your first (and likely lowest-paying) job. Don’t blow the opportunity to save up for a rainy day and go on that cool trip you’ve been dying to take. *Anonymous, ’15*
I know first-hand that it can be really stressful and sometimes discouraging to move back home after being independent for four years. I love my family, but it was very difficult and sometimes even embarrassing to talk to extended family, friends, or co-workers and tell them that their beloved Vanderbilt graduate was back living with her parents. Just keep your head up and know that it is only temporary and likely no one but you is actually disappointed in you. Jamie Lee Jones, ’15

Give yourself time and accept help. Alexa Reed, ’17

Moving home is wonderful right after graduation. You have some time to wind down and evaluate your future without paying rent and without having the huge stressors of living on your own. At some point, if you find yourself feeling miserable, dependent, and socially isolated there, maybe it’s time for you to move on. Katie Alley, ’18

Do what you can to save money, and don’t become a pest. Try to be a contributor, rather than just a guest. You’re an adult now and you should act like it. Sarah Staples, ’14

Don’t freak out if you don’t have a job lined up after graduation. You’re NOT a failure! I was so self-conscious while I was living at home and searching for a job, because I felt like everyone was judging me. Looking back now, that wasn’t true at all. AND now I have an amazing job that I absolutely love. You just have to trust that things will work out exactly how they are supposed to. Rebekah Smith, ’16

Show gratitude toward your parents, especially if you’re living with cheap or no rent! Help out around the house, buy groceries, etc. Hilary Horvatits, ’17

Take this time to save! Once you move out, it gets so much harder to put away money. Francesca Ambrose, ’17

Hug the people you love and spend some of those would-be rent dollars on a nice dinner to say thank you. Paige Diner, ’13

It’s pretty acceptable these days to move back home honestly, just to save up money. As long as you realize it’s a temporary thing, it’s completely fine. Benjamin Jacobi, ’15

Moving back in with your parents is a mix of comfortable and frustrating. As long as they’re willing to support you, do your best to reward them for it. Save money, be respectful, and plan to get out when you are fully ready. John I. Schember, ’16

Your relationship with your parents will be very different! Some parents still expect a child; some expect a friend. Communication will be crucial here. Emmie Arnold, ’15

**Staying Connected to your Commodore Pals**

Staying in touch is HARD! Call your friends, but don’t feel bad if you don’t talk as often as you used to. Relationships evolve and while that means putting forth the effort, it also means leaving room to grow. Anonymous, ’13

The Vanderbilt Alumni Association is incredible. Through events and other offerings, I’ve stayed in contact with most of my class who live in NYC in addition to meetings dozens of new ‘Dores who either graduated before me or went to one of the professional schools. Anonymous, ’16

I play D&D with my Vandy friends on Thursday nights! Lauren Mitchell, ’16
I created a GroupMe of Vandy in Atlanta people that I knew (2017 grads mainly), and then each of those people added others that they knew. It’s a great way to have people to do stuff with. **Alanna Pahnke, ’17**

Visit Nashville—everyone misses it so we try to get together there! Great to relive old memories and make new ones. **Anastasia Medytska, ’14**

Group messages and at least annual trips / reunions! **Megan Schneir, ’14**

As an adult now, you have to take an active part in maintaining your friendships. Friendships are work, but will keep you sane and stable as a growing adult! **Damonta Morgan, ’17**

I write letters to my friends! Yes, real letters with envelopes and stamps. It’s a great way to update friends on what you’re up to, without the awkwardness of a random text about yourself. Plus, everyone loves getting a letter in the mail! **Rebekah Smith, ’16**

Texting is great, but nothing beats a good old–fashioned phone call. **Ali Von Deylen, ’16**

Big fan of the telephone. **Mitch Masia, ’16**

We schedule biweekly Skype chats! It’s great to chat and catch up. Also, if you have a long walk to or from school, use those walks to call people to stay in touch. **Anonymous, ’18**

Go to Homecoming your first year, and FaceTime friends or call them when you have the chance. I like to call people on my commute home from work! **Hilary Horvatits, ’17**

Make an effort to go to homecoming your first fall after graduation. You’ll know the most underclassmen and they’ll be so happy to see you again! **Chelsea Yip, ’18**

Keep telling your friends happy birthday, and wish them happy holidays. Don’t forget about them! There’s Facebook, Snapchat, all kinds of social media to stay connected. **Anonymous, ’17**

Group chats are key. Vandy people continue to be over–committed after graduation too, so planning times to talk on the phone or FaceTime have been essential. Plan an absurd reunion trip for way too far out into the future and then make it happen. **Liam Underwood, ’16**

My friends and I did a secret Santa our senior year and decided to do it again via snail mail after graduation. It’s hard to organize and keep everything “secret”, but it ended up being a blast. **Hannah Gacke, 15**

I love to reach out to friends while walking to/from work or home— quick chats are great ways to check in with people! I try to plan long weekends with various groups of friends throughout the year too, so I always have a trip to look forward to. **Liana Bunce, ’15**

Download InkCards and send people you miss cute (and affordable!) cards with pictures of you living the high life at Vanderbilt. **Morgan Franklin, ’16**

I keep my club and roommate GroupMe’s active, and I try to call a different friend from Vandy every week. It’s not easy to find the time, but it’s definitely worth it. **Anonymous, ’15**
Plan a yearly reunion and pick a new location each year — that way you can see everyone’s new cities! Kendall Johnston-Legg, ’17

It’s easier to keep in touch rather than catch up every several months. Make plans to meet up whenever possible, schedule weekend calls every once in a while, or maybe set up a fun FaceTime activity, like cooking together. This last suggestion comes from someone who successfully survived a long–term long–distance relationship with FaceTime dates and calling at any time available. John I Schember, ’16

Group messages are a lifesaver for staying connected with my friends from Vandy who moved away. I also love to have individual catch–up phone calls with people every month or so to get in–depth updates on their lives. Sara Bunch, ’15

Make sure you engage with your local alumni chapter as soon as possible! They have fun events and it’s a great way to reconnect with old friends and make new ones! Madison Maderious, ’18

Messaging apps are your best friend for quick updates and chats. Also, you know phone calls and text messaging are still a thing. Try those out too. Ekom Eyoh, ’16

My friends and I have kept our old group text messages and Snapchats alive. Also, take the time to reach out frequently. Whenever I stumble across something that makes me think of a friend from Vanderbilt, I don’t hesitate to share it with them and use the opportunity to catch up. Finally, as I am living in Nashville, I have an open door policy. If any of my Vanderbilt friends are passing through Nashville or want to visit, they are always welcome to crash on my couch! Kacie Dunham, ’18

Schedule times to talk on the phone with people. It might seem like a lot, but long distance friendships are a lot like long distance relationships. They take work. Also, if you’re ever in the same town as an old college friend, make it a priority to see them if at all possible. It will be worth the effort. Will Nichols, ’15

It’s really tough to stay close with VU friends who don’t live in the same city. We’ve started writing letters, which is a really great way to still feel connected. I’m also fortunate that I’ve been able to plan trips to see my closest friends about once a year. Hannah Lazarz, ’17

I thought I’d quit using GroupMe after graduation, but it’s been useful to keep in touch with a few groups of friends. My close friends and I do a weekly update where we all send our high and low of the week, an upcoming adventure, and a random question one of us picks. It may sound cheesy, but it’s kept us involved in each other’s lives. Tamara Cecala, ’15

My friends and I try to visit each other often even though we all live in different cities now. We also started a tradition where we get together for New Year’s Eve every year. We don’t necessarily do anything extravagant, we just go stay with one of our friends and go to a bar, but being able to get together and catch up in person means a lot. Erin Baldwin, ’14

It’s important to maintain contact with your friends from Vanderbilt. I tend to do so primarily through texting and, preferably, calling. I also plan to visit friends in their new cities whenever my schedule permits. Alec Carro, ’18
It’s the best weekend of the year!
Don’t miss a minute of the fun
with all your Vandy friends!
See all the details at vu.edu/homecoming.

VANDERBILT

HOMECOMING

NOVEMBER 6-7, 2020

SEE YOU IN NOVEMBER!
Finding an Apartment

Finding the Right Apartment
Location is super important. If your job will require more time than a nine to five, I highly recommend living as close to work as possible. I walk to work every day and it makes everything easier. Anonymous, '13

Visit! You get a much better feel for the place and the surrounding environment by driving through. I visited a couple of apartments that looked perfect on paper but turned out to be in areas I didn’t feel safe living. Tamara Cecala, '15

Facebook groups are THE place to find housing IF you’re okay with housemates. If you want to live alone, but can’t afford the astronomical rent of a swanky new apartment building, check out real estate websites like Zillow or Trulia. They have rental sections where homeowners will list apartments and such (and almost always WAY cheaper than an apartment complex). Rebekah Smith, '16

Be sure to read your lease agreement. There are terms that will get you if you do not abide. Such as, how much advance notice you must provide before you move out, etc. Tyler Davis, '17

Make apartment choices based on your transit choices. Do you have a car you’ll be driving everywhere? Go for consistent and covered parking. Taking public transit? Get close to a bus/train/subway stop. Sarah Staples, '14

If you’re trying to find a place remotely and can’t make it somewhere to visit before you commit, try to have a friend or family member go check the place out if you know someone in the area. Matt Genova, '13

Lots of searching on Zillow! I also made a spreadsheet and have dollar amounts to different features I cared about, so that I wouldn’t overspend on a way more expensive apartment for one or two amenities I didn’t care as much about. Megan McGuire, '16

Living alone is awesome if you can afford it. You’ll grow into yourself and be forced to reach out to make friends and go to events, so you’ll constantly go out of your comfort zone. Anonymous, '14

Websites such as apartmentguide.com and trulia.com prove to be good resources. Visiting the apartments on weekends, unless gated, is also a good way to check out the properties and residents before scheduling an official visit. Anonymous, '14

As sketchy as your parents might think it is, Craigslist is a great place to find hidden gem apartments. Samantha Orland, '15

Make a wish–list of everything you want in your apartment: price, location, air conditioning, wood floors, dishwasher; whatever. As you tour units, keep your wish list in mind to hone what you absolutely must have to be happy. Apartment managers will always try to upsell you, so be firm on what you really can afford. Emily Rolen, '15
Craigslist! I sent out a ton of emails describing myself and what I was looking for in an apartment (and answering any questions in the postings. I met with landlords and housemates. I checked out the entire place including water, laundry, bathrooms, nearby transit and grocery stores, noise level, and commute to work. And of course, whether or not I could see myself feeling at home in my potential place. Also, SF sounds expensive but there are definitely affordable neighborhoods (like the Sunset and Portola/Visitacion Valley). *Anonymous, ’17*

Make sure your cellular network works in your room/house. *Anonymous, ’16*

Set a hard limit for how much you’re willing to spend each month (and DO NOT go above it). Make sure you include everything in that number (rent, heating, fees, internet, etc.) and use that as your starting point. *Erin Lee, ’15*

If you’re living in any major city, look for alumni Facebook pages or groups called Gypsy Housing. Beware of scams—if it seems too good to be true, it probably is! *Anonymous, ’15*

Don’t forget to consider the little things. My roommate preferred one apartment over another because it had a stoplight to get onto the main road. We ended up choosing that apartment, and I became very thankful for that stoplight because everyone speeds on the road we live on. *Mae Mosley, ’15*

Zillow, Craigslist, Facebook. *Hilary Horvatits, ’17*

I hit the streets. It was important to me to know what was within good walking distance. *Anonymous, ’17*

Once you have a few neighborhoods picked out, there are a ton of resources for finding a place that fits your budget, space and amenity needs. We used ForRent, Livelovely, and even Craigslist to find a place that worked. *Anonymous, ’15*

Ask your friends or use social media, and there’s a Vanderbilt apartment listing platform. Look at reviews online and take into account transportation and parking, whether utilities are included, and how the living spaces are shared. *John I. Schember, ’16*

Reach out to those who have connections in the city you are moving to. They will be very helpful in telling you where to look and to help you understand the wide range of options available to you. *Jordyn Margolis, ’18*

Set a budget and then stick to it. Include utilities, parking, gas for commute, etc, in your calculations! You’d be surprised how fast all that extra stuff can add up. *Katherine Sumarriva, ’15*

Talk to people who live in the area, they will have good advice and opinions about where to go! *Megan Schneir, ’14*

Make sure to ask the landlord about how they handle upgrades and fixes in the apartment as well as an estimate for the monthly cost of utilities. *Greer Martin, ’13*

Your “non–negotiables” are going to change and you will be surprised how you will adapt for cheap(er) rent. In NYC, at least. *Paige Diner, ’13*
There’s no “perfect” apartment. We’re young. You don’t need to live in the Ritz. Rent is most likely your largest expense straight out of school, so by limiting your rent payments you’ll be able to save well and feel even better about your financial situation. The right apartment will be the right balance between affordability and amenities. *Mitch Masia, ’16*

I had a few friends from Vandy who graduated the year before me and were living in my current city. I reached out to them and they gave me recommendations about which neighborhoods and apartment complexes to look at, and I ended up following their advice and being very happy with it! *Anonymous, ’15*

Google reviews & Apartments.com. Take the reviews with a grain of salt. *John Tian, ’15*

In New York, you have to be able to compromise one thing: price, location, or amenities. Make a list of your non-negotiables and be firm about your budget. Be prepared to pay a lot up front and have all of your documents ready to go when you see each apartment. Apartments get rented in the blink of an eye so you need to be organized and prepared. *Louisa Wells, ’14*

Start putting aside some money now to cover the cost of moving, especially if you are moving to a new city. There are many ‘hidden’ costs associated with moving (security deposit, cable/internet activation fees, new furniture) and you don’t want to be caught off guard. *Steven Menendez, ’11*

I would recommend reaching out to your professional connections—especially if you’re moving somewhere new. Overall, the most important things to look for are: good roommates, a good price and a safe community. This is probably just one of your first places after all, don’t go expecting an apartment at the Plaza. *Sadie Andros, ’16*

Craigslist! It did take quite a while to find the right place, but since I was moving across the country I found it was easiest to find someone who was already living in LA who was looking for a new roommate. That way, they could show me the place via FaceTime/photos before I moved out. *Hannah Lazarz, ’17*

In NYC, StreetEasy is the way to go. If you do your homework, you can find a nice no-fee apartment and save thousands. *Anthony Tripodoro, ’15*

**Advice on Saving to Buy Your First Place**

Have a realistic goal for how much you can put aside each month. *Anonymous, ’17*

Focus on building credit history first. A good credit will take you further (lower interest rate) than a large down payment will. *Sarah Staples, ’14*

Saving up to buy my first home is another reason why I like having two savings accounts. Having a separate savings accounts for vacations and other considerable expenses (new computer, TV, etc.) allows me to set aside money to be spent on a short term schedule, while also having a savings account that is set to build for the long term. *Kacie Dunham, ’18*

Live at home while you save. I know a lot of people cringe about moving back in with their parents after college, but it really does help save a ton compared to renting your own place. *Ekom Eyoh, ’16*
Job Search, Networking, Interviews, and Your First Job

PROUDLY STANDS OUR ALMA MATER... at the top of your resume!

The Job Search

Have an open mind. I ended up with a completely different job than I thought I would have, and I ended up loving it. Laurel Piper, '16

If at all possible, send your resume directly to the person you would be working for! i.e., if you are applying for a research position, send your resume to the PI (IN ADDITION to sending it through the usual passages) if you can figure out who that would be. This shows them that a) you are so interested in the position that you would go out of your way and do an unnecessary step and b) you are a go–getter who will work hard to get things done. This little tip has helped me A LOT in my job search after college! Lauren Mitchell, '16

Take every interview you’re offered, even if you don’t want the job. The practice in front of a real live interviewer is priceless, and you never know what the connections you make might lead to down the road. Anonymous, '15

For business roles, job applications are a numbers game. Do not search for your 10 most perfect positions and apply to them alone. Cast a very wide net, apply to any and all jobs that pique your interest, even if they aren’t your dream role. You’ll be surprised where this approach takes you. Anonymous, '18

Use the Vanderbilt network! I got in touch with many alumni through LinkedIn to sit down for informational interviews that always led to hearing about an opening or actually getting an interview. Also reach out to people you met during your time at Vanderbilt, such as professors, club advisors and internship supervisors. We really consider each other family and are happy to help. Natalia Alvarez, '14

Try to find a place with good people who want to help you grow. That is way more important than being just a name when you’re starting out. Alanna Pahnke, '17

Be genuine and humble. Make it the real you that applies for a job. Christine Ko, '13

Don’t give up. Check every job board and apply for everything you might be interested in. Rebekah Smith, '16

No one is really qualified for their first job; cast a wide net and plan to learn a lot in the first year. You might love something you never would have thought of in school, and you have to try it to find out. Megan McGuire, '16

Use your resources. That includes people who are in the fields that you are pursuing. Most people are more than happy to help out someone young and entering their industry. Megan Schneir, '14
Use your professors! They have a huge network of former students, colleagues, and professional contacts and are more than willing to help get you connected.

*Emily Welter, '15*

Be patient and reach out to people you, your family, or your friends may know in the industry you are interested in. Talk to as many people as possible—it will help you in your interviews and people are much more willing to help out than you may think.

*Anonymous, '17*

One of the most underrated resources for job searching are your professors. They want you to see you succeed after graduation, and in my experience, they were very helpful in pointing me towards local companies or companies where former students were currently employed. In fact, I owe my first post–grad job to the help of one of my professors.

*Anonymous, '15*

Keep an open mind. If your degree isn’t in a specialized/technical field, consider expanding your job search to as wide as possible for this first job. Right out of college, it can be challenging to secure full–time employment. So if you read a description and think “I might be interested in that,” just go ahead and apply. There’s no harm in sending out an application, and you never know what an employer might be looking for. You also don’t know what you’ll really like to do until you’re actually doing it. I graduated with a degree in music and started working at an arts organization, but found the actual position unfulfilling after a year. I ended up applying to a job at a social work nonprofit (somewhat on a whim) and I absolutely love what I do. You just don’t know until you give it a try! *Anonymous, '15*

Expand your search beyond only a few “dream” cities and companies. There are so many different options out there, you never know what new location or unique opportunity you might end up falling in love with. *Anonymous, '15*

Talk to people! Anyone from college friends to former project team members, to mentors to alumni you stumble upon on LinkedIn—these people can be valuable resources who can give you a great idea of what their jobs are like. *Hilary Horvatits, '17*

Apply for any and all jobs that you’re interested in; don’t limit yourself to what it feels like everyone else around you is applying for. *Chelsea Yip, '18*

Remember that the job you pick isn’t going to determine your entire life or career—pick something that works for you for the moment and don’t stress about it! *Anastasia Medytska, '14*

Waste as little time as possible doubting your abilities if the job search doesn’t go your way. Whether it takes you 6 weeks to land a gig or 6 months, own the process and stay confident even when it’s hard. *Morgan Franklin, '16*

Don’t be afraid to reach out to both current professors and alumni. I just landed my dream job by calling an alumna of my law school who was a former research assistant for one of my current professors. She put in a good word for me, even though we had never talked before, and I got an offer the next day! *Hannah Lazarz, '17*

It’s better to design your resume individually based on the job you apply for rather than bombarding emails to every contact you can find. *Anonymous, '16*
If you know what city you would like to end up in, google “Best Places to Work in ____”. Most cities have a business journal that rank companies based on culture, salary and growth. This is how I found my firm in Dallas. *Jessica Brunelle, ’14*

I had a really hard time finding my first job. I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do, so I used a recruiter to help me get my foot in the door. *Halee Watel, ’13*

As a Vanderbilt grad, you’re a highly sought after candidate. You can always get a job; it’s important to stay in the mindset that you’re selling your time and effort to an employer. Make sure you negotiate hard, because you’re worth it. *Mitch Masia, ’16*

LinkedIn and other online job sites have the most quantity when it comes to finding positions. However, your college connects/social group might have the best quality depending on your major. Similar to applying to college, it is always good to have a safety option. *Bryan Byrdlong, ’15*

Networking and personal connections are key. Don’t be afraid to ask anybody you know for an introduction because “cold call” application submissions are rarely reviewed that carefully. Be patient and focused. *John I Schember, ’16*

Find jobs that suit your personality and your interests. Avoid doing jobs that make you unhappy, but keep in mind that there is no perfect job. You will have to make compromises. *Musbah Shaheen, ’17*

Research the people who will interview you. You’re already good at social media stalking—put those skills to use. *Talha Haseen, ’14*

Apply for positions with companies that currently have Vanderbilt grads or employees that you have a connection with, even through a friend of a friend. Knowing someone that can vouch for you can be really helpful in getting past the company’s phone screening and receiving an in-person interview. *Abel Yosef, ’18*

I attended Boston Career Forum, which is a great platform for English–Japanese bilinguals who’re interested in working in Japan/Japanese companies. Also reaching out to alumni is always a good idea. *Mingyun Zhao, ’14*

Apply several places and go where you feel like you have found a home. *Emily Barker, ’17*

Ask about daily tasks or a day in the life of a job you’re interested in or applying for. Then imagine yourself in those shoes and think if you’d be happy doing that every day. You may think you’d like a job, then you find out what it really entails. *Sarah Delgado, ’13*

Don’t be afraid to experiment. Interviewing for jobs you’d never imagined could help you find the dream job you never knew you wanted or just give you some good interview practice. I interviewed for a tradeshow management role at a tech company on a whim and I have been there for two year! *Anonymous, ’17*

Everyone’s path begins differently; comparing yourself to others only makes you feel bad. Don’t be lazy about it, but don’t try to meet an impossible expectation, especially if it’s not right for you. *Tamara Cecala, ’15*

Keep your options open and cast a wide net. You never know what opportunities are out there. *Brendon Wade, ’14*
Networking: Ways to Reach Out

Remember kindness and keep a true interest in people. Networking can almost make us feel that we are “using” a person rather than allowing another person to help and assist us! Also remember to return the favor when you are able to by assisting and connecting others!  

Caroline Walker, ‘15

Networking is not organic for everyone, but it’s necessary in today’s environment to ensure career mobility and advancement. If it’s not naturally your thing, practice with some friends and then attend some sort of networking activity so you don’t become nervous with a 1:1 coffee meeting.  

Anonymous, ‘16

Be sure to have your address updated in the Vanderbilt alumni network. Chances are there are tons of cool events happening in your city. Just be sure to take the time to go to a few!  

Shawn Albert, ‘16

I’ve actually made meaningful connections on flights and waiting in line for events. Organic conversations are important, especially because it feels less forced for both sides.  

Anonymous, ‘16

Attend events and find things in common with other attendees. And don’t be afraid to reach out to people via LinkedIn or email, especially if they have something in common with you (Vandy Alum, from the same city as you, etc.).  

Megan Schneir, ‘14

Vanderbilt and sorority/ fraternity alumni events. Meeting with people your friends and family know is also really helpful.  

Anonymous, ‘17

Find a professional organization that aligns with your industry and/or your personal interests and go to their events. Not only is it a good way to learn more about exciting projects and new technologies in the industry, but it’s a fabulous way to start learning the ropes of networking.  

Emily Welter, ‘15

Just be open to chatting with people. I got a freelance gig just from chatting to a girl I often sat near in a co–working space. She knew I was writing there, liked my passion and offered me a job freelancing when the opportunity came up.  

Alexa Reed, ‘17

Give back—join a nonprofit board or volunteer regularly with organizations in need. One connection gained through a nonprofit will be worth 100 from a professional organization. The most giving business leaders will already be working with local groups and those leaders will immediately see your value as both a community member and worker.  

Ryan, ‘13

Organically, through activities that you genuinely enjoy. Networking events tend to be filled with people that are looking to get something (which is why you’re there, right?) and aren’t likely to lead you to new opportunities. Get to know people in your community and keep an ear out for opportunities you’re interested in.  

Joel Walden, ‘12

When talking to someone, try to find a personal connection you have with them and can capitalize on so they remember you and you remember them!  

Holly Reichert, ‘17

I found that reaching out to the resources at Vanderbilt was the best way for me to network. All my life, I have consistently done my own research into particular jobs/ programs. However, the faculty at Vanderbilt—even those professors who you have built a relationship with over the last four years—are, frankly, better than the internet.  

Sadie Andros, ‘16
I joined organizations, including The Junior League and local professional associations, and attended many Vanderbilt Alumni Association events!  Adair Tigert, '13

Always connect with people on LinkedIn after meeting them. That way, next time you need to leverage someone in your network for a certain purpose (applying to graduate school, searching for a new job, etc.), you can find the right person in your LinkedIn contacts (some of whom may have connections that you may not have realized when first meeting them).  Eric Citron, '13

Start with people you know – parents, friends’ parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, neighbors, etc. Chances are, someone will be able to connect you to someone they know in your desired industry/company. This way, it’s a lot less scary (cold emails are the worst), and you have a better chance at the person giving you the time of day.  Sara Bernstein, '18

Expect most of your attempted connections NOT to pan out. That’s okay. That’s how networking works. It takes a lot of work. But if you put in the work and are willing to except some failures along the way, you will eventually find what you’re looking for.  Jack Delehey, '14

Utilize the Vanderbilt Alumni network! Referrals can get you in the door (and into an interview seat) at a company, and the best way to find referrals are through informational interviews. Invest in a LinkedIn Premium subscription, reach out to alums in cool positions at cool companies, and ask for 20 minutes of their time to speak on the phone about their position. Come from a place of genuine interest, and have questions ready!  Anonymous, '18

Showing up is half the battle. Even if you don’t feel up for it, force yourself to go to career fairs and recruiting events. At best you’ll walk out with a lead, and at worst you’ll walk out with more networking experience to make next time easier.  Jad El Harake, '18

I love the Vandy Networking sessions, but a lot of cities have fun networking events that you can find through the Facebook events discover page!  Francesca Ambrose, '17

Authenticity will build a relationship faster than China builds skyscrapers. Don’t ‘network’, instead build a true and honest relationship with the people you encounter and find interesting. Get people engaged in a conversation with you and always let the people you want to connect with do the talking—they have more important things to say than you do. Stay in touch with people by grabbing lunch or coffee. Make that a habit.  Talha Haseen, '14

Just talk to people. Don’t worry about ftting a particular mold. But also remember you’re in a professional setting (I don’t know how many times I’ve seen otherwise very successful people make fools of themselves because they get sloppy at a reception).  Anonymous, '17

Put yourself out there. Get to know people by not just asking them about their work, but also what they’re interested in outside of work.  Abel Yosef, '18

The most important thing to know about networking is that everything is a networking opportunity. Whether you are on an airplane flying home, in line at Starbucks, or at a party, you never know who you will meet or how they will be able to help you. Don’t wait for a formal networking event to make important connections!  Madison Maderious, '18

Learn the distinction between peer networking and mentor networking. The first is for sharing experiences with people in similar situations, the latter is for learning how to grow and and meet long term goals.  Chelsea Yip, '18

Always be kind to others. The most unexpected people will help you out.  Laura, '14
LinkedIn and my Vanderbilt connections have been the most valuable. Jordyn Margolis, '18

When someone gives you a contact’s email address and advises you reach out, the best subject line to use is “Referred By NAME HERE”. The recipient will see a name they know right off the bat and will be much more likely to open and respond to your email! Caroline (Sessoms) Howard, '14

Take advantage of alumni nights and get-togethers, you may encounter opportunities you had never thought of. Brendon Wade, '14

VU Alumni events around the city! Gerard Franks, '16/17

Always follow up with thank you emails and keep the network open, even if you are not actively seeking a job. Doing so will keep you top of mind when the next opportunity comes up. Carl Nightingale, '14

Don’t be afraid to tell people what you’re really passionate about. You never know what might connect with someone or who they may know that could support you. Liam Underwood, '16

Recruiters are a great first step to meeting company representatives. Always feel comfortable emailing a recruiter asking for a contact who can share more about their experience with the company or a position. Chandler Bair, '14

Always go to events with the intention of making one meaningful connection. People can tell when you’re constantly looking for the “next best” in the room. Louisa Wells, '14

Do not be afraid to go to events alone. Erin Lee, '15

Don’t be scared to reach out to people you don’t know personally! Liana Bunce, '15

Job Interviews 101
Just be yourself. You will thank yourself later. Judson James Lancina, '12

Definitely research the organization thoroughly. What’s its story? What’s their market presence? What have they said publicly about their strategy? Interviewers will assume you know all about their organization, so if you don’t—you might not get a second interview. Caroline Bergan, '13

Remember eye contact and confidence! Remember that the people interviewing you are people! They’ve gone through interview processes also. Look them in the eye, be honest, come as prepared as you can and trust yourself. Also remember that not getting the job might just mean that there is something better for you out there! Caroline Walker, '15

Always email and say thank you—if anything, it will at least bring your name back to the front of their mind. Alanna Pahnke, '17

My biggest tip would be to use the Career Center! They will help you up to two years after you graduate, and have plenty of resources for what to wear, how to write an effective thank you letter, sample questions, etc. You can also set up a mock interview and they will help you refine your answers. Emily Jones, '14

Always be nice to the interviewers, the other office goers and the receptionist when you go for an interview. They are ALL involved in the decision making process. Leah Damesek, '13
Come prepared. Ask as many questions as you can leading up to the interview on what to expect, even if it’s just on the internet. Also, come with sincere / genuine questions for your interviewers. I can always tell when someone has just written down questions they found online rather than intellectual and thought provoking questions about whether the job would be a good fit for the both of you. **Megan Schneir, ’14**

Be confident, do your research on the job/ company, and prepare. Come up with answers to questions that may be asked and practice your answers out loud, not just in your head. **Anonymous, ’17**

How to prep: Research the company’s history and values, their current products or services, and the direction of their brand so you have a foundation of knowledge from which you can speak. Research the person who is interviewing you on LinkedIn for details such as their hometown, college and career trajectory. **What to Say:** Definitely explain not only what you hope to gain, but what you hope to contribute. **Anonymous, ’14**

Be honest– don’t lie about any answer because you’ll inevitably be called out on it. Also, be a REAL person. Whenever I interview people, one of my biggest questions is: “Can I really spend eight to 10 hours a day with this person?” **Mitch Masia, ’16**

Read up on the company, its products and services. Google any helpful interview tips. Anticipate questions and rehearse your answers. Always have something relevant to say about the role, the company and why you’re ready to take on the challenge. **Tyler Davis, ’17**

Practice with a friend. 90 percent of the questions will be totally predictable, so write them out and practice with someone who you trust to give honest feedback. **Hannah Lazarz, ’17**

Dress for the industry you are interviewing for. Startups are more casual than large companies. **Sarah Ungar, ’13**

Do your research. Always come prepared with good questions. Know how to honestly discuss your strengths and weaknesses. **Anonymous, ’17**

I always have a couple of go–to questions that I like to ask at the end of an interview including: “How will the work I’ll be doing contribute to the organization’s mission?” Also, Google Alerts is a lifesaver if you want up to date news about the company/org you want to work at. **Anonymous, ’16**

Beyond preparing for questions they might ask you, consider a handful of inquiries to demonstrate your interest and to gain additional information about the position. You’re also reviewing the interviewer because the job/ company/ atmosphere ought to be a good fit for you as well. **John I. Schember, ’16**

The more you do something the better you’ll get at it. Try to think of each interview as practice and don’t stress too much about whether or not you get the job. **Brendon Wade, ’14**

Do a lot of research on the company you’re interviewing with and on the industry. Be able to ask specific questions and understand the role that you are applying for. I totally underestimated how important this was in my job search. **Sara Bernstein, ’18**

Better to start off as super formal and feel out the formality than to start informal. It can always become more informal, but once you have crossed that line it is difficult to get back. **Anonymous, ’12**
Be genuine and real. There is no need to show off or embellish your accomplishments. People want the real deal, not someone who is boastful.  
Christine Ko, ’13

Just be yourself. Everyone on the other side of the table has been in your shoes before!  
Gabrielle Smith, ’13

Never walk into an interview without preparing a few thoughtful questions for your interviewer.  
Chelsea Yip, ’18

Research and prepare for each company you interview. If you’ve prepared by looking at the company values or statements on their website, it can be helpful to determine what they are looking for in an employee. It’s always important to know a little bit about the company so that you’re not caught off guard when they ask about specific company information.  
Anonymous, ’13

Practice being asked questions on the spot. You can’t seem nervous or phased by attempts to stress you out.  
Steven Spens, ’18

Print five copies of your resume, just in case.  
Kelly Boyd, ’14

Be yourself! Focus less on what you think they want, and more on what you like about yourself and how to present that.  
Julia Di Fiore, ’14

Always send a follow–up thank you email after meeting or interview. The more someone hears your name the better.  
Jordyn Margolis, ’18

Prep for general types of questions, but don’t come in with memorized answers. Especially for customer–facing jobs like consulting, a lot of the interview (both behavioral and case) is designed to test your ability to think through something on the fly as well as clearly articulating your thoughts. Most importantly, be confident.  
Eric Citron, ’13

Always think about how you can add value to the position you’re applying to. Whether that is your previous work experience, your passion or simply your personality. Many organizations have started to adopt a “hire on kindness” mentality where they want to make sure you’re someone they want in the office.  
Anonymous, ’15

Never ever extend the truth. If they are asking for a skill you don’t have yet, don’t lie, but instead tell them what you are capable of offering and remind them you’re there to learn that new skill quickly.  
Anonymous, ’15

Think of a few experiences from Vanderbilt that really defined your experience. Chances are that you will have the chance to work a few of them into your interview, and it is those personal anecdotes that will set you apart from the other candidates.  
Shawn Albert, ’16

It’s always best practice to wear formal business attire for interviews, unless the interviewer explicitly says otherwise.  
Alec Carro, ’18

Make sure to keep direct email correspondence you have with your interviewing company or employees there as concise yet thoughtful as possible. Once you are in the real–world working, you internalize the saying “Too Long, Didn’t Read.”  
Monica Retka, ’14

Have a bank of six to seven stories that answer multiple categories of questions: times when you took initiative, made a tough decision, worked collaboratively and had a positive outcome, etc. Then, learn to tell those stories in your sleep. Refine them, master them, learn to love telling them.  
Anonymous, ’15
Treat an interview like a conversation. Just as they are trying to see if you are a good fit for them, you should be trying to figure out if the company is a good fit for you. Anonymous, ’15

Ten minutes early means you’re on time. But a half hour early is just disrespectful and stresses interviewers out. Find your sweet spot to show your promptness and your respect for others’ time. Andrew Maguire, ’12

ThePrepary.com has an excellent behavioral interview preparation worksheet that I found extremely helpful throughout the process! Caroline (Sessoms) Howard, ’14

Reach out to people working at the company you are interested in. Especially reach out to those who are Vanderbilt alumni or familiar to you for any other reason. Abel Yosef, ’18

Wear what makes you feel most confident, while also staying professional—when you feel good, that carries over to your presentation and posture. You can adjust according to the industry after you learn more about the company. Liana Bunce, ’15

Being your best and authentic self is the ideal to strive for in an interview. Always prepare some thoughtful questions beforehand, and do your research; but also have an “elevator pitch” prepared for why you like the company, why the role is of interest to you, and why you think you’d be a great fit for the job. Christopher D. Hamrick, ’14

Be early. Don’t be on time. Early. Do some research about the company before you show up. Nothing’s worse than asking a question you can find the answer to on the home page of their website. Jay Larry, ’14

“Case Interview Secrets” by Victor Cheng. Read it, really practice the cases, and actively listen to the audio. As a STEM major I had no business experience, but this book made me case interview–ready, and lead to quite a few job offers. Emily Rolen, ’15

Ensure you get their address on the way out (can get from the secretary) and write them a handwritten thank you note. Stay memorable by mentioning a personal detail from the interview, like “Go Patriots!” or “Enjoy your vacation in Jamaica!” Chris Butsch, ’13

There’s only so much research you can do. In the end, it comes down to being personable. They want to have a genuine conversation with a real person about his or her experiences. And don’t strictly rely on professional experience for your answers. Planned a trip across Europe? Use that. Spent a summer building houses in Peru? Use that. They want to know about you as a person, as well as a professional. Look like a professional. Talk like a professional. But remember to be real and personable. Sara Bunch, ’15

Dress up for a phone interview. Even though they can’t see you, it will help you look and act the part. Hayden May, ’15

Your First Job: What to Expect on Your First Day/Week/Month

Full of nerves! I was nervous about making mistakes, but the truth is you will make a bunch. You have to, if you want to grow. Just be honest when you don’t have an answer and tell your team you’ll find one. Then find it! Be proactive. Be kind. Be authentic and be curious. Tyler Davis, ’17

Don’t be afraid to ask questions but also be aware of your surroundings and soak everything in. You can learn a lot about office culture just by paying attention and being observant to the people and things around you. Rebekah Smith, ’16
In the corporate world, there are few safety nets. While in college a C or B is considered passing many companies will only reward you if you are doing A level work. At a certain point being a B or C worker stops your advancement or becomes a liability. So, I’ve learned to always strive for 100 percent.  

Bryan Byrdlong, ’15

Keep in mind that it can take quite a long time to ramp up your involvement on the team because it takes time for you to not only learn, but for people to trust your work product. The quicker you can demonstrate that your team can trust you, the faster you will be able to take on additional responsibilities.  

Julie Roseman, ’14

The first three months of my job, I felt like I was floundering. Find someone, a coworker, a person in a similar field, someone who can support you and give you advice because you will need it.  

Anonymous, ’16

The transition from college life to working full–time, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., was rough. I underestimated how draining that would be and was exhausted for the first few weeks, but your body adjusts.  

Emily Jones, ’14

Even in a fast–paced industry, it takes a little while to get in the hang of things. Don’t expect your first few months to be extremely glamorous.  

Anonymous, ’17

Remember that you haven’t experienced the 40+ hour work week yet, so don’t be surprised if you struggle to make it through the first week or two (or three).  

Molly Mocek, ’14

I came in with a class of 10 new hires, so our first month was spent in various forms of training. After that, I officially joined my team.  

Anonymous, ’17

Be professional, but make sure to show some of your personality!  

Greer Martin, ’13

You’re never fully prepared until you’ve started.  

Gerard Franks, ’16/17

Even though you may not be pulling all–nighters in the library, you will be waking up earlier and working all day. Don’t be surprised if you feel more tired than usual. There is no shame in going to bed by 9 pm. each night.  

Ali Von Deylen, ’16

Don’t worry if you don’t have the routine down yet, it’ll all fall into place and a rhythm fairly quickly.  

David Nelwan, ’16

A lot of change happened all at once. It’s important to remember that your personal life and responsibilities don’t pause to wait for you to transition into your new job. It can seem overwhelming, but remember to take the time you need to stay grounded and take care of yourself. Your job will probably expect a lot from you as a new hire, but being able to stay committed to your self–care can also show a great level of maturity that I found my supervisors respected.  

Liam Underwood, ’16

Be there early and leave late when you’re first starting. You need to show you’re a hard worker and that you care. Don’t fall into the sometimes tempting trap of gossiping with/about co–workers. All of that comes back to haunt you in one way or another.  

Carli Wittgrove, ’12

You will forget things and you will make mistakes. Don’t be afraid to admit that and ask for help. Your more experienced coworkers are usually more than happy to help you out.  

Ali Von Deylen, ’16

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In all honesty, my first couple of weeks on the job were kind of boring. Fill downtime with research. College may be over, but learning shouldn’t be. I spent a lot of time researching what someone in my position typically does on a daily basis; what certain processes and projects might look like; best practices; etc. Don’t be afraid to ask questions, but also don’t ask them when you can just as easily Google it.  
*Sara Bunch, ’15*

The first week feels like trying to drink from a fire hydrant. Learn names as quickly as possible and don’t be afraid to ask for help!  
*Chelsea Yip, ’18*

Every job is an opportunity to better yourself. I was miserable both unemployed and in a terrible temp job, but now I have a job I absolutely love with people who are amazing to work with each day. Life can change a lot in six months.  
*Anonymous, ’13*

The first couple of weeks were somewhat disorganized. Expect to take some time figuring out your role, expectations, etc.  
*John Tian, ’15*

The first few weeks were kind of boring, honestly. It took me some time to get fully on-boarded, so much of my first day/week were sitting around, playing on the laptop they gave me, and feeling awkward around the other employees. After a few months, however, I have made friends, feel more than comfortable in the office, and have enough responsibilities to get through the day.  
*Sara Bernstein, ’18*

Learning to manage my productivity at work has been the hardest transition. At work, I have a set time window every day in which I have to get things done, while in college I could, for the most part, work on things whenever I wanted to.  
*Anonymous, ’15*

Ladies: don’t wear high heels on your first day of work. You will be walking around so much meeting people and learning procedures that you will have sore feet and calves for the rest of the week.  
*Emily McGrath, ’13*

Overwhelming and terrifying. I felt like I was still interviewing for the job. The trick you have to remember is that everyone feels that way when they start a new job. Be patient with yourself, ask questions when you need help, and just remember that it’s a learning curve and you will get there.  
*Anonymous, ’15*

My first few months at my job have been crazy. I am so thankful that Vanderbilt prepared me the way that they did, but every day of “adulthood” is the most rigorous school that you’ll ever attend.  
*Sadie Andros, ’16*

It took me a while to learn how to ask for help, but once I did, I realized I had many mentors who were in my corner.  
*Tamara Cecala, ’15*

I had no idea what I was doing, and you probably won’t either. That’s okay, as long as you ask for help. I wasted a lot of time trying to figure things out that my peers could have taught me in seconds.  
*Jad El Harake, ’18*

I was the only young graduate in a manufacturing environment and it was a rude awakening. Be ready to help in any way, and don’t act “above” any assignment given to you.  
*Alex Shanosky, ’15*

My first month at my first teaching job was hectic, terrifying, stressful, and insanely fun. I experienced many ups and many downs, but relied on new co-workers, new friends, and old friends to help survive. I wish someone had told me that it was okay to cry after my first day of teaching.  
*Christine Douthwaite, ’12*
Wherever you are in the world, Your VU Alumni Association can help you navigate your career and reach your professional goals

Your Vanderbilt Network
With 135,000 alumni around the world, leverage your VU connections by building relationships with alumni in your industry and city through VUconnect, the official alumni LinkedIn group, and your Vanderbilt Chapter!

Your Job Search
Explore job postings through the official LinkedIn group and VUconnect job board! Build your personal brand and get expert advice from our career coach partners, monthly webinars, group coaching intensives and expert podcasts.

Your Resume and Interviews
Hone your resume and interview prep skills through Optimal Resume. Connect with a career coach partner for in-depth resume advice.

Your Career Advancement Strategy
Continue your professional development by connecting with fellow alumni at Chapter events (you never know who you will meet!). Check out our alumni career webinar series and expert advice podcasts to stay on top of your game!

VUconnect.com/career
Congratulations! What now? Although some of you may be able to provide a clear and confident response about your future plans, others may be feeling the stress of the job search. Even if you have a job lined up, you’re bound to experience some anxiety as you launch into life after Vanderbilt.

As you transition from the familiarity of college with its routine of classes, studying, time spent with friends, and campus life, know that any change, even a positive one, can induce fear and anxiety. Rest assured it’s normal to feel this way as you find your footing in the real world.

Here are some ideas to keep your transition smooth:

**Have a Plan, but Be Open to Changes**

- Haven’t found the right opportunity yet? Approach your job search methodically by developing a routine to search for opportunities. Take action every day, whether it’s researching companies of interest, preparing for an interview, or scheduling a networking meeting. Have a backup plan and be willing to take a temporary bridge job if needed.
- Use a mix of job search strategies to pursue both published (online postings) and unpublished opportunities. Many jobs can be found in the unpublished, “hidden” job market, and you will discover these opportunities through networking.
- Remain open to unplanned conversations, chance events and meetings. Information or a connection that leads to an opportunity often comes from an unexpected source. We encourage you to be focused but adaptable to unexpected opportunities that may come your way.

**Develop a Professional Network**

- It might seem daunting, but effective networking is nothing more than building relationships with individuals who share your professional and personal interests. Don’t hesitate to ask for input and advice of others as you search for your first job and transition to other jobs. Build your network by connecting with people you know via professional associations, social groups and volunteer activities.
- Vanderbilt has a powerful network of alumni spread out over the world. Staying connected through VUConnect or with a Vanderbilt Chapter in your area is an effective way to make new connections, get advice, and learn about various industries and opportunities.
Expect Twists and Turns

• It’s unlikely that the trajectory of your career will follow a straight, planned path. Instead, it will be marked by unexpected twists and turns. Focus on what interests you now: who would you like to work with or be around all day, what would you like to be doing, where would you like to work (both the organization and the geographic location), and why does this type of work appeal to you. Knowing why you’re pursuing a particular opportunity can add to your sense of meaning and purpose.

Use Your Resources

• Did you know that the coaching services of the Career Center (vanderbilt.edu/career) are available to alumni for two years after graduation? You can also attend on–campus networking events. The Career Center staff can help you develop or polish your resume, prepare you for upcoming interviews and craft an effective job search strategy. You’ll also find an abundance of helpful online career resources via the websites of both the Career Center and the Alumni Association.

WE CONCLUDE WITH A BIT OF WISDOM FROM AUTHOR STEVEN PRESSFIELD:

“Our job in this life is not to shape ourselves into some ideal we imagine we ought to be, but to find out who we already are and become it.”
Advice on Getting Through Graduate School

AS THE YEARS ROLL BY

... keep learning!

Reasons Young Alumni Chose Post-Graduate Study

I graduated in 2016 and am just now applying to grad school. MPH schools almost always prefer at least two years of experience. Lauren Mitchell, ’16

I chose to attend grad school to give myself more career options. By the time I’ve earned my Ph.D., I’ll be qualified to work as a professor at a research institution, an educational administrator, or a psychologist working in a school or private practice. I still have time to figure out exactly what I want to do, and if I want, I can do a little of everything throughout my career. Taylor Boothby, ’17

I knew that I needed to gain more technical skills to be able to advance in my field, and also found that job opportunities for those with master’s degrees were significantly broader. The program I’m in also builds a lot on the undergraduate coursework I did at Vanderbilt in a very focused way, which I knew I would need in order to really be successful in my field. It’s also always just been a personal goal of mine to obtain an advanced degree, so that played into my decision to leave the workforce and go back to school as well. Matt Genova, ’13

I had a great passion for bioethics which started at Vandy and continued afterwards. Getting my masters in Bioethics allowed me to dive deeper into those topics that I was very passionate about and provided more clarity as to job options in the future. Caroline Walker, ’15

I honestly just really like school. Gabrielle Smith, ’13

I wanted to fill in the gaps I felt I was still lacking in order to be the most qualified candidate for a job. Jordyn Margolis, ’18

My area of interest (Clinical Psychology) requires graduate education. I was mentored by wonderful faculty members at Vandy that pushed me to consider a Ph.D., something that I had never even considered as an option for myself. Ellen Hart, ’16

I wanted jobs that were more involved and required certain additional skill sets beyond what I learned in undergrad. My current company only hires master’s degree holders or higher. Rameez Qurashi, ’14

After student teaching in a high poverty and high racial diversity school, I realized that I needed to learn more about educating diverse students before going into the classroom. Holly Reichert, ’17

To gain skills needed to make a career transition. Anonymous, ’14
I was working for a while after school and realized that I was not doing what I really wanted to do. Instead, I was working in a clinic watching other professionals doing what I wanted to do. *Laura Rhoades, '13*

Getting my masters at Peabody for education was a no–brainer. The five–year bachelor of music/master of education degree is why I came to Vanderbilt in the first place. *Mae Mosley, '15*

Thanks to the experiences I had with research at Vanderbilt, it not only felt like a natural progression, but I had discovered a passion that I wanted to continue. By the time I finished a year in a lab my sophomore year at VU I knew it’s what I wanted to do and so I planned my time and course–of–action accordingly. *Anonymous, '16*

**Tips on Graduate School**

Choose your graduate school (especially law school) based on where you want to live. The people you meet in school and the internships available during the school year are essential in you eventually finding a job, so make sure that you’re somewhere you want to be. *Anonymous, '10*

You will genuinely not have a lot of free time. Take some time before school to explore your interests or travel. *Laura Quast, '15*

I wish I had known before that grad school is totally different than undergrad. There’s way more studying but less homework; and there’s way fewer people who are interested in being social. Don’t expect to come in and make friends right away. It takes serious time to talk to people about stuff other than school. *Anonymous, '18*

It goes by fast, so savor every moment! I made some fantastic friends during my two short years in grad school. *Julia Di Fiore, '14*

Don’t wait for a professor, colleague or mentor to tell you what you should be learning. Continue to be curious and hungry for the information you feel will help you in your personal journey. *Liam Underwood, '16*

Early on in my first semester of graduate school, I felt a lot of pressure to have a mastery of the science and research skills immediate. I had to remind myself to be patient – I still have a lot to learn, and that's okay! The whole point of graduate school is to build upon and learn from the information you studied in undergrad. *Kacie Dunham, '18*

Reach out to people first to make friends. It’s harder when we aren’t all living on campus! *Holly Reichert, '17*

Treat it like a full time job. *Sarah Staples, '14*

Appreciate how well your Vanderbilt education has prepared you for the challenges ahead! It’s been easier than I’ve expected, in many ways, to succeed. I also wish I had known that it was going to be a very different life from Vanderbilt. The community, at least where I chose to go, is very different—people just go to class and leave. Finding friends in grad school is much more difficult, though it can be done successfully. *Emmie Arnold, '15*
I wish I’d known how important it is to have close relationships with your professors.  
*Anonymous, ’17*

Much like going from high school to college, you will become more independent with less university oversight in graduate school. Much of the work is research–based, so it’s vital to revisit the skills of time management and self–motivation that we all mastered coming into undergraduate education.  
*Mae Mosley, ’15*

Grad school is physically, mentally, and emotionally exhausting. Make sure you take care of yourself outside of the classroom and don’t be afraid to ask for help.  
*Anonymous, ’14*

Travel when you can before going to school.  
*Charlotte Russell, ’17*

I wish that I had spent more time for myself before and during graduate school. While it is easy to say that now, as I was accepted, I had more free time during my gap year that I could have used to explore my hobbies and interests that I could carry with me to school.  
*Anonymous, ’15*

The importance of school/life balance.  
*Emily Chong, ’15*

If you’re in a PhD program, this isn’t really “school” anymore—it’s your life. You’re going to be there for a while. Stop feeling guilty about all of the reading that you could be doing and go for walks, make art, be there for your friends, and have whatever hobbies you want to have. What you need to get done, you’ll get done. Here’s a secret: no one is doing all of the reading. Mostly, they’re just watching Netflix and feeling guilty, too.  
*Michelle Cohen, ’11*

It’s not undergrad. You are not going to be taken care of nearly as much. You may have one assignment all semester in your class, but if you don’t start that assignment early, you will NOT finish it. Often times, grad school papers are significantly more work than undergrad papers, so don’t expect the same thing.  
*Naveed Nanjee, ’11*

I wish I knew more about getting a research position and experience writing for scholarly journals.  
*Anonymous, ’15*

Putting extra time in to work harder, study more, and retain more knowledge is not just necessary to get a good grade anymore. Grades are not what really matters in nursing school. Retaining knowledge and actually learning for yourself is what is important so that you will be able to successfully perform in your job after graduation.  
*Anonymous, ’12*

**To Take Time Off or Go Straight Through?**

I chose to go straight into grad school, and it has worked well for me! The few months of summer were just enough time to move to my new place and relax a bit before starting my new academic adventure. I think starting right away gave me a lot of momentum, since I was still in the “school” mindset when I started this fall.  
*Maria Linn, ’16*

I chose not to take time off because I want to continue school while my mind is in “study mode” so to speak.  
*Anonymous, ’17*
Vanderbilt makes you a professional student, and I kept up that momentum by going straight to grad school from Vandy. While I definitely feel burned out at times, I know that when I (eventually) finish, I’ll still be young as compared to others with my training in my field. Ellen Hart, ’16

Yes, but not by choice. I was rejected from my schools or received no funding, and it was devastating. However, I needed that time to live outside of school, and I felt much more prepared moving off on my own and starting a grad school program having had a break and time to spend with my family. Trust that life is sending you the direction you need to go, even if it’s unbelievably confusing and even painful. Anonymous, ’14

I took a gap year, and I’m so glad I did! Having a regular job after graduation gave me the time I needed to really put my best foot forward on applications, because I had time to complete them in the evenings and wasn’t stressed about getting homework done at the same time. I don’t think I would have gotten nearly as many grad school interviews if I had applied during my senior year. Taylor Boothby, ’17

I think not taking time off before law school has advantages and disadvantages. You’re still in study mode and you don’t have adult responsibilities yet, but it can be hard to express your skills to employers when everyone around you has real work experience. The summer before you start work, go home and volunteer with an office in your area of interest. They’ll take the free labor, and then you have something to talk about. Anonymous, ’18

I decided to take time off because I was very overwhelmed and burned out by the end of the final semester. I knew I needed time to recharge before I’d be ready to give so much energy to school again. I also did not want to spend more time and money on school unless I had a clear goal for the future and additional schooling would help me get there. Katie Alley, ’18

I took time off—it gives you more life experience and maturity. I also felt that I got a lot of the “having fun” out of my system and could focus on studying without as much FOMO. Anonymous, ’13

I’d considered pursuing both an MBA and my JD at various points, so I wanted to work after graduation as a way to figure out what I wanted. That led me to working in marketing at a tech company that specializes in legal software. After about a year there, it became clear that I should pursue my JD. I’m glad I took that break because I not only know where I want to focus my legal career, I also have a recommendation from my CEO in my application! Anonymous, ’17

I took two years off before going to medical school. I started as an ER scribe for a big scribe company and ended up in middle management by the time I left. For anyone thinking about doing one or more gap years before medical school, there is no better clinical experience than being a scribe. Period. The medical knowledge you gain gives you a huge advantage in the preclinical years; you will have actually seen the diseases you learn about, and being able to contextualize facts and concepts makes learning them much easier. Secondly, having a job, especially one where you are given a lot of responsibility, forces you to develop good habits that carry over to medical school. Many of the more successful students in our class had work experience before matriculating. Christopher Xin, ’14
Although it was not what I originally planned, taking time off before medical school ended up being such a blessing for me. Having a break from the stresses of school and getting the 9–5 work experience has given me a greater perspective on my career goals and just life in general. Ali Von Deylen, ’16

I went straight to school because I was sure that I wanted to be a lawyer. But, I wouldn’t recommend going straight through! Professional school is a way different environment than undergrad. Most of my classmates took one or two years off to work before law school, and I feel like those two years helped them become more mature and also let them have fun. I wish I had taken two years to develop more of my personal identity and to be able to explore the world more before the grind of law school. Emily Chong, ’15

I took three years off before going back to graduate school, and am absolutely confident that it was the right decision. Most of my peers in grad school are in their mid– to late–20s, and only one person came straight from undergrad. Taking time off will allow you to refocus and refine your larger career goals, which may not always be clear in your first few months after graduation. Having a few years of work experience will also greatly enrich your time in grad school, allowing you to draw on lessons learned in the professional world to inform your studies. Matt Genova, ’13

I took some time off to gain experience in the field and enhance my resume. I recommend taking a little bit of time off or doing something during the summer between graduation and graduate school. It helped me to refocus and refresh before going back to school. Danielle Rourke, ’13

I went to nursing school right after I graduated from Vandy. I knew that I’d lose motivation if I pushed it back a semester or even a year. By the end of grad school I was pretty burned out on school, though. So while it was tough, I think it was the right choice for me. I’d definitely recommend that anyone planning on grad school at least consider taking a gap year. Anonymous, ’16

I took time off to work full–time, and I HIGHLY recommend it. The burnout can be real if you go straight to school, and you learn so much about yourself in your first full–time job out of undergrad. Plus that way you can have a bit more freedom to travel before you have to go back to school. There’s no rush. Anonymous, ’17

I joined Teach for America for two years to further understand the sociological themes I had studied for four years. I gained immediate work experience and the end date of my corps member commitment made it possible to know exactly when to enroll in graduate school. This removed any of the awkwardness or uncertainty around quitting your first job to go back to school—the transition was natural. Paige Diner, ’13

I took no time off before starting medical school and absolutely made the right decision. All the information from my premed classes was still locked in my memory, and I was still in a great mindset to work hard and study. One summer is plenty to relax and decompress. It will be nice to be finishing residency at age 30 instead of later in life. Anonymous, ’15

I chose to enter graduate school immediately because it was the best choice for my chosen career path. I also did my research and was able to find a program that allowed me the flexibility to work part time while still staying in school. This way I’ve been gaining work experience to add to my resume along with my next degree. Will Nichols, ’15
Working between undergrad and grad school helps clarify what you want to get out of grad school. I think it’s important to spend time learning about what you want out of your career by simply working. It will help you set the goals you want to achieve during your grad school year(s) in order to really get the most out of the experience. Anonymous, ’14

I didn’t take a gap year. Medical school and residency is LONG... I didn’t want to be 35 when I finally became an attending physician. That being said, there are lots of pros to gap years, even aside from building your resume/application. Your 20s are an incredible time; I almost wish I had taken a gap year only so I could enjoy the freedom of being in my 20s more. If you do want to go straight through but change your mind later, you can always take a year out of med school to do research, get an MBA, MPH, or other advanced degree too! Katherine Sumarriva, ’15

I went straight to medical school following Vandy, and I think that it worked well for me because I took the summer as real time off. I had overworked myself my senior year, so taking the summer to relax and regain my sense of self was critical to tackling medical school. Mark Wells, ’13

I took time off because I wanted a break from constant schooling, both because I was burnt out and because I knew I would appreciate my education more. I believe it made me a more competitive applicant for medical school because it gave me time to bulk up my application and because I believe admissions committees like to see that you have some life experience under your belt. Laura Quest, ’15

Financial Help
If you’re paying for graduate school yourself, seek scholarships and ask for more money. It sounds crazy, but it works. Asking for more won’t make you lose your acceptance. Anonymous, ’10

Search for odd scholarships. If there’s something you’re interested in studying, then Google search word combinations and apply to obscure scholarships. Friends in my cohort found full scholarship and stipend funding to study a language (such as Swahili) alongside their graduate degree program. You might be awarded support to do things you already wanted to do. Also, don’t worry about deadlines, there’s no harm in emailing the contact even months after the deadline to see if any scholarships are still available and that you’d like to apply. Corey Peak, ’12

Consider your finances in making the decision to go to graduate school. If you are entering a program that does not cover your expenses, make sure you understand what sort of situation you will likely be in financially at the end of your program and DO NOT assume you will get the best paying job after graduation. Cara Batenhorst, ’09
Law School

Law school is the start of your professional career. Your classmates are not just your friends, they are also your professional colleagues, so act accordingly. People will remember if you are rude, if you are willing to share your notes, if you act cooperatively or competitively. Be nice to people. *April Philley, ’12*

I wish I had known how regionally focused legal hiring markets can be even for students from Top 20 law schools. Most of the people I spoke to when considering law school weren’t involved in hiring for their firms and hadn’t searched for jobs in decades, so their advice was a bit outdated. If you know that you want to stay in a particular region, or even a particular state, it could be better to attend the best law school in that area rather than a Top 20 or Top 14 law school in a different region. If you’re more flexible or you want to get a job in a bigger market like New York City, you should attend the highest ranked school that you can. *Anonymous, ’11*

I chose to attend law school to pursue a career in juvenile justice reform. I am so glad that I did, but I am particularly grateful that I took the time to find a school that has a really strong program specifically for law students who want to do social justice work (UCLA!). *Hannah Lazarz, ’17*

Medical School

Medical school is really time consuming. I had heard that a lot before enrolling thinking it was a myth. It’s not. *Christopher Xin, ’14*

Medical school is a lot of work but it is definitely still possible to have a social life. The important thing is to treat it like a regular job. If you put in the hard work on a ‘9 to 5’ schedule, there is still time to pursue your passions. Learning early in medical school about the core Step 1 learning materials like Pathoma and First Aid is really helpful in allowing you to learn efficiently. *Anonymous, ’15*

I am graduating medical school this year. I wanted to be a doctor because doctors have an incredible opportunity (and responsibility) to help and improve their community—whether it be local, regional, or global. Medical school is hard. But no matter what, dedicate time to yourself, your family, and your friends. *Katherine Sumarriva, ’15*
Budgeting
Set a budget that is under your earnings so you can save and put away money to retire. This is key! You should also make sure you have a little fun with the money since you earned it. 

Jase Burner, ’13

If you have the opportunity, meet with a financial planner to discuss goals and the best way to pay off loans and save. The advice of a professional is invaluable and makes paying off loans and saving seem much less overwhelming. It also helped me to be more efficient with my money and forced me to have clarity as to what was most important to me. 

Caroline Walker, ’15

Google Sheets has a great template for monthly budgeting. I didn’t feel comfortable giving my banking information to an app, so I wanted to build my own budget. The Google Sheets template lets you choose categories for income and expenses and follow those categories month to month with calculations such as percentage lost or gained of your total savings and actual spending compared with real spending. My first year managing my finances solo was so much easier with this handy tracker to keep me honest. 

Mae Mosley, ’15

Put everything on one card. Lots of credit cards have a budgeting tool built into the app – if all your purchases are on that card, it’s easy to keep track of your budget. But pay it off IN FULL every month!!! 

Rebekah Smith, ’16

Start your 401k with your first paycheck (if possible) and make sure to get the whole of a company match! Budget using a tool like Mint and figure out how much you realistically spend each month so you can start building up a savings account. 

Alanna Pahnke, ’17

Take the time before you start working to set up a budget and accountability system. Get a credit card with a strong rewards program. 

Hilary Horvatits, ’17

It sounds simple, but it’s super helpful to track your expenses for the first few months. You can sign up for an app like Mint or you can create a spreadsheet (there are tons of templates online) that you can manually update. It’s helpful to actually see where your money is going and adjust as needed. 

Emily Welter, ’15

Really take the time to sit down and budget your expenses. It’s trite advice, but the experience will really help you prioritize spending in a manageable, goal–oriented manner. 

Shawn Albert, ’16

Make a social budget. It sounds so lame, but while most costs stay constant week to week (i.e. rent, groceries, etc.), your social budget can ebb and flow. Set yourself a limit (I have myself ~$60/week) for fun things and try and stick with it. 

Andrew Maguire, ’12
In addition to matching retirement/stock/etc contributions, employers often offer benefits for transportation or fitness goals. Explore those options and don’t leave any free money on the table.  

Chelsea Yip, ’18

I love the app Acorns. It takes small amounts of money from your bank every month and invests it. Between investing small amounts in during the summer and small contributions during school, I’ve saved up enough for a spring break trip with my Vandy friends.

Anonymous, ’18

Two small things to do every time a paycheck hits your account:
1. Pay all of your bills and set aside some money for other necessities (groceries, toiletries, gas/subway fare). Then, even if you go a bit nuts with frivolous spending, you’re still covered.
2. Divert some of that paycheck to a savings account, even if it’s only like $20. So when your phone breaks, or your car needs a new part, you have an option aside from “survive off of instant ramen until my next paycheck.”

Anonymous, ’16

Use an app like Goodbudget to keep track of spontaneous and incidental costs. Plan out your monthly budget in Excel.

Brendon Wade, ’14

When you don’t budget and plan your money, it vanishes.

Ekom Eyoh, ’16

Spending
The first few months may be tough if you have to pay for many starting costs like professional clothes, apartment furniture, etc. Be kind to yourself if it seems like you’re having a hard time saving at the beginning. Once you’ve paid your starting expenses and feel more solvent in your finances, then you can contribute more aggressively to your rainy day fund until you’ve saved your 3–6 months of living expenses. It’s also okay to live like a college kid—pretend you never had the money to start with and put it in savings instead!

Natalia Alvarez, ’14

Be honest with yourself and how much you spend. Sit down with a pen and pencil (or spreadsheet) and calculate how much you can spend versus how much you need to spend. I followed the 50/30/20 rule: spend 50% on necessities, spend 20% on extra luxuries, and save 30% of your paycheck.

Musbah Shaheen, ’17

Stop online shopping!!!! In grad school you have less time to procrastinate, anyways; kill two birds with one stone. Save time and save money by not online shopping.

Anonymous, ’18

Consider paying for small things in cash. When you’re forking over $6 a day in dollar bills for coffee and having to go to the ATM all the time, you really start seeing how much money is trickling away slowly.

Carol Chen, ’12

It can be easy to treat yourself when you start getting a regular salary—and you should because you definitely deserve it. However, it’s called “treating” for a reason because you do so sparingly. I’d also recommend that you start off by setting yourself some goals—maybe make a plan to save up for a new car or an international trip.

Sadie Andros, ’16

Surround yourself with people of similar incomes that are also dedicated to saving and budgeting.

Anonymous, ’15
Saving
Meet with your employer’s financial and/or retirement expert. Don’t be embarrassed to have them explain your options, and then do research on your own to maximize your savings. Sarah (Muller) Yecke, ’12

For me, buying groceries and eating at home has been a great way to save money. I stock up on some key ingredients—onions, minced garlic, ginger, spices, potatoes—so that I can always throw them in whenever I’m cooking up whatever’s in my fridge. They all store well and add so much flavor to food. As for spices, look for the bulk spice section over the individually packaged spices. Sophie Chen, ’15

Save, but also enjoy your life. Gabrielle Smith, ’13

Set up automatic transfers on the 1st of the month for as many bills/savings accounts as necessary—then they’re always paid right after pay day, and you don’t have a chance to spend that money on other things. Anonymous, ’15

Save more than you think you need! Megan Schneir, ’14

Put your savings into different buckets before you have a chance to miss it. For instance, I budget a bit towards a new car, long-term savings, travel and a rainy day fund each month. Anonymous, ’17

If I get a bonus at work, I spend 10 percent on something fun for myself and put the rest towards loans or savings. Anonymous, ’13

Save, save, save! When it comes time to fill out your direct deposit form, make sure to set up an “emergency savings fund” (for a flat tire, or an unexpected medical expense), as well as put aside some money each paycheck and invest in a mutual fund. It’ll add up quick, and you won’t notice it leaving your checking account. :) Christopher D. Hamrick, ’14

I set up automatic payments for all of my bills, so I don’t have to think about them. I transfer money every pay period to a checking account that I don’t have a debit card for, so the money is always there. Kortnea Colbert, ’12

Student Loans and Credit Card Debt
Don’t fall victim to the credit card monster! You will start getting applications for new cards every day, but it’s important to resist temptation if you want to maintain good credit. Pick one card that suits your needs best, and stick with that. For example, I fly a lot so my primary card is associated with an airline. Anonymous, ’16

Ask in your job interview if the employer offers any loan repayments benefits. It’s an amazing job perk! Rebekah Smith, ’16

Pay those off as fast as possible. Make it hurt for a year and live debt free. Ryan, ’13

Pay off all of your credit card bills each month. You never know when you might have a medical accident (or a knee surgery!), and the fact I had previously paid off all my credit cards was very helpful! Megan Schneir, ’14

Communicate, communicate, communicate. If you cannot make the payments, communicate with the company as soon as you know in order to make a plan B for repayment. Then, I recommend hustling. Tyler Davis, ’17
Student loans are no fun, but they aren’t going to kill your credit report/score if you stay on top of them. Gabrielle Smith, ’13

Seems silly, but pay off your card every month! Unlink your credit card to shopping accounts like Amazon—this makes you search for your wallet each time you need to pay and makes you more mindful of your purchases. It helps keep unnecessary expenses down. Sophie Chen, ’15

If the interest on your student loans is high, try re-fnancing through a service like Earnest. I got my interest rate down from 6.5 percent to just over 4 percent. Since my loans were split, half high interest rate and half low, I just refnanced the high-interest ones. Anonymous, ’15

Getting a good credit card is quite useful for building credit and earning rewards—but only if you pay it off on time. Debt is a slippery slope. Anonymous, ’17

I would do an automatic payment each month for your loans. It makes it one less thing you have to think about and you know each month on the same day that you will have X amount coming out of your account. Becca, ’16

When you have debt, it’s going to stink when you start paying it off. However, always take the opportunity to look at the silver lining—paying off debt is an excellent way to start building credit history, which will ultimately play an important role in applying for loans down the road. Shawn Albert, ’16

Do not put anything on a credit card that you couldn’t pay for in cash. Your credit is so important and will dictact a lot of your future fnancial decisions. Also look into refnancing student loans. Anonymous, ’15

Pay off the debt with the highest interest rate frst. It takes discipline and focus to get out of debt. Halee Watel, ’13

Pay off your credit card in full every month. Pay off your loans frst before worrying about other big costs or purchases (house, car, etc.) Brendan Wade, ’14

Undergraduate student loans are okay to have since the interest rates are so low, so don’t get hung up on paying them off immediately. Stay on top of your payments, even if those payments are low, so that you build your credit score. Natalia Alvarez, ’14

Don’t let credit card debt bite you from behind. If you need to set up a credit card, set up one with a Credit Union that charges a lower interest rate than a for–proft Bank. Don’t just make a minimum payment—if you can, try to pay off any debt as soon as you can. Christopher D. Hamrick, ’14

Be mindful of your credit score. You are fast approaching the point in your life (around ages 25–35) when a credit score is of utmost importance for a car, a house and any other big purchase. Carol, ’12

Pay off as much as you can in the six months after you graduate because it will not rack up interest yet. Pay more than the minimum payment if you can afford to do so as well so that you can pay them off quicker. Emily Barker, ’17

Pay off your credit card in time to avoid paying interest. Abel Yosef, ’18
Taxes

Even if your taxes are relatively simple, utilize a service like TurboTax or HRBlock. They guarantee to assist you if you are audited, which can relieve a lot of stress if it happens to you (I speak from experience). Anonymous, ’16

Don’t procrastinate in doing your taxes! Caroline Walker, ’15

You’ll never understand them, but they eat your money. Anonymous, ’14

If you don’t understand taxes, read up on them. Especially if you are starting right after graduating, you will only have half a year’s salary to pay taxes on at first, so take advantage of this lower tax bracket by contributing as much post-tax to your retirement accounts, as you’ll probably be in the lowest bracket of your life. Alanna Pahnke, ’17

Find someone to talk you through this. You do not need to be an expert on all of the things, just some of them. Accountants know what they are doing. Christopher Fink, ’14

Be mindful of every deduction you can possibly take. You write off your student loan interest and any tuition funds you spent that year as a full time student. Don’t be afraid to do your research and hire a tax person who knows better. Tyler Davis, ’17

Your paycheck will be a lot smaller than you think. Katie Lopez, ’13

Educate yourself! The worst thing you can do is treat taxes as a magical nemesis. Read tax guides and learn where your money is going and why. Mitch Masia, ’16

Don’t spend every dime you make or you could be left scrambling when taxes come. Alexa Reed, ’17

Recent grads should be mindful of the fact that paying student loans and a few other things may provide a tax break. Speaking to parents or a financial analyst specializing in taxes would be a good idea to learn more. Anonymous, ’14

Many graduate student stipends do not have taxes taken out of them up front, but they can still be considered taxable income. If you are in this situation, I would advise finding an estimate for what your income taxes should look like, and be sure to save up for that. Kacie Dunham, ’18

Be aware that if you are a freelancer that there are some different rules for paying taxes. I had to learn about paying quarterly taxes, which was something I had not been familiar with previously. I splurged on a CPA last year just to make sure I was doing everything correctly and she answered all my questions. I still was able to use TurboTax, but with more confidence. Julia Di Fiore, ’14

Keep track of your donations. In pre-move cleaning, I donated quite a few things but did not keep track of it, and therefore couldn’t write those donations off on my taxes. That’s a mistake I won’t make again! Mae Mosley, ’15

I’ve found TurboTax to be really good at taxes. I’ve moved and have been paid from multiple states in a year and they managed to make submitting that information not a nightmare. The basic version will likely cover everything you need. Emily Rolen, ’15

Pay attention to state laws when you move! Not all states are the same. Anonymous, ’17
I still have no idea about taxes yet. *Benjamin Jacobi, ’15*

Double check to make sure a parent isn’t claiming you as a dependent because that will skew your tax return. *Anonymous, ’15*

Sign up for the maximum withholding from each paycheck, that way you don’t get hit with a surprise tax bill. *Brendon Wade, ’14*

Want to earn a little extra tax-free money? Babysit/ nanny/ pet sit! Use sites like Care.com and Sittercity. This is how I’ve made tons of extra money! Under the law, if you receive less than $600 in wages from one employer, it’s considered tax-free. Start early on doing your taxes if you aren’t used to it! *Andrea Messer, ’12*

A LOT of your weekly paycheck goes towards taxes. It will probably be a little shocking at first and you never really get comfortable when you see the YTD amount that you have paid in taxes. *Hayden May, ’15*

If your company reimburses moving expenses, that can get a little tricky! Turbo Tax does make things really easy, though, and even if you pay for an upgraded version the first year to understand how tax filing works, it’s worth the extra education. *Liana Bunce, ’15*

Your salary is not your salary. Don’t start budgeting before you know how much you’ll be paying in income tax. *Patrick McAlexander, ’16*

**Retirement: it’s never too early to plan.**

If your company does a 401K match, make sure to max that out. Nobody ever wishes they had started saving for retirement later in life. Start now! *Emily Rolen, ’15*

Start a Roth IRA immediately. If you did math in high school, you should know that someone who invests as a 20-year-old will retire at 65 with almost twice what someone who started at 30 will retire with. Just take 10 percent off the top and invest it. You’ll be surprised with how little you miss it. *Anonymous, ’14*

Take advantage of your company’s 401K plan. Put as much as you can into it in your first few years. *Francesca Ambrose, ’17*

Immediately maximize your company’s contribution to your 401K! For example, if your company will match your contribution up to 4 percent of your salary, contribute 4 percent. It’s free money! *Samuel Greene, ’14*

The general rule of thumb is to save 15 percent of your salary for retirement including 401k matches from your company. Also look into keeping a Roth IRA account on the side. If you get an end of year bonus or money back from taxes, put that towards your retirement savings right away. It’s bonus money that you won’t miss. Have an emergency savings account that will last you at least 6 months with no income, and if your employer offers long term and short term disability programs, buy into those. You never know if you’ll get sick or have to leave work to take care of a relative. *Laurel Piper, ’16*
Welcome to the G.O.L.D. (graduates of the last decade) community! As you step across the Commencement stage, you will join the ranks of our global alumni network. Engagement with Vanderbilt doesn’t stop after graduation. We hope you will stay connected with Vanderbilt in a number of ways, including making your annual gift.

Gifts of all sizes come together to make a big difference for the students who will follow in your footsteps. After graduation, we will reach out to you to ask for your support via mail, email or even a phone call from a current student. And you can always give online at vu.edu/supportvu.

You have the unique opportunity to start loyal and stay loyal by making your gift to the Senior Class Fund and eventually becoming a member of the Oak Leaf Society. This special society honors those who make a gift of any size for two or more consecutive fiscal years*!

*Vanderbilt’s fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30

Volunteering for Vanderbilt
Interested in giving back by dedicating your time to Vanderbilt? Contact us at annualgiving@vanderbilt.edu to learn more.

DID YOU KNOW?
Alumni giving participation factors in the U.S. News and World Report college and university rankings. Your participation will help improve Vanderbilt’s reputation and enhance the value of your degree!

Every gift makes a big difference! In fiscal year 2019, gifts of $100 or less to Vanderbilt totaled $1.8 million. That’s enough to provide four years of tuition to nine students!

Visit vu.edu/gold to learn more about your new role as a graduate of the last decade and the impact you can have!
Inside the Commodore Kitchen

CONQUER AND PREVAIL

... in the kitchen!

Cooking for the New Chef

Consider a delivery service like Hello Fresh or Blue Apron. Anonymous, '15

Pinterest has endless lists of easy recipes for lunches or dinners. Meal prep will save you time and money and keep you eating healthy, if you put in the time on Sundays! Anonymous, '18

There's a website called thefresh20.com where you can buy a recipe plan for one person. It gives you ingredients to buy at the beginning of the week and then five recipes you can make using those ingredients throughout the week. It saves you from making one recipe that's meant for four to six people and eating the same thing for several meals in a row! Anonymous, '15

I love attempting to replicate some of my mom's recipes. I can never make it taste quite as good as mom does, but it's the perfect way to cure homesickness and feed myself dinner. I also suggest packing a lunch for work. It just makes sense. Anonymous, '15

Look up Chef in Training. It's a great blog with some simple recipes! Emily Barker, '17

Making soup is way cheaper and easier than you would think. I make a batch nearly every week to keep in the fridge for a fast healthy dinner that's easier to heat up. Anonymous, '15

Recipes are out there. The biggest thing is to eat healthy— you'll feel great. Mitch Masia, '16

Ina Garten's “How Easy is That?” cookbook is the best! The recipes feel fancy, but are really easy to execute. Caroline Howard, '14

You can cook almost anything in a cast iron skillet. Just search on Google for recipes. Alex Faupel, '15

I always have bell peppers and onions in my kitchen because they are easy to cook with. I use them to make my own burrito bowls, stir fry, or even just as seasoning. Kacie Dunham, '18

If you have extra produce that's pushing its shelf life, quiche is super easy to make. You really only need veggies, cheese, eggs, and a frozen pie crust. Anonymous, '13

Have someone— whether that's your mom, dad, roommate, whoever— teach you some fundamental skills. You've got to have that knowledge base first. Then you can start experimenting with different seasonings, marinades, combinations, etc. Once you're good at the basics (and variations), then you can have some fun and try and tackle some trickier meals. Anonymous, '16
MEAL PREP!!! Make your breakfasts and lunches ahead of time!!! It doesn’t have to be fancy; just get it done or you will spend way too much money eating out!!  
Lauren Mitchell, ’16

Run fast. Cook fast. Eat slow. Has some great easy and healthy recipes. I use that cookbook a lot. Laurel Piper, ’16

I buy precut frozen vegetables, which are cheaper and more nutritious), and you don’t have to worry about them going bad for months. I also cook my rice or pasta for the week on Sundays and separate them into little Tupperwares, so on a busy weekday night all I need to do is to microwave my pre-portioned rice and some veggies and it takes less than 10 minutes. Ashley Shan, ’16

Google what you are craving, and there is probably a recipe for it. Onye Okeke, ’16

Trader Joe’s pre–prepped dishes. Anonymous, ’13

Thanks to my Nutri Ninja blender, I am confident that Smoothie King has NOTHING on me. I highly suggest you get great at making protein packed smoothies to counter all the sweets that will somehow, magically make their way into your home. Morgan Franklin, ’16

Trader Joe’s is key! It’s not about making everything crazy, but just about combining things. I always keep staple items in my fridge that I know I can always reach to and put in something. Jordyn Margolis, ’18

If you are single, buying fresh fruits and vegetables can be tricky because you probably can’t eat them all before they go bad. So, I buy lots of frozen fruits and vegetables and just a few fresh ones. Anonymous, ’12

If you’re into cooking on your own I’d suggest The Southern Vegetable Book. It has pictures, the recipes are easy and always turn out right, and you eat more vegetables. Your mom would approve. Emily Rolen, ’15

Sheet pan dinners! Chop up a bunch of veggies, add your choice of protein, and bake in the oven for 20–30 minutes. Super easy and makes for great leftovers. Liana Bunce,’15

Costco has individually vacuum sealed frozen chicken breasts... endless possibilities. Anonymous, ’15

I love to make couscous! It’s easy, tastes delicious, and is great to bring to work for lunch. Sadie Andros, ’16

Go to The Chew’s website. Michael Symon can teach anyone how to make anything delicious. Anonymous, ’14

Get Blue Apron and a cool cookbook! Blue Apron helps you learn how to cook and is inexpensive until you get your bearings in the kitchen, especially compared to eating out. A $10 bottle of wine makes every meal better. Natalia Alvarez, ’14
Recipes from Commodore Kitchens
I have found so many amazing recipes by just searching for recipes which include a few main ingredients that I have lying around. For example, I had decided to buy a bunch of cut-up beef the other day with no recipe in mind, decided a few days later that I wanted to make marinated kabobs and just had the most AMAZING dinner. Here’s the marinade recipe I found for the beef:

**Beef Kabob Marinade**
1 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup soy sauce
1/2 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup prepared mustard (I used Dijon)
1 1/2 teaspoons coarsely cracked black pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced
Mix all ingredients in a large bag and marinate the beef for 4–24 hours.

And the easiest homemade dinners: keep some chicken around and a few store bought 30–minute marinades. When you get home, throw the meat in the marinade, make some rice and steamed veggies, cook the meat and enjoy! *Eric McManus, ’12*

**Pumpkin–Black Bean Veggie Soup**
One of my new favorites is a Pumpkin–Black Bean Veggie Soup.
Ingredients:
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 zucchini, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 cans (15 oz. each) black beans, rinsed and drained
1 can (15 oz.) LIBBY’S® 100% Pure Pumpkin
1 can (14.5 oz.) no–salt added diced tomatoes, undrained
1 can (14 fl. oz.) vegetable broth
1/2 cup water
1/2 teaspoon salt or more to taste
Shredded cheese

**Mexican Chicken**
Stupidly simple, perfectly tender Mexican chicken. I make this for myself once a week. It’s filling and nutritious for less than $3.25 worth of ingredients
1) Cover all sides of a thawed chicken breast in taco seasoning
2) place the breast in a cooking dish and pour salsa all over
3) bake at 375 for 25 minutes
*Chris Butsch, ’13*
**More Recipes**

Stir fry pork and veggies (broccoli is a good one). After putting some oil in the pan, I cook the pork until it’s almost done, and then I cook the veggies with the pork! Season with soy sauce while you cook it, and then when they’re pretty much done, add in rice or noodles that are already cooked. Super easy, looks impressive, and keep well as leftovers! *Emily Chong, ’15*

Make fancy tomato sauce for your pasta: buy a jar of tomato basil tomato sauce, but add ground turkey or beef or cut up Italian sausage, season with salt and pepper. Then cook some mushrooms, onions, garlic, tomatoes in some olive oil and heavily season with Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Combine in a big pot and add the jar sauce and let simmer for a while. If you want it hot, add some red pepper flakes! *Christine Ko, ’13*

Pan seared chicken thighs with carrots and onions—cheap, easy, and flavorful. Baked salmon with honey mustard and soy sauce glaze. Any green vegetable tastes great with just salt, pepper, and a little olive oil. Sweet potatoes pie is a super easy and delicious homemade southern dessert. Sandwiches are always great and you can jazz them up if you like and try new things like fancy breads and cheeses. *Anonymous, ’13*

Mixing equal parts water, honey, and soy sauce makes a super easy and delicious chicken marinade! *Anonymous, ’15*

Salmon and roasted veggies: get some filets of salmon (with skin), rub with olive oil, then lightly season with Tony’s Cajun seasoning or just salt and pepper. Bake in the oven set at 375°F for about 12 minutes (or until the white stuff comes out). In a separate pan you can roast vegetables (remember that they take a bit longer!); broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, asparagus, potatoes, whatever! Douse with olive oil and heavily season with Italian seasoning! *Christine Ko, ’13*
Insider Advice for Living in Your New City

HAIL TO THEE OUR ALMA MATER ... from our new place in the world.

Please enjoy these tips on the many cities Vanderbilt alumni call home. And, once you’re settle in your new city, be sure to start enjoying the educational, networking, community service and social gatherings offered by your chapter. We hope to see you at an event soon!

Love, Your Vanderbilt Chapter leaders
Welcome to Atlanta
from the Atlanta Vanderbilt Chapter

VUconnect.com/atlanta

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Atlanta Chapter events.

Where to live
Atlanta is getting to be very expensive to rent, but don’t fret! Check for ads for smaller buildings on Zillow or Craigslist if you’re in need of more affordable housing. There are a lot of options if you have your eyes open. Sara Delgado, ’13

You want to be close to the Beltline! Will Nichols, ’15

Traffic in Atlanta continues to top the list as among the worst in the country. Best advice: live relatively close to where you work, but make sure that area fits your social needs.

- Virginia Highlands – between Emory University and Midtown with mostly duplexes or homes converted into multiple living quarters. You can walk to shops, restaurants, coffee shops, and bars.
- Inman Park – east of downtown just south of Virginia Highlands. Apartments, condos and converted houses for rent. Several shops and restaurants are within walking distance.
- Grant Park / East Atlanta – Up-and-coming neighborhood. Less expensive than Virginia Highlands, but the neighborhood and community feel are the same.
- Candler Park – east of downtown between Inman Park and Decatur and popular for young families. Cheaper than the Highlands, but still pricey. Mostly duplexes.
- Midtown – Trendy for 20-to-40-year olds and very convenient to everything the city has to offer. Rents are more expensive than other locations.
- West Midtown – up-and-coming area of town popular among artists and Georgia Tech students. Newer apartment complexes with local fare, and close to shops and bars.
- Buckhead – north of Midtown and home for many young Vanderbilt grads. Close to shopping and restaurants.
- Brookhaven – Neighborhood in north Buckhead. Still has access to everything, but more of a community feel.
- Decatur – Popular laid back and eclectic neighboring town with great attractions. Decatur Square has fun places to shop and great places to eat.
- North of the City (Perimeter area or Vinings) – Great areas to find more affordable housing 15 minutes from the city, but you most likely won’t be able to walk to a local establishment.

Things to do
Go to the farmer’s markets! There’s a bunch here, but the best two are the DeKalb County Farmer’s Market on Ponce and the Buford Highway Farmer’s Market up near the perimeter. If it’s at all convenient, buy most of your food at one of these places. It’ll taste better, stay fresh longer, and be cheaper than any other grocery store! Amber Colletti, ’12
• Professional sports – The Braves, Hawks, Falcons and Atlanta United provide year-round professional sports
• Krog Street Market – West Coast–style market in Inman Park with unique, specialty creations and stalls to sell produce, goods, and prepared food, along with a few southern–grown restaurants and retailers.
• Ponce City Market – This restored Sears, Roebuck & Co. building is a popular place to grab a bite to eat, shop or work. Be sure to stop by Farm to Ladle, owned by a Vanderbilt alumnus!
• Martinis & IMAX – Friday nights at Fernbank Museum of Natural History.
• Jazz at the High – The High Museum of Art stays open late for cocktails and live jazz on the third Friday of the month.
• Cocktails in the Gardens – Seasonal Thursdays at the Atlanta Botanical Garden.
• Vanderbilt Game Watches – Vanderbilt fans in Atlanta attend game watches for select games. Visit vuconnect.com/atlanta and look for chapter emails for events.
• Festivals – Popular festivals include the Dogwood Festival, Virginia Highlands Summer Fest, Decatur Arts Festival, Decatur Beer Festival, Pride Festival, and Chomp & Stomp.
• Wine Tastings – Murphy’s Restaurant has a great tasting. The Vino Venue was started by a Vandy alum and is probably the best place in the city for wine tastings and classes.
• Peachtree Road Farmer’s Market – runs April through November with local produce, meats, cheeses, breads and more!
• Breweries – Atlanta has many popular breweries including Monday Night Brewing, Red Brick Brewing Company, Sweetwater Brewing Company, Eventide Brewing and Urban Tree Cidery.
• Buckhead Theatre – Atlanta’s premier intimate theatrical venue, it is also the site of sold–out shows of every musical genre.

Fun Outdoors
Tourist attractions. Aquarium is expensive but worth it. Civil Rights Museum is extremely well done and moving; a must–see. Unless you want to pay Coke $20 to assault you with their marketing for three hours, the World of Coke is a hard pass. Chris Bursch, ’13

• Piedmont Park – great for running, walking, playing with your dog, or people watching. The facility also has tennis courts, bocce ball courts, a pool, softball diamonds, volleyball courts, and open fields for soccer or Frisbee.
• Beltline – a multi–use 22–mile trail being developed in Atlanta; sections of the Eastside (3 miles), Westside (3 miles), Southwest (1.15 miles), and Northside (1 mile) trails are completed and open for use.
• Good neighborhoods to explore by foot or bike – Candler Park, Virginia Highlands, Emory, Grant Park, Lake Claire, Decatur, Inman Park, Brookhaven.
• Silver Comet Trail – this walk/bike path stretches from Vinings all the way to Alabama.
• Stone Mountain (just outside the city) – hiking, golfing, fishing, laser light show, and more.
• Chastain Park (Buckhead)
• Sweetwater Creek State Park (hiking trails, about 30 mins out)
• Tennis – Great city for any level of tennis player. All of the public tennis facilities around the city have teams, drills, and lessons for all levels and Atlanta has its own city wide league called ALTA (altatennis.org). Dekalb Tennis Center hosts mixed doubles round robin that attracts young singles. Details at dekalbtennis.com.
Popular restaurants
OKCafe and Silver Skillet offer a quintessential Southern dining experience. Kevin Rathbun Steak has the best steak in the city. Lots of vegan / vegetarian options around Cabbagetown. *Chris Bursch, ’13*

Garnish & Gather is a great local “Blue Apron” in ATL. Learn tips from your roommate or significant other... then you’ll be on your way! *Kelly Boyd, ’14*

**Breakfast/Brunch**
Highland Bakery ($$) | Buckhead Bread Co. ($$) | Alon’s Bakery & Market ($$) | Another Broken Egg ($$) | Henri’s Bakery ($$) | J. Christopher’s ($$) | Thumb’s Up Diner ($) | Goldberg’s Deli ($) | West Egg ($$) | Murphy’s – ($$$)

**Lunch/Dinner**

Popular Bars
Nightlife. Buckhead Bars (Churchill’s, Big Sky) are crowded and preppy. Johnny’s Hideaway is the best place to dance. Little Five Points bars are grungy and alternative. Breweries like Orpheus and Sweetwater frequently host Millennial-centric events. The website GAFollowers.com posts lots of events. *Chris Bursch, ’13*

- Hand ‘n Hand (Virginia Highlands)
- Atkin’s Park (Virginia Highlands)
- The Family Dog (Virginia Highlands)
- Fado Irish Pub (Buckhead & Midtown)
- Lost Dog Tavern (Buckhead)
- Brick Store Pub (Decatur)
- Taco Mac – multiple locations (Buckhead, Midtown, Virginia Highlands, Decatur)
- Five Paces Inn (Buckhead)
- The Ivy (Buckhead)
- The Big Sky (Buckhead)
- Park Tavern (Midtown)
- Ormsby’s (Westside)
- The Painted Pin (Buckhead)
Welcome to Austin
from the Austin Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/Austin

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Austin Chapter events.

Where to Live

Live closer to downtown – most of the jobs are in North Austin, which is up and coming and beautiful, but there’s a lot of construction and the traffic isn’t nearly as bad as everybody says. *Anonymous, ’15*

The east side is growing so much I can’t keep up with all of the new places for food and drink. Music venues on Red River are great for smaller concerts. If you need some time to play with dogs, Auditorium Shores is a massive off-leash dog park. *Anonymous, ’15*

East Austin is the cheapest place to live. You can still be very close to downtown and have a good set of bars near you. Austin is an incredibly vibrant city and there is always something to do. Use meetup.com to find others with your same interests. *Jack Minardi, ’12*

- **Downtown** – New, but expensive, high-rise apartments and condos with plenty of bars, restaurants, shopping, music venues, the hike-and-bike trail along Lady Bird Lake, and even two of the city’s best movie theatres at your doorstep
- **South Congress** – a walkable area close to downtown with lots of apartments and houses for rent, as well as bars, restaurants, coffee shops, music venues and funky boutiques.
- **East Austin** – one of the fastest growing neighborhoods in Austin, with apartments, loft condos, duplexes and older homes. Housing prices have been rising steadily in this area, reflecting its up-and-coming status, as restaurants, bars, shops—and hipsters—have flocked to the Eastside.
- **Mueller** – An urban village on the site of an old airport with newer apartments and homes, as well as restaurants and shopping located 10-15 minutes from downtown.
- **Bouldin Creek** – walkable neighborhood adjacent to South Congress with a mix of older and renovated duplexes and homes and plenty of restaurants, coffee shops and boutiques.
- **South Lamar** – A mix of apartments and multi-use developments, as well as Austin landmarks such as the Alamo Drafthouse movie theater and the Broken Spoke dance hall.
- **Hyde Park** – an eclectic mix of families, college students and young professionals populate this area just north of the UT campus with duplexes and houses. Plenty of coffee shops, restaurants and small boutique shops within easy walking distance.

Other areas to consider include the central neighborhoods near MoPac/Loop 1 (Tarrytown, Rosedale, Enfield, Clarksville, and Rollingwood) and other neighborhoods in Central Austin (North Loop, Brentwood, Crestview, Allandale), but these areas tend to be a bit more expensive and more “family-friendly” than those noted above.

Affordable homes and apartments can also be found in lovely communities located north of Austin (Round Rock, Pflugerville, Cedar Park) and south of Austin (Circle C, Oak Hill), which would put you anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour to Downtown (depending on traffic, of course).
Popular Activities

Austin has everything – you can drive 10 minutes in any direction and be in an outdoorsy hiking area or the heart of downtown. Icenhauers on Rainey St. has the best Sunday Funday during the summers, get the Trailer Park Taco at Torchy’s and make it “extra trashy”, and go to a concert at Mohawk. Hannah Gacke, ’15

Get ready for the best food trucks—Torchy’s, East Side Kings, and Via 313 are all favorites. See the bats, go float the river, and drink margaritas on patios all year on Rainey St. Anonymous, ’14

Austin is a fantastic city to explore! I’m still learning about all there is to do, but live music is amazing here. Coming from Nashville, it felt like a similar vibe. We have two big music festivals: Austin City Limits and South by Southwest. Austin has many beautiful parks and wildlife to escape to, but it also has a vibrant nightlife if you're looking to go out. The city is full of fantastic food, people, and activities—I can’t recommend it highly enough! Julia Di Fiore, ’14

- Live music venues: There’s always live music of almost every genre in Austin.
- Alamo Drafthouse: shows popular first–run movies and smaller arthouse films, during which you can order a variety of food and drinks The Alamo also hosts sing–alongs, quote–alongs, TV watch parties and other fun events.
- First Thursdays on South Congress: Local vendors set up tents and extended hours for restaurants and shops. And of course… there’s always live music!
- Nightly bat watching on the Ann Richards Bridge: come see the world’s largest colony of Mexican freetail bats feast of bugs at sunset. An annual Bat Fest is held on the bridge each August, when the colony is at its peak population.
- Festivals: Popular festivals held throughout the year include:
  - Sound on Sound Fest (November): music and comedy
  - SXSW (March): interactive, educational, film and music
  - Urban Music Festival (March): music
  - Fusebox Festival (April): art, theatre and music
  - Moontower Comedy and Oddity Fest (April): comedy
  - Austin Wine and Food Festival (April): wine and food
  - Fantastic Fest (September): film
  - Austin City Limits Music Festival (October): music
  - Texas Book Festival (October): books and authors
- Formula One U.S. Grand Prix (November): The only stop in the U.S. on the global Formula One racing circuit attracts folks from all over the world. Held at the Circuit of the Americas racetrack.
- Armadillo Christmas Bazaar (December): local artisans of all types set up booths to sell their wares as unique holiday gifts. Beer, wine and mixed drinks and live music also featured.
- Trail of Lights (December): an annual Austin tradition, thousands of holiday lights illuminate Zilker Park
- Zilker Kite Festival (March): Hundreds of kites fill the sky over Zilker Park.
- Eeyore's Birthday (April): in the true spirit of “Keep Austin Weird” this annual event in Pease Park downtown involves costumes, drum circles, general mayhem, and all sorts of fabulous people watching in honor of Winnie the Pooh’s downtrodden pal.
- Pecan Street Festival (first weekend in May and last weekend in September): huge arts and crafts festival set up on Sixth Street downtown.
Fun Outdoors

- Ann and Roy Butler Hike–and–Bike Trail at Lady Bird Lake: More than 10 miles of beautiful trails surround both sides of Lady Bird Lake on the southern edge of downtown.
- Barton Creek Greenbelt: 7.2 miles of trails for hiking, biking and walking, as well as opportunities for rock climbing, just 10 minutes from downtown.
- Mount Bonnell: climb up 106 steps to the hilltop park with some of the best views in Austin
- Zilker Park: More than 300 acres with dozens of trails, picnic areas, multi–use fields, botanical gardens and much more.
- Barton Springs Pool: located within Zilker Park, Barton Springs is a man–made pool fed by a natural spring that stays at an average of 68 degrees year–round.

Popular Restaurants

- Tacos – The humble taco holds a special place in Austin’s food scene.
  - Taco Shack | Tacodeli | Torchy’s Tacos | Veracruz All–Natural | Maria’s Taco Xpress | Fork & Taco | Papalote’s | El Chilito | Paco’s Tacos
- Barbecue – A few barbecue locales considered top tier among those in the know:
  - Franklin Barbecue $$ | Micklethwait Craft Meats $$ | LaBarbecue | Stiles Switch BBQ and Brew | The Salt Lick $$
- Breakfast/Brunch – 24 Diner ($$) | Magnolia Café ($$$) | Kerbey Lane Café ($$$) | Juan in a Million ($) | Cisco’s ($) | Olivia ($$$)
- Lunch/Dinner – Odd Duck ($$$) | Barley Swine ($) | Swift’s Attic ($$) | Qui ($$$) | Uchi ($$$) | Uchiko ($$$) | Lucy’s Fried Chicken ($) | Frank ($) | Ramen Tatsu–Ya ($) | Lenoir ($$$) | Bufalina ($) | Manuel’s ($) | East Side Pies ($) | Texas Chili Parlor ($)

Popular Bars

- Firehouse Lounge (Downtown)
- Red Room Lounge (Downtown)
- HandleBar (Downtown)
- Bar 96 (Rainey Street)
- Banger’s Sausage House and Beer Garden (Rainey Street)
- Half Step (Rainey Street)
- Drink.Well (Burnet)
- Whisler’s (Eastside)
- Weather Up (Eastside)
- The Gingerman (Downtown)
- Bar Congress (Downtown)
- House Wine (South Lamar)
- Gibson Bar (South Lamar)
Welcome to Charlotte
from the Charlotte Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/charlotte

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Charlotte Chapter events.

Where to Live
Charlotte is a great city and is pretty similar to Nashville. Many cool neighborhoods, such as Dilworth, NoDa, and Plaza Midwood. Tons of breweries, bars and restaurants, and professional sports. *Allison Winston, ’12*

Neighborhoods close to Center City (Uptown Charlotte)
• Center City/Uptown
• South End
• Plaza Midwood
• Chantilly
• Dilworth
• NoDa (North Davidson)
• Wilmore
• Madison Park
• South Park
• Cotswold
• Elizabeth

Neighborhoods further from Center City
• Ballantyne (home to The SEC Network studios)
• University
• Huntersville
• Tega Cay and Fort Mill, SC
• Waxhaw
• Quail Hollow
• Matthews
• Belmont
• Mountain Island Lake
• Pineville

Things to do
• Epicentre – a collection of cafes, restaurants, late night spots, retail and events.
• Seventh Street Market – Several small restaurants under one roof. Coffee, wine, pizza, sandwiches and baked goods.
Performing Arts – Charlotte Ballet, Opera Carolina, Actor’s Theatre of Charlotte, Charlotte Symphony Orchestra, which has a regular concert series at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center in addition to a summer outdoor concert series at several parks.

Time Warner Arena is the venue for many major concerts.

NoDa Summer Music Fest

PNC Music Pavilion – Outdoor music venue with many summer concerts

Jazz – First Friday Jazz at The Bechtler Museum and The Jazz Room at the Blumenthal Performing Arts Center

NASCAR races and NASCAR Hall of Fame; races held at Charlotte Motor Speedway

Club scene – Charlotte has a number of smaller music venues, although not as many as Nashville. Check out Creative Loafing or the Charlotte Observer for listings.

Local Festivals: BBQ Festival, Festival of India, Greek Fest, Festival in the Park, several local beer festivals, Taste of Charlotte, Speed Street (during May Race Week).

The Charlotte Regional Farmer’s Market on Yorkmount is the largest area market open most days, but there are many others operating on various schedules, on Kings Drive, Matthews, Center City Charlotte, Mecklenburg County market near Carolinas Medical Center, Stonecrest and Ballantyne.

Ethnic Markets: There are a good number in and around Charlotte, both large and small. Here are a few to get you started!
  o Mexican and South American: six locations of Compare Foods, a supermarket devoted to all types of ingredients for making your favorite south of the border dishes.
  o Mostly Asian: Super G Mart, North Carolina’s largest international supermarket is located on Hwy 74 east of Center City Charlotte, at 7323 E. Independence Blvd., Charlotte, NC, (980) 321–4048, supergmart.net/
  o Indian: Patel Brothers, 10701 Centrum Parkway, Pineville, North Carolina 28134, (704) 540–2013
  o Greek: Agora Greek Market located at 5122 E. Independence Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28212, and Minos Imported Foods, 11016 Monroe Road, Matthews, NC 28105

Restaurants/Bars/Breweries

Outside Epicentre – Mert’s Heart and Soul – Southern/Soul food | Basil Thai Cuisine | 5Church | 204 North | City Smoke – BBQ | Ink N Ivy

South End – The Oak Room | Midnight Diner | Tupelo Honey Café – Southern/American brunch | Nova’s Bakery | Toast in Dilworth | Mac’s Speed Shop – BBQ | Price’s Chicken Coop | Sycamore Brewing | Triple C Brewery | The Unknown Brewing Company

Plaza Midwood – Soul Gastrolounge | Midwood Smokehouse | Dish | Krazy Fish | The Common Market | The Peculiar Rabbit | Diamond Restaurant | The Pizza Peel and Tap Room | The Whiskey Warehouse
Young professionals groups

- The Young Affiliates of the Mint, Mint Museum
- Charlotte Chamber Young Professionals
- Young Professionals Club, Charlotte City Club
- Young Visionaries of The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art

Athletic Fun Outdoors and Indoors

In other cities exercising outside can be tough, but in Charlotte you can always find something to do, whether it’s going for a run, bike ride, walk, participating in exercise classes or going to the Whitewater Center and area lakes for some water-based fun!

- Freedom Park offers walking trails, tennis, basketball courts, playgrounds
- Little Sugar Creek Greenway connecting walking and biking trails from just north of Center City to Park Road Shopping Center.
- Four Mile Creek Greenway – McAlpine Creek Greenway and McMullen Creek Greenway all connect in South Charlotte.
- Jeff Adams Tennis Center and Park Road Park are just two of the many public tennis facilities available.
- Team and Social Sports:
  - Waka Kickball and Social Sports – join a team and play/socialize in the fall
  - Sportslink – organizes teams and leagues for a wide variety of sports year round
- Running – There are numerous running trails, running groups and races of various distances throughout the year.
- “The Booty Loop” – popular bike route along Selwyn, Queens Road, Queens Road West and Hopedale Avenue in Myers Park
- Sherman Branch Mountain Bike Park – 14 miles from Center City Charlotte, in Mint Hill, NC.
- Crowders Mountain State Park and Kings Mountain State Park – offer hiking on a range of trails and terrains, climbing, camping and other outdoor activities.
- Carolina Thread Trail is a regional network of greenways, trails and blueways that reaches 15 counties around Charlotte, with 220 miles of trails open to the public. The name “Carolina Thread Trail” is rooted in a region with a rich heritage of weaving fabric.
- The US National Whitewater Center – 15 miles west of Center City Charlotte and offers whitewater rafting, kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding, rock climbing, mountain-biking and other outdoor activities.
- Nearby area lakes – Lake Wylie, Lake Norman and Mountain Isle Lake offer boating, swimming and other outdoor activities.
Welcome to Chicago
from the Chicago Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/chicago

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Chicago Chapter events.

Culture
What’s up with the Windy City?
You’ve probably heard Chicago referred to as the “Windy City,” but according to local historians, our notoriously gusty weather surprisingly played no role in the development of this nickname. Popular belief is that our nickname came to life over a century ago, given to us by a reporter covering the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition, hosted in Chicago. This reporter wrote about how Chicagoans just couldn’t stop bragging about the town, thus coining the phrase “Windy City.” Well, the name has stuck with us and is surely relevant in Chicago today. The Chicagoland area has been heralded by social scientists as one of the most successful and vibrant metropolitan areas in the world, and we simply can’t help but show off our Chicago pride.

Where to Live
Buy a big jacket and a volleyball net, and you will be happy all year long (the beaches are real, surprisingly for those of us not formerly familiar with the Midwest). If you choose to live in a high-rise area such as River North, I have found that condos are more economical than apartments when renting. Living close to public transportation is important, especially during the winter. Look for buildings/apartments/condos/etc. that include heat...gas bills can really rack up in the winter. Eric Citron, ’13

Best neighborhoods—Gold Coast, Lincoln Park, Lakeview, River North. All around, best city! Allison Johnston, ’13

Don’t go straight to River North/Gold Coast area if you are new to Chicago. This is a really nice area, but if you start out living there you will never expand and check out the rest of the city. There are so many great areas to live that are much more affordable—Lincoln Park, Lakeview, Wicker Park. Check it all out before you move to the heart of downtown. There is no such thing as bad food in this city. Invest in a good coat, snow boots, and nice gloves... you will need it! Brandy Waters, ’11

Old Town is an up and coming area that has a lot of young, fun bars on it and is less expensive than River North or Gold Coast. Lakeview and Wrigleyville are a bit more affordable and more casual. Danielle Honigstein, ’17

• Gold Coast – With landmark mansions and expensive lakefront condominiums, the Gold Coast has a reputation as one of the wealthiest areas in the city. However, there are also affordable gems to be found here in vintage walk-ups.
• Streeterville – You’ll find high rise apartments and all the advantages of being close to the heart of the city and just a few steps from landmarks like Chicago’s Water Tower, the Hancock Center, and the Drake Hotel.
• River North & River West – Both of these neighborhoods feature loft residences and the best galleries in Chicago. The trendy restaurants and home furnishing boutiques contribute to their cool vibe.
• The Loop – Technically bounded by the elevated (“el”) tracks, this is the commercial and business heart of Chicago. Increasing numbers of apartments are being developed around the Loop.
• Old Town – With its tree-lined residential streets, this “near north” community is just north of Chicago’s downtown area. And is home to some of Chicago’s finest and most expensive housing.
• Lincoln Park – With more than a mile of public parks, Lincoln Park boasts a world class zoo, golf course, and hiking and biking paths close to the lake. The western part of the neighborhood includes more bars, restaurants and boutiques per capita than the rest of the city.
• Wrigleyville & Lakeview – Home to the Chicago Cubs and historic Wrigley Field, this livable and walkable area with tree-lined streets, beautifully rehabbed Victorian greystones, two- and three-flat buildings, and multi-unit condos. The many bars and restaurants contribute to a vibrant nightlife and hometown spirit.
• Ravenswood – Popular for its affordable homes, Ravenswood has experienced a renaissance and has mass transit that easily connects to the Loop.
• Bucktown & Wicker Park – Housing runs the gamut from beautifully renovated town homes to inexpensive, spacious lofts. Area features galleries, bohemian cafes, comic book shops, and restaurants ranging from expensive chic to down home and unpretentious.

Where should I look?
Try apartment finding agencies, Chicago Tribune newspaper, The Reader weekly paper, walk around neighborhoods that interest you, word of mouth, Craigslist, or other rental and property web sites.

Apartment Finding Services include Chicago Apartment Finders chicagoapartmentfinders.com; Apartment People apartmentpeople.com; The Apartment Source theapartmentsource.com; RelocationCentral by Cort (formerly Relcon Apartment Finders) relocationcentral.com/chicago–apartments.html; and Homestead Group thehomesteadgroup.com.

Getting Around
There are very few areas of Chicago that can’t be reached by public transportation. Visit transitchicago.com for schedules, detailed maps and an online trip planner.
• The “el” – The “el” is an elevated and underground rail system that covers the city and a bit beyond. It’s both easy and safe to use. Please visit ventrachicago.com for further information.
• Buses – Where the “el” doesn’t reach, you’ll almost certainly find a bus that will take you to your desired location. Take a look at transitchicago.com for schedules, as well as maps.
• Metra – Need to get out to the suburbs? Check metrarail.com and you’ll likely find that
• The Metra suburban commuter trains, metrarail.com, can get you to the suburbs and there’s also a suburban bus service, operated by the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA).
**Restaurants**

Chicago is a sophisticated melting pot of the world’s cuisines. Check out metromix.chicagotribune.com to find something to whet your appetite.

- **Lincoln Park** – Café Ba Ba Reeba | Toro Sushi | Toast | Geja’s Café | Sapori Trattoria | Webster’s Wine Bar
- **Bucktown & Wicker Park** – Blue Fin | Café Absinthe | Big Star | Feast | Coast | Bin Wine Café
- **Old Town & Gold Coast** – Bistrot Margot | Cru Café and Wine Bar | Gibson’s Steak House | Benchmark | Rosebud on Rush | Tavern on Rush | Topo Gigio | Nico Osteria
- **River North** – XOCO | Gilt Bar | Paris Club | Coco Pazzo | Fogo de Chao | Gene & Georgetti | Mercadito | Sushisamba Rio | RPM | Siena Tavern
- **West Loop** – AVEC | Blackbird | Embeya | Maude’s Liquor | Girl and the Goat | Nell’Cote | Vivo | Wishbone

**Things to do**

All of Chicago’s best museums have free admission days throughout the year if you are an Illinois resident. Take advantage of these! *Samantha Orland, ’15*

It always depends on who you ask, but don’t be afraid to go off the beaten path! Chicago is smaller than NYC, but has just as many hidden gems. *Alexandra Perraud, ’13*

Read *Eater* to see what is new in Chicago! *Greer Martin, ’13*

- **Parks** – Enjoy the outdoors or join in beachfront activities North Avenue Beach at North Avenue at Lake Michigan; Oak Street Beach at Oak Street at Lake Michigan; Lincoln Park Zoo at Fullerton and Lincoln Parkway; Millennium Park at Michigan Avenue and Randolph; Grant Park at Michigan Avenue and Madison; and Navy Pier at 600 East Grand Avenue.
- **Chicago’s Sport and Social Club** – A great way to meet new people and get involved in sports, this group organizes sports teams, who are sponsored by bars and other establishments around the city. Learn more at chicagosportandsocialclub.com.
- **Professional sports** – Chicago Bears, Chicago Blackhawks, Chicago Bulls, Chicago Cubs, Chicago White Sox, Chicago Fire, and Chicago Wolves.
- **Museums** – You can explore everything from history and art to astronomy and sea life. Best of all, many institutions offer free days.
  - Museum Campus (museumcampus.org)
  - Adler Planetarium (adlerplanetarium.org)
  - The Art Institute of Chicago (artic.edu/aic)
  - Chicago Historical Society (chicagohistory.org)
  - The Field Museum (fieldmuseum.org)
  - Museum of Contemporary Art (mcachicago.org)
  - Shedd Aquarium (sheddaquarium.org)
  - Museum of Science & Industry (msichicago.org)
• Live music – you’ll find live music throughout the city. The Reader and metromix. chicagotribune.com have listings.
  o House of Blues (hob.com)
  o Park West (parkwestchicago.com)
  o The Metro (metrochicago.com)
  o Double Door (doubledoor.com)
  o Riviera Theatre (rivieratheatre.com)
  o Allstate Arena (allstatearena.com)
  o United Center (unitedcenter.com)
  o Ravinia Outdoor Venue (ravinia.org)
• Movies – From national releases to art house films, there’s always a lot to choose from.
  o City North: Brew & View at the Vic, Facets Cinematheque (art house films), Landmark’s Century Centre, Music Box (art house films), Pipers Alley, 3 Penny, Village, Webster Place
  o Downtown: Esquire, Gene Siskel Film Center (School of the Art Institute), Navy Pier (Omnimax), River East 21
Welcome to Dallas
from the Dallas Vanderbilt Chapter
Vuconnect.com/dallas

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Dallas Chapter events.

Where to Live
Uptown and Knox–Henderson areas are great places for recent grads...with restaurants, bars, shopping, and the Katy Trail (a great exercise trail) within walking distance. And, if you can’t bear the thought of leaving Vandy Vans behind, there is a free trolley that runs down McKinney Avenue until midnight. Sara Magenheimer, ’11

Uptown is a really fun neighborhood with lots of recent Vandy grads! Everything is within walking distance and there are tons of bars and restaurants. Anonymous, ’15

I live uptown in the State Thomas neighborhood, which is a great place for recent grads. It's made up of mostly young professionals and is very pretty with lots of trees, cute apartments, and townhouses. It's also very safe. You know you live in a good area when people from all around come there to walk their dogs after dark. I've found it to be very affordable. It's also within walking distance of lots of fun bars and restaurants. Lindsay Pounder, ’10

Uptown and Lower Greenville are great for new grads! Jessica Brunelle, ’14

• Uptown – If you are working downtown, or anywhere in the Park Cities, Uptown is a great place for young graduates. Many places are within walking distance to great restaurants and bars. This is where the “young professionals” tend to go out.
• Plano, Frisco, Carrollton and Coppell are all good places to live if you are working on the North side of town, but they are more “family oriented.”

Restaurants
There are TONS of great places to eat in Dallas. Pick up a copy of D Magazine – it has great restaurant suggestions and reviews as well as a calendar of local happenings.
• Mi Cocina | Breadwinners | Primo’s | Penne Pomodoro | Eatzi’s | Taco Diner | Gloria’s | Steel | Fearing’s (inside the Ritz) | Abacus.
• Central Market is a fabulous grocery with lots of pre–made foods that you can pull off as making yourself—great if you want to impress a date!

Things to do
One of my favorite places in Dallas is HG SPLY– there’s an amazing rooftop balcony that overlooks the Dallas skyline. Molly Mocek, ’14

• Dallas Mavericks, Dallas Cowboys and Texas Rangers games – Always fun (even if the team isn’t having a winning season!)
• Vandy football games – At Christie’s Sports Bar on McKinney
• Glass Cactus – Located at the Gaylord Texan in Grapevine
• The Katy Trail – (located in Uptown) A great place to run, walk, rollerblade, and bike. It’s full of young people after work and on the weekends.
• White Rock Lake – A popular place to enjoy the beautiful Dallas weather. You can rent sailboats, pack a picnic or take a walk along the paved trail that goes around the entire lake.
• Highland Park Village – Visit anytime and take a drive through the Highland Park neighborhood during the holidays—the lights are absolutely beautiful!
• State Fair of Texas – Has been held annually at Fair Park since 1889. It is a massive event that takes place in the fall. It’s something everyone needs to experience at least once in their life.
• The Red River Shootout – The football game between heated rivals Texas and Oklahoma, is a great experience. The two teams “meet in the middle” at Dallas’ Cotton Bowl.
• American Airlines Center – Gets some awesome concerts—check Ticketmaster frequently or you might miss out!
• Museums
  o The Sixth Floor Museum: this is the museum dedicated to the life and assassination of John F. Kennedy. Definitely a must-see for everyone.
  o The Dallas Museum of Art
  o The Nasher Sculpture Center
  o The Meadows Museum of Art (on Southern Methodist University campus)
  o The Dallas Contemporary
• Shopping – Dallas is a great place to shop.
  o NorthPark Center (10 mins north of downtown): everything from Forever 21 to Neiman Marcus. It also has a nice food court and a movie theatre.
  o Dallas Galleria Much like NorthPark, but further away from the Park Cities area
  o Highland Park Village – Very upscale outdoor shopping center. Even if you can’t afford most of the stores, it’s a great place to window shop. Rumor has it, this was America’s first shopping center.
  o West Village – Located in Uptown: outdoor shopping with eclectic mix of shops, bars, restaurants and The Magnolia movie theatre.
  o Plano and Frisco – Great, brand-new shopping malls.
  o Allen Premium Outlets – A little-known secret: if Northpark and Highland Park Village are a little out of your budget, you can find great deals here. Everything from Neiman’s Last Call to Nike to J.Crew. From downtown, take Central Expressway (also known as “75”) north about 25 miles. You will see signs along the Expressway that direct you to the exit.

Getting Around
Traffic is a severe challenge, especially around rush hour, so live near your job if possible—or live somewhere where you will be driving against the flow of traffic. The DART commuter train system is very easy and convenient. Buy a Toll Tag—even if you don’t anticipate driving on the tollway much. You’ll be glad you did! Take advantage of the other great cities in Texas! San Antonio, Houston, and Austin all make great weekend trips and if you find a cheap fare on Southwest, you can be there in no time!
Welcome to Denver
from the Denver Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/denver

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Denver Chapter events.

Where to Live
Luckily, the City of Denver has produced a map of all of the neighborhoods in the city. Visit denvergov.org/denvermaps/documents/citywide/Neighborhoods.pdf to view the map.

Best places to live tend to be near Wash Park, Cheeseman Park, SoBa and LoDo. Parks are awesome. Bars are awesome. Skiing is best in the world. Not a great guy–girl ratio (“Menver” is a thing). *Anonymous, ’13*

- Downtown – Downtown Denver is still in the process of becoming more residential, but offers all the benefits of a major city including public transportation, art museums, NHL, NBA, NFL and MLB stadiums. Apartments actually can be reasonably priced downtown, but there is less availability than in the surrounding neighborhoods.
- LoDo (Lower Downtown) – this updated segment of downtown has renovated lofts and mid–rise apartments, and is centered on the revitalized Union Station, the centerpiece of Denver’s light rail and urban redevelopment plan, allowing quick access all over the metropolitan area and containing some of the city’s hottest venues. Rents tend to be high, but there are lots of options. This is “the place to be” for urbanites in Colorado and is very popular with Denver’s singles.
- Ballpark – this neighborhood is centered around the Colorado Rockies baseball field and is a cheaper alternative to LoDo living without sacrificing proximity to Denver’s nightlife.
- LoHi (Lower Highlands) – full of trendy restaurants and historic homes, LoHi is a recently gentrified area with a lot of larger apartment buildings and townhomes with reasonable rents that is popular with younger families and professionals. A pedestrian bridge connects it to downtown and LoDo.
- Highlands/Sloan’s Lake – Up–and–coming area, but only three miles from downtown. Prices are much more reasonable but the options are more geared toward single family homes than condos or apartments.
- Baker – offers many historic homes and newer apartment complexes. Although still an up–and–coming area, it has become popular for working young professionals who want to be close to downtown or to the Santa Fe Arts District, a grouping of art galleries and antique shops along Santa Fe Drive.
- Uptown – a very popular area for 20–somethings east of downtown, Uptown has many bars and restaurants. It is a bit more spread out than LoDo or LoHi so it is somewhat less walkable, but you can easily cycle to downtown or around the area.
- Wash Park – a very popular area southeast of downtown with housing ranging from million–dollar–plus mansions to trendy condos and apartments, but is primarily higher–end single–family housing.
• Cherry Creek – upscale neighborhood featuring Cherry Creek Mall, the Country Club, and the mixed-development Cherry Creek North area. The eastern part of the neighborhood has many options for upscale apartments and townhomes as well as higher-end single family homes. Great for the shop-a-holics and high-end trendsetters, as well as more established families who want a bit more space than downtown offers.

• DU/University – The area around the University of Denver offers yet more housing for recent college grads and those who like to stay young at heart. With great restaurants, a wide variety of housing options and access to the Denver light rail system, University has something to offer everyone.

• Golden, Littleton, Highlands Ranch, Aurora, Greenwood Village/DTC (Denver Tech Center) and Parker are good choices if you want to live in the suburbs.

**Things to do**

If you find yourself in Denver be sure to make your way into the mountains. Mount Falcon, the Foothills in Boulder, and Eldorado Canyon State Park offer great hikes with spectacular views near the city!  *Sarah O’Brien, ’13*

I really believe that Denver is the perfect city. The weather is amazing. It’s sunny over 300 days a year and, after a beautiful snowfall, the snow practically evaporates from the ground rather than melting and getting slushy. For those sports fans, Denver has at least seven professional sports teams and four new sports venues. Just a short distance out of the city, you can escape to the mountains to go on a nice hike in Boulder or climb a fourteener (mountain over 14,000 ft.).  *Brittany Cowfer, ’12*

• Red Rocks Amphitheatre – A world-famous concert venue built within a natural rock formation overlooking the Great Plains and the city of Denver, Red Rocks has hosted major artists and performers for over 80 years. A park, the venue is open to the public during daylight hours (unless an event is scheduled), and offers a museum and a surprisingly tasty restaurant. Locals are known to frequent the weeknight movie screenings during the summer and to run stadiums up and down the amphitheater stairs.

• Denver Broncos – The Broncos are serious business in Denver (as are the Colorado Avalanche, the Colorado Rockies, the Colorado Rapids and the Denver Nuggets). Virtually every home game at Mile High stadium has been sold out since the 1980s and you aren’t a true Denverite until you’ve attended one, but ticket prices are high, reflecting local enthusiasm.

• The Rockies – (the mountains, not the baseball team) Denver is a very outdoorsy city with over 300 days of sunshine per year. A big part of life in the winter is braving the traffic each weekend on I-70 to reach the freshest powder, while summer traffic can be equally bad to go mountain biking, hiking or to get to the many Hot Springs.

• Bar Crawls in LoDo – With the density of hot nightspots in LoDo, LoHi and the Ballpark (not to mention all over town), chances are that you’ll find yourself participating in a bar crawl at one point or another.

• Coors Brewery Tour – In nearby Golden, Colorado, the Coors Brewery (the largest in the world) is open for tours most days and has a fun tasting room at the end of the tour for those over 21.

• Actually, any brewery – Denver, Boulder and Fort Collins all have dozens and dozens of craft breweries worth a visit for anyone interested in beer tasting or brewing.

• Santa Fe Arts District – Just south of downtown along Santa Fe Drive, a grouping of art galleries, bars and antique stores.
• Wash Park – Washington Park is a great place for people–watching, picnicking, jogging or roller–blading.
• Cheeseman Park – Cheeseman Park, a former 19th century cemetery, is a great place for jogging or geo–caching. Local legends maintain that undiscovered gravesites are still often recovered by residents.
• Cherry Creek Trail–The Cherry Creek Trail follows the course of Cheery Creek around the southern side of downtown to the Cherry Creek neighborhood. You can rent a bike through Bicycle, the city–wide, short–term bicycle rental program.
• Ski resorts – Copper Mountain, Winter Park, Arapahoe Basin, Breckenridge, Vail, Beaver Creek, Loveland, and Keystone are just two hours from Denver.

**Popular Restaurants**
Denver is a foodie paradise, with options highlighting the “farm–to–table” scene and the “green living/green eating” ethos of the West.
- Breakfast/Brunch – Wash Park Grille ($$) | Duo ($$$) | Sassafrass ($) | Beast and Bottle ($$$) | Squeaky Bean ($) | Snooze ($)
- Lunch/Dinner – Ale House at Amato’s ($) | Stella’s ($$$) | Duo ($$$$) | Sushi Den ($$), Root Down ($$$), The Kitchen Next Door ($$), Colt & Gray ($$$), TrueFood ($$), Beatrice & Woodsley ($$$)
- Ice Cream – Little Man Creamery (in LoHi) is locally famous, in a building shaped like a giant milk canister, and isn’t to be missed.

**Popular Bars**
- Terminal Bar @ Union Station
- Peak’s Lounge (in the Downtown Hyatt), a great rooftop bar downtown to watch the sunset over the Rockies
- Williams & Graham, a speakeasy in LoHi
- Punch Bowl Social, a hang–out spot on Broadway with bowling, TVs and games, alongside good food and drinks
- Yard House in downtown
- 1up – a bar with dozens of classic arcade video games with two locations in downtown
- Prohibition – a classy bar in Uptown

**Getting Around**
Public Transportation
Denver has a great light rail system, based on Union Station, that reaches to the Denver Tech Center in the south, to Golden in the West and to Denver International Airport in the Northeast.
Welcome to Houston
from the Houston Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/Houston

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Houston Chapter events.

About Houston

- **Houston “Firsts”** – “Houston” was the first word Astronaut Neil Armstrong spoke when he landed on the moon. It is home to the first major freeway in Texas. America’s first public television station is located here.
- **Multicultural Houston** – There are 90 languages spoken throughout the area. The diverse population consists of 37.4 percent Hispanic, 49.3 percent Caucasian, 29.3 percent African-American and 5.3 percent Asian. There are 83 consulates—third largest consular corps in the nation.
- **Business in Houston** – Texas Medical Center is home to more than 42 nonprofit institutions; the largest medical center in the world; U.S. energy headquarters with more than 5,000 energy-related businesses; and the Port of Houston, a $15–billion petrochemical complex, No. 1 in the nation in foreign tonnage and No. 2 in total tonnage.
- **Need medical help in Houston?** – Houston has one of the country’s premier medical centers in our own backyard. The Medical Center, adjacent to downtown, is comprised of several hospital systems: University of Texas Health Science Center, Memorial Hermann Hospital, St. Luke’s Hospital, Methodist Hospital, Texas Children’s Hospital, MD Anderson Cancer Center and the Woman’s Hospital of Texas. houstonmedcenter.com

Where to live

If you are going to be working inside the inner loop, live in the inner loop, and vice versa with outside. Anytime you need to cross 610 you’re going to double your commute. Take advantage of the Rodeo, Museum District, and the sports/music opportunities all throughout the city. **Anonymous, ’11**

I live in the Heights and I love it; also check out Midtown, Montrose and Upper Kirby. **Kendra Williamson, ’13**

I love Midtown, Montrose, and the Heights! Houston has amazing food options. Some can’t miss ones are Ninfa’s on Navigation, Lupe Tortillas, Feast, and Bernie’s Burger Bus. Also check out Central Market for awesome grocery shopping, live music, and food trucks on the weekends. 19th street in the Heights has cute boho style shops. **Anonymous, ’11**

Montrose and the Heights are fun places to live and hang out! Houston has the best food, too. **Natalia Alvarez, ’14**
**Things to do**

You are undoubtedly in the best city in the nation, so you’re already winning. Hit the food parks, the “tunnels” downtown, Discovery Green, and Free Press SummerFest. All the hipsters hang out in The Heights, so you’ll probably find some Fido--esque coffee shop around there.  
*Jay Larry, ’14*

Go to Free Press Summer Fest! Buy your tickets NOW! Bike or run on the Allen Parkway/ Downtown trail – it is really nice and connects to so many places. Over summer, go to the Little Woodrow’s turtle races. Check out concerts at Fitzgeralds. Tour the Karbach and St. Arnolds breweries.  
*Kendra Williamson, ’13*

- Professional sports: Houston Astros (MLB), Houston Rockets (NBA), Houston Texans (NFL), Houston Dynamo (MLS)
- Theater District – One of only five cities in the U.S. with resident companies in the four disciplines of the performing arts: Alley Theatre, Houston Ballet, Houston Symphony and Houston Grand Opera.
- Theme Parks – Space Center Houston is the Official Visitors Center for NASA’s Johnson Space Center. Others include SplashTown water park, Moody Gardens on Galveston Island, Kemah Boardwalk, Downtown Aquarium and Discovery Green Downtown Park.
- Outdoors – There are more than 165 public and private golf courses. Houston is located 50 miles from the Gulf of Mexico and 30 minutes from Clear Lake, a 2,000-acre destination for boating enthusiasts. It is the third-largest pleasure boat basin in the U.S.
- Volunteer – YES Academy (founded by Vanderbilt Alumnus Chris Barbic), Volunteer Houston, Junior League of Houston
- Major Parks – Memorial Park, Herman Park, Discovery Green

**Restaurants**

Houston has amazing restaurants, some say even better than New York City. Here are some musts.

- Carrabba’s (the original) | Mark’s | Reef | Pappasitos | Daily Review | Shade | Barnaby’s | Dolce Vita | Hunan | Nit Noi | Benjy’s | Armandos | Mockingbird Café | Goode Co. BBQ | Taqueria and Seafood | Papas Burger | Tony’s | Ciao Bella | Ruggles Green | Backstreet Café.

**Shopping**

It’s a good thing you are coming to Houston to work, because soon you will want to spend your hard-earned money with all of Houston’s fabulous shopping! These are a few of the larger destination shopping locations.

The Galleria | Highland Village | Memorial City Mall | CITYCENTRE | The Woodlands Mall | The Outlets at Katy Mills
Welcome to London
from the London Vanderbilt Chapter
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Where to Live
• Chelsea and Fulham – Large ex–pat communities, full of young people; surrounded by great shops and restaurants, but can be very expensive...quality over quantity
• Clapham – Hub for young professionals commuting into the city; great nightlife and good transport links
• South Kensington and Notting Hill – Large ex–pat communities / families combined with the artistic scene of Portobello Road; beautiful buildings and common spaces, but definitely one of the most expensive places in London
• Angel and Islington – Perfect for young professionals commuting into the city; great nightlife, very popular in recent years
• Farringdon and Clerkenwell – Up–and–coming neighbourhood with converted warehouse buildings and unique rental properties where your money will stretch further; good restaurants and great nightlife in nearby Angel
• Holborn and Covent Garden – As close to Central London as it gets with great access to everything; not as residential as other locations, less space for your money

Housing Tips
• If you have the ability, try to visit the neighborhoods you consider living in before signing a rental agreement. Most of the large estate agents have accessible store–fronts with walk–in visitations, so spend a Saturday checking out the local properties on offer.
• Renting property in London can seem like an expensive prospect, but there are ways to make your British Pounds go farther such as renting a house–share. Large groups of friends can often live together in a five to six bedroom house, or you can find an available room in an existing house–share through websites like gumtree.com and spareroom.co.uk.
• Properties closest to transport links will often be more expensive, but commuters into the city will find that proximity to the tube can make a big difference to the day.
• Rental prices can be listed in monthly or weekly rates.
• Check all the appliances when viewing properties, as you will likely find the washing machine in the kitchen...a bit strange, but very handy in a small space!
• Especially in older buildings, have a survey done of the property to ensure there are no damp issues in the walls.

Transportation
• Underground – Commonly known as the Tube, the London Underground system is a convenient and safe way to get around London. tfl.gov.uk is your go–to source for information about transport and any delays or closures
• Buses – London’s infamous red double–decker buses are a great way to see London as you travel. The Oyster Card used on the Underground can also be used on buses.
• Taxis – Black Cabs are an iconic form of London travel, and you can hail these on the street or find them in taxi ranks outside of hotels and major attractions. London taxi drivers spend three to four years learning “The Knowledge,” the exam one must pass to become a Black Cab driver, so they definitely know their way around town. You usually have to tell them where you’re going before getting in the cab, and tipping is not expected. Beware of minicabs...unofficial cab companies which can be found loitering around bars and clubs late at night.

• Cars – Cars can be an unnecessary headache in Central London, due to limited parking, expensive permits, and the Congestion Charge (a fee one must pay for driving within certain areas of Central London). If you do need to drive, however, you can only drive on your American license for six months before you will need to apply for your UK driving license.

• Bicycles – Cycling has become a popular way of getting around London, especially with the citywide bike share Santander Cycles. tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling

**Things to do**

Explore!!!! It is so huge and there is so much to do and see all the time. As George Bernard Shaw once said, if you are tired of London you are tired of life.

*Juhi Mirchandani, ‘12*

• Accomplice London – Improv theatre meets scavenger hunt, a great day out.
• Courthauld Gallery – Small intimate gallery showcasing some of the most famous impressionist works in London.
• Football – There are many London football teams, including those in the top Premier League. Saturday is the big game day, with tickets usually available for purchase at a reasonable price.
• Greenwich – South of the river, Greenwich is home to the Royal Observatory and Prime Meridian as well as the Greenwich Market.
• Kew Gardens – The Royal Botanical Gardens provide a great escape from busy city life.
• Markets – Borough Market, (London Bridge, Thurs.–Sat.) great food market; Greenwich Market (Greenwich, Sat.–Sun.) local crafts and artisans; Portobello Market (Notting Hill, Fri.–Sun.) Go early to avoid crowds, very touristy but a must–see; Spitalfields Market (Liverpool Street, Mon.–Fri. = shops only, Sunday = shops and local stalls) Fashion, antiques, furniture.
• Proms @ Royal Albert Hall – Month–long music concert during the summer showcasing the best of British music, a very traditional English experience.
• Southbank – Southbank Centre is the largest single–run arts centre in the world and is home to performance halls, photos exhibitions, music events and the Mayor’s Thames Festival.
• West End Theatre – There are always shows on, and discount / same–day tickets are usually available.
• Parks – All of the Royal Parks have great space to run, relax, even rent a boat or go horseback riding.
• Gyms
  o Pure Gym – Cheap monthly rates, numerous locations around town
  o Fitness First – Three price tiers which give you access to different locations and services (fitness classes, swimming pools, tanning beds, etc.)
  o David Lloyd – More expensive monthly rates but great facilities
  o Virgin Active – The best facilities but the highest rates!
Popular Restaurants
So great is London’s reputation for quality and variety of restaurants, you will always find something to suit both your palate and your budget. When in doubt, check out timeout.com/london and squaremeal.co.uk for the latest reviews and recommendations. Booking recommended.
• Barbecoa (£££) | Bumpkin (£) | Busaba Eathai (£) | Hakkasan (££ to ££££) | Ottolenghi (££) | Sale E Pepe (££) | Tendido Cero (££) | Wahaca (£)

Breakfast and Brunch Spots
London’s brunch culture is growing slowly but steadily, and the city is starting to offer some great weekend brunch options:
• Aubaine (££) | Del Aziz (£) | Landmark Hotel (££££) | Smiths of Smithfield (£££) | The Wolseley (£££) | J&A Cafe (£) | Med Kitchen (£)

Afternoon Tea
In order to have the quintessential English experience, afternoon tea is a must. Many places offer a simple afternoon tea menu (try afternoon-tea-london.co.uk for additional suggestions), but be sure to try one these four classic afternoon tea spots. Booking is a must!
• Claridges (£££) | The Ritz (£££) | The Savoy (£££) | The Wolseley (£££)

Bars & Pubs
• Blue Bar @ Berkeley Hotel (££££) | Boujis (££££) | Cadogan Arms (££) | Giant Robot (££) | Milk & Honey (££) | Mahiki (£££) | White Horse (£) | Vinoteca (££)

Popular Gyms
• Pure Gym – Cheap monthly rates, numerous locations around town
• Fitness First – Three price tiers which give you access to different locations & services (fitness classes, swimming pools, tanning beds, etc.)
• David Lloyd – More expensive monthly rates but great facilities
• Virgin Active – The best facilities but the highest rates!

Convenient Road Trips from London
In addition to all that London has to offer, surrounding boroughs and counties provide great places to escape the city with a quick train ride.
• Bath – Two hours west of London; original Roman ruins and Roman baths, a great spa getaway
• Bicester Village – One hour north of London; designer outlet shopping
• Brighton – Two hours south of London; seaside town with great nightlife and unique arts district
• Cambridge – One hour north of London; university town with beautiful buildings and quaint passages set around the historic market place
• Cornwall – Three hours southwest of London; coastal villages full of locally produced food and products; ideal to rent a cottage in July or August, necessary to hire a car
• Lake District – Three hours north of London; England’s largest national park, some of the most beautiful countryside in the country; ideal to rent a cottage in June or July, necessary to hire a car
• Oxford – One hour west of London; university town, visit the individual colleges
Welcome to Los Angeles  
from the Los Angeles Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/losangeles

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Los Angeles Chapter events.

Where to Live
As far as finding a place to live, LA is very spread out – and there are a huge variety of neighborhoods to choose from in terms of ambiance, what kind of housing you want, urban or natural surroundings, and even climate.

The important tip about finding a place to live is to avoid a long commute if you can. Even if your office is only 15 miles from your home, you will be looking at a long ride in traffic every day, so definitely consider location relative to your job.

The Valley is way better than people make it sound. My favorite area is Ventura and Laurel Canyon. And make friends with people in the movie business. I haven’t paid to see a movie in years, and I usually see them before they’re out to the general public. Or sign up to be in a test audience. Kristin Park, ’11

Things are very spread out in LA and traffic is a nightmare every single day so plan ahead for gas and time if you are going to live far from work. Also, unlike most cities, downtown is NOT where nightlife is so don’t move there expecting to be in the trendy spot. Samuel Greene, ’14

This city is different than many of my friends assume. There is way more to Los Angeles than Hollywood and the beach. There is great food, beautiful hikes and fun festivals. People forget that LA is the second largest city in America and that a diversity of people and industry exists here. The weather is wonderful and if you like to get outdoors, you can take advantage of a lot, here. It is definitely spread out and there is traffic so I find that my friends in more central locations are able to see and do more. Unlike most cities, the center is not downtown. People who live in and around West Hollywood have equal access to Santa Monica, Downtown and Burbank. However, depending on your personality it also helps to choose a part of town that reflects your interests and is somewhat near to where you work. If you are unsure, I recommend subletting for a few months to give you time to explore the city. Alanna Dillon, ’11

The areas highlighted below are where most young professionals (in both creative and traditional fields) choose to live.

• Downtown – Downtown has experienced a huge revitalization, which has included the construction of numerous new apartment and condo buildings as well as restaurants, bars and other entertainment facilities like L.A. Live. Neighborhoods nearby include Hollywood, Koreatown and Silverlake.

• Hollywood/Los Feliz/Larchmont – Most people who say they live in Hollywood actually live in one of the surrounding neighborhoods such as Los Feliz or Larchmont Village. True Hollywood can be very seedy, but these surrounding neighborhoods offer all the access as well as safer living. Larchmont Village has a wide variety of places to eat and hang out. Hancock Park, while very nice, is the more upscale area that is more
expensive and geared towards families and couples. If you are interested in moving some place with an energetic, young and urban vibe, this may be the place.

• La Brea/Mid City – The area has many apartments at more reasonable prices than other areas of the Westside. It also boasts numerous attractions like the Grove Mall (an outdoor shopping mall with a farmer’s market), LACMA, La Brea Tar Pits and countless shopping and food options.

• Culver City – Downtown Culver City has also gone through a transformation. There are great restaurants and a movie theater all around the Sony Studios.

• West Hollywood – This area is conveniently located and provides easy access to Century City, Downtown and Santa Monica. It also has some of the best food and nightlife in the city. West Hollywood is very safe and apartments and houses here are more expensive than in the La Brea or Hollywood area.

• Santa Monica/Venice/Marina del Rey/Playa – South of Montana in Santa Monica there are a variety of apartment options, and Montana Street offers a mix of restaurants, shops and other amenities. North of Montana is most single-family homes. As you move south towards Venice and Marina Del Rey, both prices become more affordable and options are more eclectic. While Venice is certainly a lower cost option than Santa Monica be careful where you live as the area differs greatly block by block. Marina del Rey and Playa Vista are a lower cost options than Santa Monica, but do not have as many amenities as Venice.

• South Bay (Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach & Redondo Beach) – The South Bay communities are more reasonably priced than Santa Monica but offer many of the same amenities beach living have to offer. It is the perfect place for those who enjoy an active lifestyle and social life.

• Studio City/Sherman Oaks – If you are going to be working in the valley – Sherman Oaks and Studio City are affordable and great places to live. They have a more “neighborhoody” feel than other parts of LA. It is also a quick 15-minute drive over the hill from West Hollywood, and 10 minutes down the freeway from Hollywood makes for a central location. Sherman Oaks is just down the road and also has a variety of cute shops and restaurants and is centrally located.

**Shopping**

• The Grove in LA is a wonderful outdoor mall that has everything from Barneys to Nordstrom, all sorts of cafes, and a huge movie theater.

• 3rd Street Promenade in Santa Monica is a street blocked off to traffic that is packed with shopping and dining.

• The Beverly Center in LA is probably the best shopping mall in the area – it is multiple floors of very high end – Louis Vuitton, etc. – to anchor stores like Macy’s and Bloomingdales to Bebe, Forever 21, H&M, etc. It has pretty much anything you would like to buy.

• Melrose Avenue is also a neat place to shop – the funky vintage stores have cool finds at cheap prices, and a bit further west on Melrose you will find Marc Jacobs, Fred Segal, Miss 60 and other high-end boutiques.

• Hollywood and Highland has a fun outdoor mall

• The Country Mart in Brentwood is also a popular place for shopping and fun cafes.

• Malibu – Planet Blue, etc. – you are guaranteed a celeb-spotting if you spend enough time shopping and going to the Coffee Bean in Malibu!

• Santee Alley – If you are looking for REAL bargains, and all sorts of fake designer stuff, Santee Alley in downtown LA is the place to be. It’s a cash-only spot – be prepared to bargain with the vendors.
Restaurants
Ivy on Robertson (a very LA experience) | Water Grill | Pancho’s in Manhattan Beach (fun, young bar scene and great margaritas) | Gladstone’s in Malibu (gorgeous view and fun brunch) | The Avalon Hotel in Bev Hills (retro pool and bar/restaurant) | Sushi Roku | Nic’s in Beverly Hills (great martinis, fun bar scene and great food) | La Scala in Beverly Hills (super chopped salad)

Things to do
• Museums
  o The Getty Center in West LA
  o Getty Villa in Malibu
  o LACMA
  o Museum of Contemporary Art
  o La Brea Tarpits
  o The Petersen Car Museum
  o Pacific Design Center (a huge design center that provides any fabric, furniture, appliances, etc. for the home—it mainly sells only to designers.)
• Runyon Canyon and the Santa Monica Mountains for hiking
• Huntington Gardens for beautiful gardens
• Hollywood Bowl
Welcome to Memphis
from the Memphis Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/Memphis

Now that you are here, update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Memphis Chapter events.

About Memphis
Memphis is known for its vibrant music, unique food, captivating arts, and philanthropic nature. You will be blown away by the Southern hospitality, incredible cuisine and musical history.

Furthermore, this city provides a plethora of opportunities to get involved, network, build lasting relationships, and make a legitimate impact throughout the city. If you have the smarts and ambition, you can be a big fish in this pond.

Where to Live
The cost of living in Memphis is very reasonable. Great apartments, condos and houses may be found in nearly every part of Memphis and Shelby County. The true heart and vigor of Memphis can be found in the Midtown and Downtown areas.

Cooper Young and Overton Square – These Midtown neighborhoods arguably host the most diverse selection of young professionals in the city with an incredible selection of attractions, restaurants, lounges, and bars.

Downtown – Memphis boasts a modern new-age setting with affordable luxury condos and lofts throughout the Mud Island, South Bluffs, and Main St. communities. Nearby, you will find the iconic Beale St, National Civil Rights Museum, The Gibson guitar factory, the Fed–Ex Forum, and much more! And if you enjoy living along water, living Downtown conveniently affords you the opportunity to run or walk along the Mississippi River.

Young professional groups
Depending on your interests, New Memphis Institute, Memphis Fast Forward, NEXUS, and The Leadership Academy provide excellent opportunities designed to assimilate young professionals into the community while placing them in positions to succeed. If you are a socialite, or simply enjoy meeting new people, and also enjoy yielding your influence to benefit others, these groups would certainly appease you.

Things to do
The Memphis Flyer is the free, local, and weekly newspaper (found at all grocery stores, movie theatres, etc.) that lists everything from book-signings to concerts.

Midtown (near Cooper St. and Young St.) is a great hangout for young adults and young professionals. Germantown, and especially Wolfchase Galleria, is great for shopping, but it can get very crowded on weekends. If you are looking for music and nightlife, Beale Street offers wonderful live music at night. Finally, if you are in Memphis, you MUST try the barbecue. Jun Song, ’12
There is a lot to do in Memphis if you know what to look for! Nightlife is definitely manageable with all of the different bars available. There are also historic and cultural places to visit that are still beautiful and interesting, even for millennials. *Anonymous, ’14*

I just started working downtown. As a native Memphian this may seem kind of sad, but I just never really did downtown. Now that I work here and see it everyday, I realize it’s like a whole different part of Memphis. They have really built it up and there are all these really eclectic restaurants that are hole in the walls that you wouldn’t think to find unless you explored. I love it! *Anonymous, ’13*

- Graceland – take a time machine into the era of Elvis’ dominance.
- Stax museum – groove with the likes of Al Green, Issac Hayes, and James Brown
- Live music – No matter your taste—blues, bluegrass, indie, punk, salsa, neo-soul, or jazz—there is a place for you to enjoy your favorite tunes. Good midtown music dives include: Young Avenue Deli | Minglewood Hall | Lafayette’s music room | The Zebra Lounge | The Blue Monkey
- Ralford’s Hollywood – put your late night energy to work and dance like it’s the 80s on the beautifully lit dance floor.
- Dixon Gallery and Gardens – stroll through 17 acres of woodland tracts, formal spaces, and cutting gardens.
- Memphis Botanic Gardens – expect to fall in love with any one of the 23 specialty gardens that provide an intimate experience and look into various families of plants, flowers, and trees.
- Orpheum Theatre / Playhouse on the Square – experience quality entertainment delivered by the finest stage acts we have to offer.
- Memphis Zoo – this nationally renowned zoo offers visitors the opportunity to see the rare panda bear.
- Memphis in May International Festival – This festival lasts throughout the entire month of May and is arguably the most fun, interactive, and popular festival of the year! Highlights include the Beale Street Music Festival and the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest.
- Free concerts – Levitt Shell in Overton Park offers free concerts.
- Live at the Garden – a highly acclaimed outdoor concert series provides the opportunity to hear great music with reserved table tickets or lawn tickets where you can bring in whatever you want to eat and drink.
- Professional and College Sports – FedEx St. Jude Golf Tournament | Memphis Redbirds | Memphis Tigers | Memphis Grizzlies

### Restaurants

- **Barbecue** – The Memphis Dry rub style is world renowned! Central BBQ | Commissary | Corky’s | Rendezvous
- **Breakfast** – Brother Junipers | Gibson’s Donuts
- **Casual** – Ching’s Wings | Gus’ Fried Chicken | Huey’s | Aldo’s | Jerry’s Sno Cones.
- **Finer dining** – Flight | Restaurant Iris | Hog and Hominy | The Arcade | Texas De Brazil | Houston’s | High Point Pizza | Quetzal | Local | Bar Louie
Welcome to Nashville
from the Nashville Vanderbilt Chapter

Vuconnect.com/nashville

Even though you lived here for four years in college, being a resident in Nashville is a different story. There are more than 19,000 Vanderbilt alumni living in Nashville! We’re glad you stayed.

Be sure to update your address at vuconnect.com to make sure you receive emails about Nashville Chapter events.

Words of Advice
Nashville is a fantastic city. It’s hard to appreciate it when you’re stuck in the Vanderbilt–bubble, so get excited about exploring a completely different city from what you thought. Nashville has much to offer its community members with lots of variety. Go on an adventure and get to know the city that we adore.

Where to Live
Nashville is becoming an expensive place. A lot of young people out of college have several roommates in Nashville to offset the costs. Don’t be afraid to get a good group together and rent a nice house. You’ll save more money than you would living on your own. Tyler Davis, ’17

There’s so much out there; try putting a short-term moratorium on your college hangouts to go see the rest. Megan McGuire, ’16

It’s Nashville. Go to student events and bring Tupperware. Wear a hat and sunglasses to avoid detection. Profit and have food for days. Daniel DooHee Lee, ’17

I along with all of my friends used a Facebook group called “Nashville Rooms for Rent” to find roommates. Most major cities will have a group like this and it’s a great way to verify you’re meeting with someone who you could see yourself living with. Anonymous, ’15

South Nashville (Wedgewood–Houston, Berry Hill, 8th South, Chestnut Hill) is growing rapidly and a great area for recent grads. Ali Von Deylen, ’16

• Green Hills – you will most likely find duplexes or homes converted into multiple living quarters. Prices can run somewhat expensive, but you are paying for the neighborhood, and it is worth it.
• East Nashville – this is a great up and coming neighborhood that is well on its way. It currently doesn’t have the high prices of other areas in town but the neighborhood and community feel are there. This is the new “young professional” place to live and has many trendy/eccentric bars and cafes. Brunch on Sundays is the “thing to do.”
• Melrose (near 8th Avenue) – very popular for younger people and grads. Lots of local neighborhood places. Mostly condos and houses for rent.
• Downtown/the Gulch – Wonderful to live downtown if you work there, so you can be central to everything. Many Vanderbilt grads live in the area. Central to music and sport venues, and there are plenty of places to live. Prices tend to be higher, but you have the benefit of having everything you could want within a short drive.

• Franklin/Brentwood/Cool Springs – Great areas to find nice, family-style housing, but you most likely won’t be able to walk to a local establishment. These are more established neighborhoods with larger living spaces and located 15–20 miles outside the city, but are great if you work near this area.

• 12th South/Belmont – This is a fun neighborhood that attracts young professionals and graduate students due to its proximity to the great restaurants, bars, boutiques and coffee shops in 12 South, Belmont Boulevard and Hillsboro Village.

Restaurants
• Jack’s | Café Margot | La Hacienda (Nolensville Rd.) | Las Paletas (12 South) | Loveless Cafe | Mafiaozá’s | Marché | Park Café | Rose Pepper | Whiskey Kitchen | Local Taco | Burger Up | Cantina Laredo | The Taproom |

Bars
• 12 South Taproom | MLRose | Patterson House | Greenhouse | Melrose | Sambuca | Rumours | Holland House | Yazoo Brewery | Tennessee Brew Works | Fat Bottoms Brewery | Bearded Iris Brewery | Smith & Lentz Brewery

Things to do
Some of my favorite neighborhoods are also popular with current Vanderbilt students (who doesn’t love 12 South?). Now that I live downtown, however, I have found some new favorites as well. There are a lot of fun places to explore in East Nashville and Germantown, and the Downtown Art Crawl, which occurs on the first Saturday of the month, is always a blast. Nashville also has a great trivia scene. I particularly enjoy Trivia Time at Jackalope Brewery on Thursdays and Nerdy Talk Trivia at Tailgate Brewery on Tuesdays. Kacie Dunham, ’18

There are so many neighborhoods in Nashville you probably haven’t explored and many new things to do. Try exploring the surrounding cities of Franklin, Brentwood, Lebanon, Hendersonville, Gallatin, etc. You will find adventures there as well. Emily Barker, ’17

Go to ALL of the free Lightning 100 events. You may just discover your new favorite band! Anonymous, ’16

Downtown Art Crawl. First Saturday of every month. Sarah Staples, ’14

The best advice I can give for learning about what to do in Nashville is to subscribe to Randal Tarkington’s weekly newsletter, wherein he lists everything going on in the city on a weekly basis, including free events. His email is r.tarkington@vanderbilt.edu. Alec Carro, ’18

The Full-Moon Pickin’ Parties that take place in the fall at Percy Werner Park are so much fun and very affordable! Get involved with different charity events! Centennial Park always has charity events and it seems like every week Nashville has marathons! Also, be a part of a Nashville community whether it’s a church, synagogue, local YMCA/ social club, or a volunteer group! You’ll find so many awesome people in Nashville and will definitely run into other Vandy grads! Andrea Messer, ’12
• Frist Fridays – Concert Series held the last Friday of the month during May, June and July at the Frist Center.
• Professional Sports – Nashville Predators (hockey), Tennessee Titans (football) and Nashville Sounds (baseball).
• Spring/summer Local festivals, wine tasting events and outdoor concerts/shows.
• Music – Full Moon Pickin’ Parties at Warner Parks in the summer and fall, Bluebird on the Mountain at Dyer Observatory, bluegrass at Station Inn, writers in-the-round at Bluebird Café, and other clubs which include 3rd and Lindsley, Exit/In, Mercy Lounge, Cannery Ballroom and The Basement.
• Centennial Park – Shakespeare in the Park, free summer movies, music and craft festivals throughout the year.
• Hiking – Radnor Lake and Percy/Edwin Warner Parks are great for hiking.

Where to Exercise
In Nashville, you can always run into someone doing something outside.
• Centennial Park – Great for running, walking, playing with your dog or people watching.
• Centennial Sports Park – Has an indoor ice skating rink.
• Shelby Bottoms Park (East Nashville) – Many biking and walking trails and sports fields.
• Percy Warner and Edwin Warner Parks – Many well-maintained hiking and jogging trails.
• Falls Creek Falls, Percy Priest Lake, Center Hill Lake (outside the city) – Within an hour or so from town and offer amazing scenic views, trails and recreation areas.
• Climb Nashville (in Sylvan Park) – for those rainy or cold days you still want to do something outside of the box.
• Sevier Park, in 12th South – excellent for walking, outdoor basketball and tennis courts, and located within walking distance to the famous Las Paletas (Gourmet popsicle shop)
• Running clubs – There are also plenty of running clubs to join! If you’re into group runs, check out one of the many running clubs in the area. It’s also a great way to meet others in your community. Running helps you see and explore the city in a very different way.
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from the Metro New York Vanderbilt Chapter

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It’s no lie that NYC is the most expensive city to live in, but trust me, it’s well worth it. There’s nothing like being young in NYC, with all the wonderful career, social and personal opportunities that it has to offer. Lisa Ganz, ’13

Where to Live:
You will have to choose between location and amenities. Yes, you will always have a friend who finds a “dream” apartment with all the right amenities in a great location, but situations like that account for a drop in the bucket of the usual apartment hunt in New York. You will be best served by having a set of bare minimums that you will require for your apartment and taking the first or second place you find that is within your budget that meets those thresholds. Otherwise you might seriously regret having passed on something acceptable—not to mention how grueling the apartment search can be in NYC to begin with. Alexander Sweet, ’11

Live in Harlem, Queens, the Bronx, or Hoboken if you want to get bang for your buck. Otherwise, find some people you don’t mind being close to... very, very close to. Anonymous, ’13

Brooklyn is full of adventure. With the parks, bars, flea markets, gardens, museums, music, food and the subway itself, it is your own fault if you’re bored. Paige Diner, ’13

Lots of Vandy grads and recent college grads in general tend to live in Murray Hill, but find the neighborhood that is right for you. Each area has its own charm, and you also need to factor in your morning commute. It is very easy to get to anywhere in Manhattan from Union Square or the area around Penn Station. Popular areas for young people to go out are Meatpacking District and Lower East Side. Anthony Tripodoro, ’15

Best city in the world. Find a roommate or two in a fun neighborhood and have a blast. Keep moving around neighborhoods to experience as many as you can because you never know how long you’ll be here. Chase Horine, ’12

Hoboken is a 10 minute PATH ride away from Manhattan. While you don’t have all the luxuries of being right in the city, Hoboken is quiet, fun, and full of young professionals. There are a ton of great restaurants and fun bars here, all within a 10 minute walk. Being outside of Manhattan allows you to get more bang for your buck as far as rent goes also, which is really nice. Anonymous, ’12

• Murray Hill – A lot of recent graduates move to Murray Hill. It is a fairly central location and can be reasonably priced for amenities that will make your parents comfortable (like a doorman, for instance).
• East Village and Lower East Side – Great night-life and has become very popular, making rentals go up in price. You can still find good deals but you may have to search a bit more. There are fewer accessible subways, but buses are convenient.

• Upper East Side and Upper West Side – You can typically get more space for your money and both areas have more of a neighborhood feel. It can take a bit longer to commute to work or to see friends.

• West Village – Can be much more expensive, but a great neighborhood with lots of restaurants. Accessible by the majority of the subway.

• Williamsburg – One of the most convenient neighborhoods in Brooklyn for getting to and from the city. Be forewarned, the L train that makes it so convenient is shutting down for a couple of years for repairs.

• Jersey City, Hoboken, Brooklyn and Queens – You can oftentimes find more affordable and more spacious rentals if you think outside Manhattan. Many neighborhoods in Brooklyn are close to or just as expensive as Manhattan, but as a general rule of thumb, the further you go the less expensive it gets.

Other things to know about NYC Housing:

• Look up reviews of landlords or your building’s management company.

• Consider things like the closest grocery store if you like to cook or the closest gym!

• You’ll often have to pay a brokers fee when looking for a rental. These fees can break the bank so be sure to look for no–fee real estate companies and no–fee apartment buildings as well.

• Look for apartments using Craigslist and asking friends. Join fraternity/sorority alumni email lists. Networking can make it easier to find no–fee rentals.

• Rents in Manhattan are on the high side, so consider living in Brooklyn (Williamsburg, Cobble Hill, Greenpoint), Queens (Astoria) or New Jersey (Jersey City or Hoboken). They all have public transportation to Manhattan.

• Get to know the personality of any area you’re considering and visit at different times of the day. To save money you can convert an apartment by adding a wall to create an extra room. Make sure your building allows this and keep in mind the wall may not extend to the ceiling.

• Live close to the subway. If you are far from a subway, buses and Citi Bike are often a good alternative.

• If the apartment building does not have a washer/dryer, make sure that there is one nearby. Wash & Fold can be worth it.

Things to do:

Sign up for local magazines and newsletters, like Time Out New York, pulsd, or the skint. You’ll always know what’s going on in the city! Anastasia Medytska, ’14

Take advantage of the free things. New York is an expensive city, but subscribing to newsletters like “TimeOut NYC” will give you a list each week of the city’s coolest happenings in addition to things you can do that require nothing from your wallet. Anonymous, ’16

There are lots of great free events in the summertime (concerts, festivals, etc.). Try soup dumplings in Chinatown and Dominican food in Washington Heights. You will spend an inordinate amount of money on everything all of the time. There is a great network of people from almost every city and country you could imagine (including plenty of Vandy alumni that you will run into intentionally and unintentionally). Go to all of the bottomless brunches. Anonymous, ’13
Sign up for the skin email newsletter for free/cheap things to do in this always–expensive city. There are lots of great restaurants everywhere, and great places to eat and drink in East Village. Anonymous, ’15

- Central Park – Great place to go running and there are areas to run along the East River and Hudson River as well.
- Museums – The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Guggenheim and Museum of Natural History offer free entrance at some point during the week.
- Broadway or Off–Broadway shows – Half price tickets available at TKTS discount booth. Broadway Week happens a couple of times each year so look for half price tickets then as well.
- Sailing or Ferry Rides around Manhattan – Circle Line, NYwaterway.com or the FREE Staten Island Ferry.
- Kayak in the Hudson River – downtownboathouse.org.
- Brooklyn Botanical Garden – Great place to go and relax. Conveniently located off of the subway!
- Zog Sports – City sports league that is easy and fun to join! Cost depends on number of teammates and sport. Typically around $75 – $100 each person.
- Governor’s Island – Free ferry ride from NYC. Different events each week, such as polo matches, concerts, and art exhibits. You can also rent bikes and tour the island on your own.
- Movies in the Park – Bryant Park shows movies every Monday night throughout the summer. Bring a blanket, some food and wine, and enjoy some old films.
- Upright Citizens Brigade – Great comedy improv theater frequented by the cast of SNL. You never know who is going to make an appearance! You won’t spend more than $10. newyork.ucbtheatre.com/
- Breweries – Brooklyn Brewery, Sixpoint Brewery, several Beer Gardens around NYC
- Smorgasburg – Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 5 and Williamsburg open Spring–Fall. Food market where you can purchase samplings of dishes from hundreds of vendors.
- Sample Sales – Check on theclothingline.com or nymag.com.
- Concerts and events – Check out New York Magazine’s website (nymag.com) for information on upcoming events and SeatGeek.com for tickets to concerts and games
- Live Events – There are tons of live events going on in NYC every night, making it really easy to see some of your favorite performers and teams.

Restaurants:
Madison Square Park is fantastic, go to Eataly and get the prime rib sandwich, best thing ever. Beekman beer garden is an awesome place for day–drinking when it is nice outside. The Meatball Shop is delicious. Agave and El Bastardo have the best brunch. Anonymous, ’10

Popular restaurants are almost always in flux here because there are great, new places opening every day. For the most up to date information you should use a restaurant review site like The Infatuation (theinfatuation.com/new–york)

- Harlem – Dinosaur BBQ
- Lower East Side – Speedy Romeo | Supper/Little Frankie’s & Frank | Stanton Social | Inoteca | Freeman’s | Little Giant
• Meatpacking District – Pastis
• Soho – Lombardi’s | Ruby’s | La Esquina
• Upper East Side – Uva | Mediterraneo | Pio Pio | JG Melon
• Upper West Side – Jacobs Pickles | Citrus | Bouchon Bakery | Carmines | The Mermaid Inn | Shake Shack
• West Village – Aria Wine Bar | The Place | Spotted Pig | Po | Home | Palma Corner Bistro | Magnolia Bakery | Otto
• Various Locations – Sushi Samba | Dos Caminos | Patsy’s Pizza | Azuki

Favorite Brunch Spots:
Clinton Street Bakery | Friend of a Farmer | Elephant & Castle | Pastis | Isabella’s | Balthazar | Penelope | Dos Camino | Essex | Cafe Angelique | Harry’s | Jane

Bars/Nightlife
East Village and Lower East Side are generally popular, but there are endless options.
• East Village and Lower East Side – are generally popular for going out. There are endless options and good variety.
• Nightclubs – Typically in Chelsea and Meatpacking District
• Sports Bars – Village Pourhouse, SideBar, Triona’s on Third
• Cocktail Bars/Speak Easy – PDT, Death and Co, Little Branch, The Mulberry Project, Schiller’s
• West Village – typically has great restaurants and pub-like bars/lounges

Most Popular Gyms:
Wait and see if your company offers a negotiated discount with a gym before joining one—oftentimes you can get a great deal by joining one through your company
Alexander Sweet, ’11
• NY Sports Club – Option of joining one gym or getting a passport to gyms across the city
• Equinox – Nice facilities and good classes
• Crunch – Good classes
• NY Parks and Recreation – Gyms around the city that you can join for $50 a year
• Boutique fitness studios – join or pay per class (SoulCycle, Bar Method, Pure Barre, Pilates, Yoga, etc.)
• ClassPass – an alternative if you prefer to take lots of different boutique classes versus belonging to a gym

Getting Around/Transportation:
• Subways – Quickest and usually most convenient way to get around the city. If you take the subway (or bus) to and from work everyday then look into getting a 30–day unlimited Metrocard (many employers offer these pre–tax).
• Buses – Can take longer to get around based on traffic, but can be convenient options when you are not close to a subway. Buses are good for going cross-town or up 1st Ave and they are available on every major avenue and street.
• Car – Unless you need a car for your job, leave it at home or sell it. Garages are very expensive and traffic/parking can be a nightmare.
• Check hopstop.com for the quickest routes to where you’re going (subway, bus, or taxi)
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Where to live
Most young people who work in Silicon Valley still live in the city and commute from there. It can sound daunting, but traffic is so bad in South Bay that your commute might be almost the same as if you were coming from the city. If you have a choice between SF or South Bay, go for San Francisco! Anonymous, ’15

Fremont is a great area in the Bay—it’s closer to SF than anything in the South Bay, but it’s still easy to explore the peninsula and everywhere else. It’s a chill area with great people, too, and isn’t nearly as expensive as SF or Palo Alto. Alexa Reed, ’17

I’ve lived in San Francisco and in Menlo Park (south of the main city). There are a number of great places and unique neighborhoods. Think about where your office is and what things matter to you (open spaces for biking/running, lots of restaurants nearby, short commute to work, etc.) and make a decision based on the most important factors you identify. Breanna Stein, ’12

Things to do
Favorite restaurant: Burma Love; Favorite city hike: Coit Tower; Favorite ice cream shop: Mitchell’s; Favorite activity: strolling around the tiny seven square mile city; Advice: get out of the city and enjoy all the nature the Bay Area has to offer. Anonymous, ’15

There’s always free fun stuff to do in SF; sf.funcheap.com lists tons of free fun events. If you like going out, download the Discotech app and get on free guestlists for a ton of clubs. Oakland is nearby and also has fun events like First Fridays, and Berkeley has amazing restaurants and a great atmosphere. Anonymous, ’17

Museums
Asian Art Museum, Cable Car Museum, Legion of Honor, California Academy of Sciences, Exploratorium, de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Popular Bars/Clubs
15 Romolo, ABV, Alembic, Balboa Café, Bar None, Bourbon & Branch, Bruno’s, Bus Stop, Butter, Chambers, Comstock Saloon, Cobb’s Comedy Club, Harry’s Bar, Magnolia Brewery and Pub, Mezzanine, Monahan’s, Noir, Pagan Idol, The Riddler, Smuggler’s Cove, Tipsy Pig, Top of the Mark, Tonga Room, Trick Dog, Two Sisters

Road trips
Big Sur, Carmel Valley, Half Moon Bay, Lake Tahoe, Marin/Tiburon, Mendocino, Napa Valley, Point Reyes, Santa Cruz, Sonoma County, Yosemite
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from the Washington D.C. Vanderbilt Chapter

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Where to live

When first moving to D.C., figure out where you are going to be working and then look for places that are close to a Metro station or bus stop (wmata.com) especially if you don’t plan to have a car – parking is at a premium pretty much everywhere.

Neighborhoods: all the young people live in Columbia Heights, but I think it's overrated. Try to find a place in Eastern Market, convenient, cool and young and potentially cheaper than other locales. Michael Andrew Maguire, ’12

Shaw is a fun, vibrant section of the city with quaint townhouses and mom and pop stores. Mount Vernon Square is a residential spot with tons of recent–graduates and generally cheaper rent in the inner DC area. Dupont Circle is a great spot with restaurants, bars and very cool bookstores. Samantha Clark, ’17

Columbia Heights is a laid–back neighborhood in D.C. with lots of culture and charm. Check out the papusas at any of the several Salvadoran restaurants! Laura Silliman, ’14

Washington D.C.

- Dupont Circle/Logan Circle – Right in this area is near great restaurants and nightlife, but because of its convenience it can be a bit more expensive. There are lots of apartment buildings and row homes that have been converted into apartments. Dupont Circle is on the Red Metro Line.
- Georgetown/Glover Park – An older more established area where historic homes line the streets. Few apartment buildings, but an English basement apartment or renting a house with friends are options. You will most likely need to use a car or the bus service.
- Foggy Bottom/West End – A mixture of apartment buildings and row homes close to downtown and the west end of the National Mall. This area overlooks the Potomac River and is in walking distance to the Georgetown Waterfront and Kennedy Center. Foggy Bottom is on the Blue/Orange/ Silver Metro Lines.
- Capitol Hill/Eastern Market – Apartments here can be expensive, but quite popular and convenient for those working on the Hill. You can find a well–priced apartment in a converted row home. Capitol Hill and Eastern Market are on the Blue/Orange/ Silver Metro Lines.
- U Street/Columbia Heights – A young, diverse area with a lot of activity and culture to the north of The National Mall. There are several apartment options in addition to row houses. Between the metro and buses, it is easily accessible. Both neighborhoods are on the Yellow/Green Metro Lines.
- Adams Morgan – An area full of row homes and vibrant small businesses. This neighborhood is typically quiet Sunday–Thursday, but very busy on any given Friday or Saturday. You will likely need to use a car or bus service as there is no nearby Metro.
• Chinatown/ Mount Vernon Triangle – A mix of affordable housing and more expensive brand new high rises. This area features a young population and is walkable to the Yellow/Green/Red Metro Lines.
• Cleveland Park/ Woodley Park – Quiet neighborhoods nestled away from the hustle and bustle of the city. Both areas are on the Red Line.
• Friendship Heights/Tenleytown/Cathedral Heights – Right on the border of D.C. and Maryland with great shopping, restaurants and a movie theater. You will find a mix of reasonably priced apartment buildings and houses accessible to the Red Line.

Virginia
• Rosslyn/Courthouse/Clarendon/VA Square/Ballston – Great for young professionals looking to save a bit of money, these areas along the Metro's Blue/Orange/ Silver Metro also have lots of restaurants and bars.
• Alexandria – A more historic area with row homes and larger apartment buildings. There are lots of small shops on a quaint main street that ends at the waterfront. Alexandria is on the Blue/Yellow Metro Lines.
• Reston–If you need to commute to DC, Reston is a bit far, but has easy access to the interstate. This town offers good shopping, dining and a movie theater. Here you will find a mix of apartment buildings and houses, though it can be a little pricey. The area is metro accessible on the Silver Line, and has some bus options.

Maryland
• Bethesda – A small city of its own, Bethesda offers great restaurants, shopping and entertainment just outside Washington. There are many apartment buildings in Bethesda and a free trolley that runs in a loop. Parking is a bit easier to find if you have a car. Bethesda is on the Red Metro Line.

Check out the Washington Post to look for apartments and rentals. You can also find neighborhood information about grocery stores, pharmacies and libraries for D.C., Virginia and Maryland. Other places to try are the Apartment Showcase, which can be found at most street corners or online (https://www.apartments.com/, apartmentshowcase.com), Four Walls in DC (4wallsindc.com), Zillow, or Craigslist.

Food and fun
D.C. is a foodie’s delight with hundreds of top notch restaurants, great places to grab a quick bite and everything in between. During Restaurant Week, some of the finest restaurants offer multi-course menus for lunch and dinner at a fixed price!

The Washington Post has a weekly article that they publish that lists fun things to do each weekend. Emily Chong, ’15

DC is full of amazing restaurants and bars! Check out Shaw, 14th St., City Center, and Eastern Market. Caroline Bergan, ’13

DC is a playground for post-grads. You’ll meet so many interesting people who have recently graduated and are new to the city starting out their careers. The Washington Post has a great “Going–Out Guide” that I love to reference when I’m looking for something new and fun to do. Chandler Bair, ’14
The museums are beautiful, and certain museums have great study spaces! During study breaks, walking around the museum is inspiring. *Emily Chong, ’15*

There’s a big network for everything and anything. Always an event where you will meet people. CultureCapital is a great website for this. The most expensive city in the nation, make sure you limit your vices. Limit eating out and your happy hour visits. It’ll drain you more than you think. *Andrew Burton Reed, ’13*

I geek out over museums so I personally love the Smithsonian (as cliché as that is). The Newseum is also incredible. There’s also a fair amount to do outdoors in DC—kayaking in Georgetown, running on the Mall and hiking in Rock Creek Park. Even coming from Nashville, I’m still in awe of the number of music venues here, basically every touring artist comes through the area at least once a year. There are farmers markets all over the district when it’s not winter. I feel like every weekend there’s some cool—sounding street festival somewhere in the district. There are also tons of options for nightlife—Clarendon (Arlington), DuPont, U–Street, Adams Morgan... I could go on and on about how much I love this city and the palpable energy that runs through it. I feel like DC is one of those cities that truly has something for everyone. *Anonymous, ’16*

- Adams Morgan (AdMo) – Notorious for its nightlife and late night Jumbo Slice pizza, AdMo also offers great brunch spots and is around the corner from the National Zoo.
- Dupont Circle – Always astir, Dupont Circle offers great restaurants including Kramer Book’s, Circa, Bistro du Coin, and Raku, a year–round farmers market on Sundays, shopping and nightlife. Some classic bars are Public Bar, Lucky Bar, Mad Hatter, Sign of the Whale, and Mighty Pint.
- U Street Corridor/14th Street – With an eclectic feel, U Street hosts a variety of hot spots including Ben’s Chili Bowl, a D.C. landmark, Tabqaq, Copi’s Organic, Marvin’s, Local 16, Saint Ex, and Vinoteca.
- Chinatown – Lively at all times of day, Chinatown has it all from the Verizon Center where you can catch a Washington Wizards and Capitals game to a movie at Regal Cinema to a bite at Momiji, Zengo, Matchbox, Rosa Mexicano, or Oyamel.
- Capitol Hill/ Eastern Market – Capitol Hill has some of the city’s oldest bars and restaurants. The Eastern Market area, as the name suggests, is also home to D.C.’s oldest public fresh food market where you can buy anything from fresh produce to handcrafted jewelry or framed artwork.
- Foggy Bottom – Foggy Bottom boasts the Kennedy Center; the city’s best location to see the arts.
- Georgetown – Georgetown is home to plenty of shops and the Key Bridge Boathouse to rent kayaks, canoes, and bikes in warmer weather. At night, stop into one many popular bars on M St or Wisconsin Ave, or head down to one of the Georgetown Waterfront restaurants or bars.
- Southwest Waterfront and the Wharf – Newly re-developed, the Southwest Waterfront is home to one of the largest new developments in the city, The Wharf with a major music venue, numerous restaurants and bars, and one of the oldest fish markets on the east coast. Catch a ride on the water taxi to Georgetown or Alexandria or bike to Nationals Park or Audi Field.
- Courthouse and Clarendon – A great place to hang out with friends, Courthouse and Clarendon are home to sports bars where you can watch Vandy games, dine alfresco at Eventide, Boulevard Woodgrill or Liberty Tavern and hit the local watering holes like RiRa.
- Ballston– Ballston Commons is a cool new spot, with mixed use buildings and a brand new mall. Be on the lookout for Alex Ovechkin, as the Capitals’ Practice Arena is located at the top of the building.
Outdoor activities
• Jazz in the Sculpture Garden – picnic and listen to live jazz music
• Screen on the Green – bring a blanket and watch movies on the National Mall
• 4th of July – parade and fireworks display
• National Tree and Menorah lighting
• Ice skating – in the Sculpture Garden and at the Georgetown Waterfront.
• Sports leagues – there are many social sports leagues you can join – kickball, basketball, soccer, flag football and softball. If softball is of interest, the chapter has a great Vandy alumni team, so please be sure to contact us and we will put you in touch with the coaches.

Getting Around
The Metro system is comprised of the rail and bus systems and is the easiest way to get around D.C. The SmarTrip card is a rechargeable fare card you can use to pay the metro fare on the rail or bus systems and also allows you to transfer buses for free or at a discounted fare when transferring from bus to rail or vice versa. There is also the Circulator (dccirculator.com) which makes fewer stops than a regular bus, but is still a great way of getting to/from popular places and works with the SmarTrip card.
Check out advice from young alumni in other hot cities around the U.S.!

**Boston**

Boston is very much a city of neighborhoods, and each has its own character! The South End and Back Bay are great foodie destinations, and Seaport and Fenway both have great nightlife. Take the time to explore. Also, Boston is a very walkable city, so skip the Uber/Lyft to get to know the city better when you first arrive. Cambridge/Somerville are also similarly neighborhood-driven areas. People tend to describe themselves by their nearest square (Harvard, Central, Kendall, Inman, Porter, Davis, Union, etc.) and each square has a distinct flavor, so try to visit them all if you can! Pro tip: Alive and Kicking (in Cambridge) has the best lobster roll in town. Bonus: Boston Burger Company has (I think) the cheapest beer in town ($1.50 PBRs all day). This doesn’t sound that exciting, but once you realize that the State of Massachusetts doesn’t allow happy hour drink specials, this becomes decidedly more important. *Matt Genova, ’13*

Use your student email address to get $9 tickets from the Red Sox! *Emily Goldberg, ’17*

The Boston area is amazing! I just recently moved here after three years working in Nashville post–Vanderbilt and am loving it so far. I live in Cambridge, just outside of Boston proper, but the entire area is easy to navigate and pretty accessible. Cambridge/Somerville are full of grad students and have tons of great bars and restaurants, and the history and culture in Boston as a whole are a great asset and make for a really vibrant city. *Matt Genova, ’13*

It seems everyone in my company has a condo in Brookline. My favorite neighborhood is Back Bay. Check out Newbury Comics, and if you’re looking to impress a date take them to Top of the Hub. Boston Common is really nice, and while you’re there don’t forget to take a stroll down Commonwealth Avenue. In the summers they put on free performances of Shakespeare plays in the Common and they have food trucks on the lawn as well. *Rameez Qurashi, ’14*

Boston is extremely fun. Once you are settled with your job, go out and explore! Try to find people who have been living in Boston for a few years and can show you the highlights! Transportation is difficult so if you don’t work downtown you will need a car. Live as close to where you work as possible while living as close to the city as possible. *Gabriella Angiolillo, ’11*

Having a car isn’t necessary, especially if you work in the city. That being said, you definitely want to live somewhere accessible to the T, preferably the red or green lines. If you are looking for something a little quieter, but still easily accessible to the city, try Brookline (on the green line). *Steven Menendez ’11*

There’s more young people in Boston than you think. It’s also easy to navigate, with plenty to do. *Anonymous, ’15*
**Chattanooga**
Northshore and downtown are fun places to live, but can be considerably more expensive. There isn’t really much traffic, so living in the Brainerd, East Ridge, or Ooltewah areas could help you save money, while you can still get downtown in 20 minutes or less! These areas also have access to whatever you want or need. Recreation opportunities abound—you will enjoy the outdoors here! *Alex Faupel, ’15*

There is an up–and–coming hipster scene on Frazier Ave on the north side of the river. Much like 21st Ave near Vanderbilt, it has boutique shops and incredible eateries. It also has easy access to two riverfront parks for gorgeous views of the river. *Mae Mosley, ’15*

**Cincinnati**
Over the Rhine and Walnut Hills are the hot neighborhoods right now. Every neighborhood has a public park and pool, which I came to appreciate in the summers! There is always something new opening, so this is a great time to live here. The Banks is also a good place to live if you work for Procter & Gamble. *Sarah Ungar, ’13*

**Columbus**
Columbus is the capital of Ohio, so there’s lots to do! We are the home of the The Ohio State Buckeyes—lots of sports (yes, even beyond our prized football team haha). Columbus also has several different communities, each with its own personality. It also has lots of restaurants and bars. *Jori Turner, ’14*

**Glasgow, Scotland**
Glasgow is a haven for people who want to have fun on a budget! There are a ton of free/cheap cultural and musical events and it’s very easy to get around the city. The West End is a bit more expensive and has a wide variety of restaurants, unique shops, and cafes. The city centre is pretty expensive, but is easily accessible from all over the UK. *Erin Lee, ’15*

**Madison, Wis.**
Capitol Square is so much fun! Lots of bars, coffee shops, boutiques and people. Johnson Street has a lot of great restaurants. Also, there are quite a few places where concerts regularly take place around the Capitol. *Meredith Huszagh, ’16*

- In the summer, the concerts on the square are free and fun. The Madison Symphony Orchestra will play a few pieces and everyone brings blankets and picnic baskets.
- Adult swim at the Madison Children’s Museum. Salvatore’s tomato pies.
- There are free botanical gardens, a free art museum, and a free zoo.
- The East Johnson/Tenney–Lapham neighborhood is often overlooked but has some great restaurants, a nice bike path, and a beautiful lagoon that in the winter freezes over and turns into an ice rink, and in the fall has some of the most beautiful trees you will ever see.
- The lakes are fantastic resources all year round. In the summer you can rent kayaks and boats, or have a beer and watch the sunset over Lake Mendota at the UW Union. In the winter you can walk or cross country ski on them and ice fish. There is a 14–mile bike loop that runs all the way along Lake Monona. Sometimes I run that loop and take a quick dive in the lake after to cool off.
There are hundreds of miles of bike and running paths around the city. You can bike all the way to my work in the suburbs from the city center (and farther if you want)! You can get anywhere you want on a bike in this city. I do not have a car because I take the bus or my bike everywhere. I haven’t had any issues getting around, even in winter, and I swear there are more bike shops than car dealerships anyway.

Devil’s lake is a really cool state park that is only about 45 minutes out of the city.

It is super easy to get to Milwaukee and Chicago from Madison. Many weekends I take a bus to Chicago after work to visit my parents or friends. I’ll visit my brother in Milwaukee for a day trip or a weekend trip. The Badger Bus is irreplaceable for me.

The best restaurants are Sophie’s Bakery (the best and least well known breakfast in Madison. I happened on this place by accident), Graze (casual gourmet), Salvatores (pizza), and Grandpa’s (fancy pizza). Lucille is a pretty good restaurant that turns into a very fun bar on the weekends. Willie Street is the place to eat and hang out if you don’t know what you want to do because there are so many options.

Laurel Piper, ’16

Go anywhere, eat cheese curds and drink beer. State Street is a fun place to go, and the Capitol building is beautiful. Patrick McAlexander, ’16

**Milwaukee**
- brewery tours (Lakefront, MKE, etc.)
- Summerfest in June/July
- 3rd & 5th wards are a great place to hang with friends
- drink all of the Colectivo coffee
- run on the shores of Lake Michigan in the morning
- Bradford Beach is a fun time in the summer
- North Ave. and Brady Street are where the young people hang out
- Wauwatosa is a good spot if you want a less rowdy crowd
- Big Bay Park is a suburban getaway

Christopher Fink, ’14

**New Orleans**

Go to all the local events, festivals and parties. You have to dive into this city head first!

Hannah Dimmitt, ’13

New Orleans is one of the most diverse and happening cities of its size that I’ve ever seen. There are major, free festivals practically every weekend, so make a calendar for yourself of all the opportunities available to you. It’s a small community so you start running into people everywhere you go. Don’t forget to go to the swamp, take a jaunt around Baton Rouge, catch beads at Mardi Gras, eat delicious Louisiana cooking and dress up in costumes for everything. Carol, ’12

Food – Mais Arepas (Colombian), St. James Cheese Co. (CHEESE! And sandwiches), Commander’s Palace (for splurges), Pizza Domenica (half price pizzas during happy hour), Dong Phuong (super cheap for a giant bowl of pho).

Things to do – Free events: there’s a festival literally every weekend – it’s not just Mardi Gras, and almost all of them are family-friendly (or at least PG), and if you have a car (which you don’t even need in the city), you can drive up to Baton Rouge or to a strawberry fest in Ponchatoula!
• Join the young professionals association, 504ward. When they send out emails for giveaways, sign up! Apparently no one else does because I keep winning. Seriously.
• I love New Orleans. It’s a city of history and pride, where there are troubling issues around race, poverty and education like many cities, but often the will to face them. I love the attitude of laissez le bon temps rouler and a confluence of French, Spanish and American history with all the new infusions coming to the city every day.
  Carol Chen, ’12

Philadelphia
Much more affordable than NYC, Boston and DC, with similar cultural amenities (although slightly less than DC/Boston and clearly less than NYC). Food scene is awesome and the bars and clubs are more Nashville intensity level than NYC. Center City is the place to live. There are several neighborhoods within the larger area of Center City. Rittenhouse Square is the most expensive, similar in cost to NYC. Washington Square West, Old City, Graduate Hospital are other good areas to live in Center City. University City (where UPenn is) and Northern Liberties are good areas outside Center City. Pat’s and Geno’s are some of the worst cheesesteaks you can get in Philly. Go to Delassandros, Max’s, John’s Roast Pork or Cosmi’s instead.
  Lowell Safren, ’13

Rittenhouse Square and Manayunk are both nice places to live. There are tons of great restaurants and museums to explore. Shopping in Rittenhouse Square and on South Street is fun. Also, for cheesesteaks, go to Jim’s on South Street—I am a Philadelphia native and promise that they are the best!
  Sarah Bily, ’10

Each neighborhood has its own flair and culture. Buy an all-day pass for the subway or train and go explore!
  Udom Umoh, ’12

Pay what you wish yoga at the Art Museum on Wednesday nights. Ask for a “Citywide” at most bars. Anonymous, ’15

St. Louis
For young people, neighborhoods like Clayton, the Central West End, Soulard, Washington Avenue, and the areas around Wash U. and St. Louis University are the best places to live and socialize.
  Chris Watkins, ’13

There are so many free things to do in St. Louis—take advantage of them. There are a lot of fun festivals with free concerts. The craft beer is great—and there is a Flying Saucer downtown if you joined in college. The sports teams are fun to watch and great atmosphere. For great food go out to central west end.
  Anonymous, ’13

Neighborhoods to live/play – Soulard (McGurk’s/Molly’s), The Grove, Central West End (Mandarin Lounge/Bar Louie—great happy hour and dollar burger night), Downtown
  Anonymous, ’13

Things to do – Cardinals games/ballpark village, Loufest, Octoberfest, 12 Bars of Charity, Mardi Gras, Blues games, Brunch.
  Anonymous, ’13

Visit first. Travel to the different areas of St. Louis and find where you fit best. There are so many neighborhoods in St. Louis, each with its own characteristics. Stay with friends. Reach out to alumni and coworkers. I love my city, but that’s because I found an area that I love. St. Louis can be whatever you make it.
  Zoe Blankenmeyer, ’14
St. Louis revolves around baseball. If you are at all interested in sports, it is a requirement to go to at least one Cardinals baseball game a summer. Cheap tickets can be had for as little as $15 and the games are always a blast. This city is also known for its special brand of Italian food, especially the hometown favorites of thin crust pizza and toasted ravioli. Head to The Hill to find some of the best Italian food in the country. Chris Watkins, ’13

Live in Central West End, Soulard, Tower Grove South, The Loop (near WashU) or Downtown. You can live out in the suburbs if you want, but there is way more going on within the city. Do research to make sure where you are living is safe. The quality/safety of neighborhoods varies drastically. Anonymous, ’14

Seattle
I absolutely love the restaurants in Fremont and Ballard. The “main street” areas in both neighborhoods are full of quirky shops, awesome eats and culture. The true feeling of Seattle really comes out in all the unique neighborhoods—there are more than 30! Liana Bunce, ’15

Seattle is a city of neighborhoods, and each one has a unique vibe. Try to get a feel for a couple of them before you choose your apartment/house/condo if you can. Public transportation between city neighborhoods is pretty solid, though, so don’t fret too much about finding the perfect location. Young people tend to live in Capitol Hill, Fremont, Ballard or South Lake Union. All of these areas are stocked with coffee shops, restaurants and fun activities, so you really can’t go wrong. Anonymous, ’17

It doesn’t rain as much as you might think. There are lots of young and vibrant professionals with Amazon and Microsoft being headquartered here. James Varlan, ’13

St. Paul
Saint Paul is a beautiful, cozy city with a wonderful food scene and a strong sense of community. I personally love the Merriam Park, Mac-Groveland and Highland Park neighborhoods. Be sure to follow local magazines and restaurants to find the best events in the city. Also pack a lot of warm clothing, the winters get very chilly! A big celebration to attend is the St Paul Winter Carnival—it is a classic Minnesota event! Maria Linn, ’16
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You got this. Get ready for an awesome period in your life and get ready to Anchor Down. Christine Ko, ’13

Your path is your own. Do not compare it to anyone. It may take you longer, and it may contain more pit stops than you would like, but you will get where you are meant to be. I promise. Lauren Mitchell, ’16

Enjoy the last bit of college—once you’re graduated, you’re gone for good and nothing else in life is quite like college! Megan Schneir, ’14

This is the beginning of a new and exciting chapter in your life. Some of you might feel sad to leave Vanderbilt, but remember that you will always be a Commodore and Vanderbilt will always be your home. Musbah Shaheen, ’17

It’s okay if you don’t feel like you’re using your degree right away. If you need to walk dogs for a living for a few months before taking on something bigger, that is so okay! Student loan payments don’t start until 6 months after graduation, so take advantage of that time to care for yourself and recharge however you need to! Katie Alley, ’18

Have fun, make friends and try new experiences. Get off social media and get outside if it’s making you tired, jealous or depressed. John I. Schember, ’16

This time is particularly bittersweet, as one thing that unites all Vandy grads is our love for our school. I promise, though, that the best is yet to come. Anonymous, ’16

Your education will open so many doors for you—aim high! Laura Quast, ’15

When Vandy contacts you to submit to this guide, do it! I know I benefitted enormously from this guide as a senior and afterwards, and I’m happy to pay it forward in what small way I can. Carol Chen, ’12

Cherish your Vanderbilt days. Walk on Peabody lawn. Go to basketball games. Scream for your ’Dores. Because all of us grads love Vanderbilt, but nothing compares to attending this great university as a student. Mae Mosely, ’15

Enjoy your last semester of college and embrace the new chapter of life. It will be different, but it will also be wonderful. Becca, ’16
It will all work out. I graduated with no job prospects and barely a clue of what I wanted to do. The job process takes time, but it will work out if you’re persistent. Also, don’t compare your job search/grad school search to anyone. Everyone’s experience is different, and different industries hire on different timelines. So just let the process happen and eventually, you’ll find your path! Sara Bernstein, ’18

If you liked joining lots of clubs and doing lots of extra-curriculars in college, you’ll love doing them as an adult. Yes, they’re a little more effort to find and they’re not included in tuition, but it’s worth it. You’ll meet new people in your new city, have a chance to better learn your new geography, and feel more connected with the people around you. Congratulations Class of 2019!!! Emily Rolen, ’15

Be bold and be yourself! Mingyun Zhao, ’14

Graduating is going to bring with it a flood of emotions, but just remember you are smart and capable of tackling whatever life throws at you. Lean on your friends and family for support and trust in yourself. And be proud of all you’ve accomplished so far! You got this! Anonymous, ’15

And will you succeed? Yes! You will, indeed! (98 and 3/4 percent guaranteed.) – Dr. Suess. Emmie Arnold, ’15

No one has this all figured out. It’s ok to struggle and have no idea what you’re doing. It’s ok to change your mind and start over. We’re all just doing the best we can with what we’ve got. It’s a start. Sarah Staples, ’14

Don’t be afraid to take one step back to take two steps forward. Trying new things is what your 20s are all about—travel, work a few different jobs, experience life. You have the rest of your life to try and figure out your place in the world, and how you may want to change it. Try to put yourself in the position to have as few regrets as possible, by following your heart, putting in the hustle and hard work, and don’t be afraid to reach for the moon—you just might land among the stars. Christopher D. Hamrick, ’14

THANK YOU TO THE YOUNG ALUMNI CONTRIBUTORS FOR “LIFE AFTER VANDERBILT!”

We appreciate your time, genuine advice and true helpfulness for the Class of 2020!