You’ve made a great decision in attending IIT, Institute of Design. ID is in the forefront of a new way of thinking about user-centered design and how design can influence business and social policy. ID is a small, intensive program with outstanding professors who are leaders in the design community. The student body is tightly knit, providing a healthy social balance to the academic rigors of the program.

How to use this document
Students at ID created this guide for you because we know how daunting it can be to move to a new area and start a new school. You probably have a lot of questions, concerns, and thoughts. Use this document and the links contained within as a starting point for your research. This document is passed on from year to year, and it evolves with the student body, ID, and the City of Chicago.

Contents:

Sound advice
› Ask someone
› Immerse yourself

The program
› Orientation week
› Foundation year
› First year
› Getting involved
› Materials and printing
› Equipment
› Think design

Chicago life
› Chicago resources
› Apartment hunting
› Chicago neighborhoods
› Student recommended
› Our neighborhood
You will quickly realize that we do things a little differently at ID. We have our own unique culture that takes a little getting used to. Here are a few pieces of advice to help get you started.

**Ask someone**

If there is only one thing that you retain from this entire document, it needs to be that: there is no one that can answer your questions better than your classmates. Ask questions, share answers, and you will be rewarded with a richer ID experience.

Don’t be shy. Everyone around you has been in a similar position, and we are a friendly bunch (even if we look really busy).

**Immerse yourself**

Be prepared to immerse yourself completely at ID. Many students say that this is the most intense academic experience they have had. This is a good thing—it means you are getting your money’s worth.

So, before the immersion begins, be sure to take full advantage of your summer. Spend quality time with your friends and family. If you want to prep for school, start learning new software or brush up on your design reading.

ID is one of the most challenging and one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Be ready to take it all in.

Feel free to reach out to the students of WelcomeID. We are your resources!

Aaron Cook  aaron.cook@id.iit.edu
Darshana Nair  darshana@id.iit.edu
Gordon Grado  ggrado@id.iit.edu
Orientation

Orientation is an excellent opportunity to glean information and meet other students, faculty, and administration.

Orientation
Main orientation is a week-long event that introduces ID methods and their origins, advising and registration, and all other administrative details. It’s also a chance to meet faculty and hear about upcoming courses and workshops. It is critical in getting your feet wet and preparing you for the first week of class. You will be very busy during this week, but try to attend as much of the orientation as you can.
The Program

A day in the life of an ID student can be demanding and stressful, but it’s always rewarding. You live and breathe class projects week after week, fill your head with design knowledge, and engage with your schoolmates in and outside of class. Below is an overview of foundation year and first year, from the student perspective.

Foundation
From the Foundation students

“Our foundation class was 22 people. We spent all of our classes together, in the same classroom. All our desks were in the same room on the 3rd floor of the ID building. When we started the program we were told ‘by the end of the year, these people will be your closest friends.’ This is definitely true. It’s an amazing way to learn design 101. We critique each other’s work, help each other with projects, bitch about the workload, and celebrate each other’s successes and project completions.”

“The typical week consists of three days of studio, one and a half days off, and half a day for Intro to Design. Don’t be fooled by ‘time off,’ though. In between studio classes, you are busy with class projects. Every hour of your week is accounted for with these projects.”

“Every week you produce something new for each of your studio classes. This could result in a bunch of photos, a logo design, a foamcore model of a product design, several ideation sketches... ... a 30-second film or animation, or an eight-page brochure. You learn all the methods behind the design, the process goes from analysis to synthesis to ideation, and the techniques to create these things by computer and by hand.”

“Foundation provides you with all the design knowledge you’ll need for the main program. You get to know the school, the students, the classes... ...and faculty and staff all before you are inundated with the even more intense workload of the main program.”

“Foundation is one of the most exhausting times in your life. It stretches you to physical, mental, and emotional limitations. But there is nowhere else you would want to be at 4 am.”

“An exhilarating and exhausting introduction to the world of design.”

First year
From the MDES students

“As a first year student, your life will go from zero to sixty in a day... ... students take between four and seven classes a week per six weeks, and classes are between two and four hours long. The pace is intense but very rewarding. Most students have said that it takes a good three to four weeks to get into the swing of things.”

“The curriculum is structured in such a way that students take many of the same classes. The classes provide exposure to a battery of user-centered methods, and the focus is on process. How you do things becomes as, if not more, important as what you make. There are also workshop classes, which allow students to explore a design problem in depth. Team projects are a big component of many of the classes. Learning to work together can be hard work, but the teams allow students to gain insight into multiple perspectives and approaches to the design process. Many of the students at ID come from varied backgrounds such as anthropology, psychology, and engineering, and close to half the student body are from countries outside of the US. The faculty, students, and rich academic offerings at the Institute of Design foster a truly unique learning environment and perspective. During your first year at ID, you will learn an enormous amount about yourself and human-centered design methods.”
Student activities board
The Institute of Design Student Activities Board (IDSAB) cultivates a supportive school environment that encourages everybody to contribute their ideas, enthusiasm, and skills to make ID a better place. Teams include:

› **IDSAB co-chairs**—Facilitate the relationship between students and ID administration. They also manage the other student groups.

› **insideID**—Sponsors a series of internal events and activities to make student life more engaging and fun.

› **outsideID**—Helps connect students with the larger Chicago community.

› **welcomeID**—Provides a supportive environment and helps orient potential, admitted, and new students.

› **socialID**—Responsible for fun, including the legendary International Festival and pub nights throughout the year.

› **sustainID**—Paving the way to a more environmentally responsible school community.

› **The New Idiom**—ID’s student blog, updated with event photos, interviews, student work, and thought pieces. [thenewidiom.com](http://thenewidiom.com)

IDSAB holds regular meetings that are open to any interested student. We hope you will be part of making ID great!

Events
In addition to events organized by student groups, there are a couple other regular events at ID:

› **EOYS**—This is the annual End of Year Show. It's planned and executed by all IDSAB members to showcase work ID students have produced throughout the year.

› **recruitID**—Organized by the school every year, in October and March. This is your chance to meet and network with recruiters while you interview for jobs and internships.

› **Design Research Conference**—Organized by students, DRC brings together exceptional speakers, a brilliant community of designers, planners, researchers, educators, students, managers and executives concerned with understanding human-centered design.

› **Strategy Conference**—Every spring ID hosts a forum addressing how businesses can use design to explore emerging opportunities, solve complex problems, and achieve strategic advantage.

› **NOWHaus**—An informal off-site event featuring brief six-minute presentations from the student body. This brings together students, alumni, faculty, and community members in a new and engaging way.
Materials
You will need materials to prototype and make things! Wait until you get to school to purchase things, as you’ll get a complete list from your professors. Foundation students should plan to spend more than $400 and less than $1000 on materials (non-electronics related supplies)—a wide range which depends on a many factors.

Here are some of the popular places that students go for supplies:

Amazon
Students can sign up for free Amazon Prime shipping (2 business days).
http://www.amazon.com/student

Blick Art Materials
The largest art supply store near school. Sign up for their membership card and get discounts!
42 South State, 312-920-0300
http://www.dickblick.com/

U-trecht
Art supply store, a little further from school.
332 South Michigan, 312-822-7565

Artist & Craftsman Supply
Locally-owned art supply store.
828 South Wabash, 312-583-9990

Ace Hardware
Tools and supplies for projects.
440 North Orleans, 312-527-4200

Clark and Barlow Hardware Co.
Giant, old-school hardware store with lots of specialty items.
353 West Grand, 312-726-3010

Office Depot
6 South State, 312-781-0570
352 West Grand, 312-670-8200

Staples
111 North Wabash, 312-841-1213

Printing
You will need to print posters, booklets, and brochures. Here are some tried and trusted places from ID students:

The Cage @ ID
ID has high quality printing services on the 5th floor for medium to large format prints. Large volume print jobs are usually better taken care of at external print shops.
Institute of Design, 5th Floor

Fedex Office
Fedex is the closest print shop to school. They can be slow. If possible, it’s best to send them your layouts overnight and pick them up in the morning. There are two locations; we recommend the 24-hour store on Wells.
444 North Wells, 312-670-4460
222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, 312-755-1088

Concord
Another option close to school.
2 Prudential Plaza, 180 N. Stetson Ave (130 E. Randolph), Lobby Level CL-10, 312-552-3006

ABC Imaging
Located in the South Loop. Good option for quick binding.
161 West Harrison, Suite C101, 312-253-0040

Indigo Digital Printing
Super friendly, family-owned printshop in the South Loop.
900 South Wabash, 312-753-3025

Lazare Printing
Efficient, professional boutique printshop located in Lincoln Park.
709 West Wrightwood, 773-871-2500
Computers
Most students have laptops and ID is almost completely Apple/Mac. But it’s not a problem if you want to use a PC, since most of the software you will need is available on both platforms. The only drawback is that it might be more difficult to find someone who can help troubleshoot any PC specific problems.

You will be eligible for student pricing at the Apple Online Store, among other places. Your student ID is needed to prove that you are a student, so you may have to wait until your ID card is issued during orientation week to receive your discount. Sometimes a letter of acceptance and a photo ID will suffice though, so call the store to check the policy.

As far as technical specifications, the Macbook Pro highly recommended over the Macbook Air, with the following configuration:
- 8GB RAM minimum
- 256GB SSD or greater of internal storage
- i5 Intel processor minimum
- 1TB or greater external drive (USB3 or Firewire)
- 2 button mouse with scroll wheel (not Apple Magic Mouse) for use with Adobe CC & Rhino
- Backpack/bag that has protective padding on the sides and bottom to protect your laptop.
- An extra charger to leave at home or desk is nice.
- Wacom has a great series of tablets for drawing, but wait until you get to school to try them out and ask questions of fellow students.

Digital camera
The other major purchase you’ll likely incur is a digital camera. Introduction to Photography, a required course for all foundation students, uses point-and-shoots or dSLRs, which usually run $300–$500. Even if you are not in foundation, a quality digital camera is a good investment for ID because you will use it for courses such as user research, product design, and documentary photography.

In 2014, both the foundation photography instructor and students overwhelmingly recommended the Fuji X-A1 and X-M1, both mirrorless digital cameras, for quality of images and ease of use. However, if you already have a dSLR from Nikon, Canon, or Sony you should be just fine, but check with your photography professor to make sure that the specifications of your camera will meet the needs of the class.

Software
As with hardware purchases, software can be bought with a student discount once you have a valid IIT identification card. We recommend waiting until you get here to purchase software. Most software has a 30-day trial period that can get you through the first month of school.

Software requirements for each class differ by semester. You can get a head start by acquiring and learning some of these programs before school starts:
- Apple Keynote
  Comes installed on new Macs, or can be purchased through the App Store.
- Rhinoceros
  Free for Mac, $195 for Windows
  [rhino3d.com](http://rhino3d.com)
- Cloud Backup Software
  Backblaze for Mac is $5 a month and great.
  [backblaze.com](http://backblaze.com)

In conclusion, spend as little money as possible on technology until you get to school! Just bring yourself and pen/paper to take notes!
Professional design groups
IDSA (Industrial Design Society of America) is a great organization to join; they hold networking events, student workshops and national conferences (idsa.org, idsachicago.org). A lot also goes on with CHI² (Computer-Human Interaction group of Chicago), like some great speakers and workshops on computer interface design (acm.org/chapters/chisqrd). For communication design, check out AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Arts)—a great resource for all things 2-d, (aiga.org, aigachicago.org). O2 is a design for sustainability organization with a chicago chapter (o2-usa.org/chicago). Archeworks, another local design program, also has interesting lectures and exhibitions (archeworks.org).

Books on design
Toothpicks and Logos, written by ID professor John Heskett, is a good book to get you started in the field of design. A nice introduction to the history of design, The Art of Innovation by Tom Kelley, is a closer look into IDEO’s design methods and practices.

Others: Design Secrets: Products: 50 Real-Life Product Design Projects by IDSA; Bauhaus by Frank Whitford is a good look at the history of ID and its design roots; The Design of Everyday Things by ID board member Donald Norman; The Evolution of Useful Things by Henry Petroski; Rapid Viz by Hanks and Belliston is a great book to learn sketching; and Grid Systems in Graphic Design by Josef Muller Brockman.

Design stores
Many high-end furniture shops are located in the Merchandise Mart, one of the premiere providers to interior designers. The Mart is also home to the showrooms of Knoll, Herman Miller, and others, which you can usually get into if you show your student ID. Go to IKEA (in Schaumburg and Bolingbrook) to furnish your apartment affordably. Design Within Reach (not nearly as cheap) has classic examples of modern design and is at East Ohio and State a short walk away. You can also check out CB2 at North and Clyborn.

Design web sites
› core77.com
› designobserver.com
› fastcodesign.com
› coroflot.com
› www.pfsk.com
› ted.com
› underconsideration.com
› www.businessweek.com/innovate

Design magazines
insideID subscribes to a wide selection of current design and architecture magazines including Metropolis, Dwell, MIT’s Design Issues, and more. Recent and back issues are available for students to peruse in the round room on the 4th floor. Please don’t take the magazines home, and remember to return them to the shelves when you are done.

If there is a topic you are particularly interested in, ask your professors—they are always happy to give suggestions. (For further reading suggestions ask the administration for the introductory reading list).
Chicago Resources

Newspapers

› **Chicago Reader**: A free monthly guide to Chicago that can be found in many stores and restaurants. [chicagoreader.com](http://chicagoreader.com)

› **Chicago Tribune**: A nationally recognized daily newspaper and Chicago staple for the past 150 years. [chicagotribune.com](http://chicagotribune.com)

› **Chicago Sun-Times**: The less sophisticated of Chicago's two major dailies. [suntimes.com](http://suntimes.com)

› **Red Eye**: The Tribune's entertainment and sports-oriented daily supplement; designed for quick reading. [redeyechicago.com](http://redeyechicago.com)

› **Windy City Times**: A gay and lesbian weekly. Even though the paper's offices are downtown, it covers the entire country. [wctimes.com](http://wctimes.com)

Websites

› **metromix.com**: Chicago restaurants, bars, entertainment, clubs, and nightlife.

› **chicago.citysearch.com**: Overall city guide.

› **papersblock.com**: Asks you to slow down and check out all the cool things in the city.

› **chicagoist.com**: News and events, restaurants and nightlife, happenings, and photography.

› **yelp.com**: Peer-aggregated reviews of retail, restaurants, salons, and other local businesses.

› **wbez.org**: Chicago's public radio station, a good source for local news.

› **timeout.com/chicago**: Chicago's guide to theater, restaurants, bars, movies, shopping, fashion, events, activities, things to do, music, art, clubs, tours, dance & nightlife.
In Chicago, finding an apartment you like is not as difficult as it is in Manhattan or San Francisco; supply and demand seem to be fairly balanced. Nevertheless, there are many factors to consider in choosing a place to live. Hopefully, the following will help you in your search.

**Mindset**
Keep in mind that your lifestyle is going to change now that you are in graduate school, so your needs for space at home may change too. Many students choose to have roommates from school because they come with the “ID Seal of Approval” and understand the lifestyle and professional interests of a designer. It is also nice to have someone to travel home with after a late night at school, which can be challenging in some areas due to infrequent bus/train schedules. Use the student bulletin boards and e-mail lists to introduce yourself and meet new potential roommates.

**Housing terms**
*High-rise apartments*—a large building that can go up to 80 stories, often with a desk staff to recieve packages.

*Walkups and “Brownstone” flats*—free-standing buildings with 2-4 stories which do not have elevators, hence the name “walkups”

*Studio apartments*—are small apartments, often above a shop, with the kitchen, bedroom, and living room all in one room.

*1, 2, 3 bedroom apartments*—apartments with separate kitchen, bedroom, and living room spaces, usually with 1 (possibly 2) bathrooms

**Cost of Living**
To get a sense of how Chicago compares to where you live now, try this cost of living calculator:

› Numbeo
   numbeo.com/cost-of-living/

Be aware of some of the facts of Chicago apartment living—the older the building, the smaller the space (including closet space). In places like Ukrainian Village, Bucktown, or Wicker Park, you will most likely pay your own utilities for heating the apartment with gas or electric. With steam heated buildings, more common in neighborhoods like Andersonville and Rogers Park, the landlord usually pays.

To save money, consider finding a roommate—two-bedroom apartment is not much more expensive than a one-bedroom, and a three-bedroom apartment can often be shared for the price of a studio.

**Temporary Housing**
› Airbnb
   airbnb.com

› Arlington House hostel
   arlingtonhouse.com

› Hosteling International Chicago
   hichicago.org

› Gunsaulus Hall Guest House on the IIT campus: call 312-567-5075

**Apartment Listings**
› Craigslist
   www.chicago.craigslist.org/

› Domu Chicagoland apartments
   www.domu.com/

› Chicago Reader
   classifieds.chicagoreader.com

› Trulia
   trulia.com

› Zillow
   zillow.com

› Apartment search firms
If you don't have time, brokers and real estate agents can help you narrow your choice. These services are free to you—the landlord pays the fees. Some of the better known firms include:

The Apartment People
   apartmentpeople.com

Chicago Apartment Finders
   chicagoapartmentfinders.com
Rent: 1 Bedrooms

On the following pages, there are maps of the city, with estimated rental rates, for various Chicago neighborhoods.
Rent: 2 Bedrooms
To save money, consider finding a roommate—two-bedroom apartment is not much more expensive than a one-bedroom,
## Neighborhood Rent Ranges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighborhood</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>1 BR</th>
<th>2 BR</th>
<th>3 BR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albany Park</td>
<td>550-750</td>
<td>725-950</td>
<td>900-1300</td>
<td>1350-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andersonville</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>750-1300</td>
<td>950-2100</td>
<td>1400-3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucktown</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>750-1600</td>
<td>1000-2100</td>
<td>1200-3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buena Park</td>
<td>550-950</td>
<td>675-1500</td>
<td>900-1800</td>
<td>1200-3500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Village/River West</td>
<td>1000-1500</td>
<td>1200-1600</td>
<td>1400-2000</td>
<td>1800-3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edgewater</td>
<td>475-1000</td>
<td>600-1200</td>
<td>850-1700</td>
<td>1200-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Coast</td>
<td>700-1500</td>
<td>1000-2200</td>
<td>1600-4000</td>
<td>2100-6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humboldt Park</td>
<td>450-700</td>
<td>600-850</td>
<td>800-1100</td>
<td>1200-1700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakeview/Wrigleyville</td>
<td>625-1200</td>
<td>800-1600</td>
<td>1200-2000</td>
<td>1500-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Park</td>
<td>675-1400</td>
<td>850-2000</td>
<td>1200-3000</td>
<td>1700-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lincoln Square/Ravenswood</td>
<td>575-800</td>
<td>700-1200</td>
<td>950-1600</td>
<td>1200-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan Square</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>650-1000</td>
<td>1000-1400</td>
<td>1400-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Irving Park</td>
<td>550-750</td>
<td>700-1000</td>
<td>1000-1400</td>
<td>1300-2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Town</td>
<td>675-1400</td>
<td>1000-2400</td>
<td>1300-3000</td>
<td>1600-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River North</td>
<td>800-1400</td>
<td>950-2400</td>
<td>1400-3000</td>
<td>2000-5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rogers Park</td>
<td>450-750</td>
<td>600-1000</td>
<td>750-1100</td>
<td>1000-1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roscoe Village</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>850-1100</td>
<td>1200-2000</td>
<td>1500-2100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South/West Loop</td>
<td>900-1100</td>
<td>1300-2000</td>
<td>1800-4000</td>
<td>2700-4000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streeterville</td>
<td>700-1100</td>
<td>1000-2200</td>
<td>1600-4000</td>
<td>2100-6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tri-Taylor</td>
<td>800-950</td>
<td>800-1400</td>
<td>895-2000</td>
<td>1100-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian Village</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>650-1400</td>
<td>860-2100</td>
<td>1000-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIC/Pilsen</td>
<td>700-900</td>
<td>850-1300</td>
<td>850-2000</td>
<td>1000-2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uptown</td>
<td>500-900</td>
<td>675-1200</td>
<td>850-2000</td>
<td>1100-2400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicker Park</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>700-1200</td>
<td>900-2200</td>
<td>1200-2600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map provided courtesy of Chicago Apartment Finders and used by permission www.chicagoapartmentfinders.com
Chicago Neighborhoods

Chicago is divided into three major parts; the North Side, the West Side, and the South Side (the “East Side” is Lake Michigan). Each of the geographical divisions is a mosaic of neighborhoods divided by ethnicity and income that give Chicago its wondrous diversity and vitality.

Where do most ID students actually live?

**NORTH**

**River North/River West $$$**

PRO: ID is located in River North, so living here makes for an easy commute. The area has a cool urban vibe and is a popular spot for clubbing and bar hopping.

CON: More and more condos are popping up here, but River North/River West may not have the same neighborhood type feel as other areas (highrises as opposed to houses with front and back lawns).

“L” transportation: Red and Brown Lines

**Wrigleyville/Lakeview $$$**

PRO: Wrigleyville, so named for its most famous landmark, Wrigley Field at the corner of Addison and Clark, is the neighborhood of choice for many recent college grads because of its proximity to the lake, its relative affordability, and its lively social scene.

CON: Parking can be a problem closer to the lake and when the Cubs play day games. The large number of sports bars and restaurants means that the area tends to be noisy on nights and weekends throughout the year.

“L” transportation: Red and Brown Lines

**Old Town $$$**

PRO: Old Town is the closest neighborhood to the Loop and North Michigan that actually has a neighborhood feel to it. Home to single professionals and young marrieds.

CON: While attractive and convenient to the best things the city has to offer, housing here is not cheap.

“L” transportation: Red and Brown Lines

**Lincoln Park $$$**

PRO: Lincoln Park is the heart of Chicago’s North Side. The neighborhood has almost everything you could want. Housing ranges from high rises to two- and three-flat brownstones to cottages. It’s the preferred address for many Chicagoans.

CON: Unfortunately, there are few, if any, real estate bargains left in Lincoln Park after more than 30 years of gentrification. Parking is also tricky.

“L” transportation: Red and Brown Lines

**DePaul/Lincoln Park West $$**

PRO: DePaul University is the anchor for this multi-faceted neighborhood just to the west of Lincoln Park proper. The area immediately adjacent to the university is young, which makes for a lively nightlife. There’s great shopping along Clybourn and tons restaurants and bars along Lincoln Ave.

CON: There are still some areas that are a bit grimy and somewhat industrial. Parking is hard unless you pay for a permit.

“L” transportation: Red and Brown Lines

**WEST**

**Logan Square $**

PRO: Logan Square has lower rents than its easterly neighbors, and it’s conveniently located for commuters. At street level, there are excellent thrift stores, fruit markets, and restaurants along Milwaukee Ave.

CON: Newcomers considering Logan Square should carefully check out this neighborhood before moving in. Logan Square has an edge with gang activity.

“L” transportation: Blue Line

**Wicker Park and Bucktown $$**

PRO: “The hippest neighborhoods in Chicago”, as proclaimed by several magazines, is full of gorgeous architecture, shops, restaurants, and bars. It strikes a nice balance of neighborhood
living and hip nightlife. It's also an easy commute downtown.
CON: Rapid gentrification and the opening of new clubs and restaurants are causing many residents who came to the area for its bohemian atmosphere, inexpensive rent, and racial mix to leave for neighborhoods like Logan's Square.

"L" Transportation: Blue Line

Ukrainian Village/West Town $$
PRO: Unlike other ethnic enclaves in Chicago, the Ukrainian stamp remains on the neighborhood with its onion-domed churches and signs in the Cyrillic alphabet. West Town, formerly the center of Chicago's meat and produce markets, has an old-school Chicago feel. Both draw artists and students seeking bargains.
CON: Unfortunately, many areas in Ukrainian Village are far from “L” stops, so be sure to keep this in mind when you’re searching for a place.
"L" Transportation: Blue Line

SOUTH
South Loop $$$
PRO: The South Loop has been developing steadily since the early 1980s and continues to enjoy a construction boom. If you want to be close to the Loop, few locations are more convenient or architecturally attractive.
CON: Being so close to downtown and a home to families and professionals, South Loop is not cheap.
"L" transportation: Red, Green, and Orange Lines

Additionnal neighborhoods

NORTH
Streeterville $$$
Gold Coast $$$$ 
North Center $$
Ravenswood $$
Lincoln Square $$
Edgewater $$
Andersonville $$
East and West Rogers Park $ 

WEST
Albany Park $$
Taylor St. / University of Illinois–Chicago $$
Pilsen $$

SOUTH
The Gap $
Bridgeport $$
Hyde Park $$

For more detailed info on neighborhoods, check out: http://www.explorecitychicago.org/city/
Student Recommended

Chicago has a rich culinary tradition, and exploring it is one of the best ways to get to know different neighborhoods. Here is a sampling of different offerings to get you started.

Food

Revolution Brewing (Logan Square)
Busy local brewery with great food and atmosphere. $$
2323 North Milwaukee, 773-227-2739
revbrew.com/

Handlebar (Wicker Park)
Cheap and good vegetarian and vegan fare with a good beer selection. $$$
2311 West North Avenue, 773-384-9546
www.handlebarchicago.com/

Big Star (Wicker Park)
Tacos and whiskey rock bar. Savory, affordable, great vibe. $$
1531 N Damen Ave, (773) 235-4039
bigstarchicago.com/

Piece Brewery and Pizzeria (Wicker Park)
Pizza and tasty craft beer. $$
1927 W North Ave, (773) 772-4422
www.piecechicago.com/

Iguana Cafe (River West)
European coffee house. Crepes, sandwiches, and pasta. $$
517 N Halsted St, (312) 432-0663
iguanacafe.com/

Avec (West Loop)
Unpretentious award winning delight. Tapas style, great wine, great value. $$$
615 W Randolph St, (312) 377-2002
avecrestaurant.com/

San Soo Gab San (Lincoln Square)
Korean BBQ, open 24 hours, serves all Korean dishes as well as sushi from the Japanese restaurant next door. $$
5247 North Western, 773-334-1589

The Soupbox (Lakeview)
Serving 12 fresh soups every day in winter. $$
2943 North Broadway, 773-935-8800
50 East Chicago, 312-851-5800
www.thesoupbox.com/

Sultan's Market (Wicker Park, Lincoln Park)
Best falafel in town. $
2057 West North Avenue, 773-235-3072
2521 N Clark Street, (312) 838-9151
chicagofalafel.com/

La Pasadita (Wicker Park)
Awesome tacos, open late night. $$
1141 North Ashland, 773-278-2130
www.pasadita.com/

Drink

Map Room (Bucktown)
More beer than you can shake a stick at. Pool table too. $$
1949 North Hoyne Ave, 773-252-7636
maproom.com/

Green Mill (Uptown)
A Chicago-must experience. Well appointed with a great list of tequilas. $$$
1471 North Milwaukee, 773-235-5577
www.greenmilljazz.com

Groceries

Stanley's Fruits and Vegetables
Always fresh, always cheap. $
1558 North Elston, 773-276-8050

Issacson & Stein
This fish market is where chefs shop for their home cooking. Note: odd hours $$$
800 West Fulton, 312-421-2444
Blommer's Chocolate
This factory store is where River North's famous brownie smell emanates from and has really good deals. $
800 West Kinzie, 800-621-1608
Ogilvie Market
A variety of small food vendors, produce, pasta, meat, sweets and coffee. $$
131 North Clinton, 312.575-0306

Mariano’s
Grocery stores in several locations throughout the city. $$
40 South Halsted, 312.243-7657
2021 West Chicago Ave, 773.799-9000

Places to study
The Bourgeois Pig
Great food and coffee in a converted brownstone with a nice patio. $$
738 West Fullerton, 773-883-5282

Intelligentsia
Famous for its coffee, but go early on weekends because the place packs it in. $ 
Various locations, intelligentsiacoffee.com

Argo Tea
Tea, coffee, snacks, and free wifi. $$ 
Various locations, argotea.com

Chicago Public Libraries
Downtown main branch has lots of quiet study space and free wifi. 
400 South State, 312-744-1139, chipublib.org

Stuff to do around town
Free Museum Passes
Sign up for a Chicago Public Library Card and you can check out museum passes by the week. You can save a lot, especially if friends or family are in town.

Ravinia
Present your student ID and you can often get into the classical concerts free of charge during the summer. ravinia.org

Discounted Movie Passes
The student activities desk in the IIT McCormick Tribune Campus Center sells movie passes for AMC/Loews Theaters for $5.50 or $6 each—considerable savings. The $5.50 ones are good Monday to Thursday and include a free small popcorn; the $6 ones are good any time as permitted by the theater.
IIT Main Campus, 3300 South Federal

Nearly Free Plays
If you want to see a lot of plays, sign up to volunteer for the Saints, which offers free admission to theaters all over the city in exchange for serving as an usher. There is a small fee to join, but this is a really nice group if you are into drama. Or visit the Hot Tix booth downtown or online for half-priced tickets.
saintschicago.org, hottix.org
Our Neighborhood

Being in the heart of the River North district, ID is within walking distance of some of Chicago’s best restaurants. Here are some nearby choices that are tasty and relatively inexpensive.

Food
Merchandise Mart Food Court
A plethora of fast-food joints upstairs. Healthy choices, too. $$
222 West Merchandise Mart Plaza, 312-329-1500

Cafe 300
Next door cafeteria-style dining. Tasty, fast, affordable. $
300 North Lasalle, 312-670-0030

Kan Zaman
Mediterranean. An ID favorite. $$
617 North Wells, 312-751-9600

Xoco
Rick Bayless’ Mexican sandwich shop. Unique, savory, expect to wait! $$$
449 North Clark, 773-888-1857
http://www.rickbayless.com/restaurants/xoco.html

Star of Siam
Thai food. Big portions, quick, super affordable. $
11 East Illinois St, 312-670-0100
http://www.starofsiamchicago.com/

Hannah’s Bretzel
1/2 block from ID. Organic, sustainable, pricey. $$$
180 West Washington, 312-621-1111
http://www.hannahsbretzel.com/

Lou Malnati’s
Chicago-style deep dish pizza. Filling, it takes a while, bit pricey, but good to share. $$$
439 North Wells, 312-828-9800
http://www.loumalnatis.com/

Portillo’s Hot Dogs
Dogs, burgers, pasta, and salads. Quick, tasty, big variety. $
100 West Ontario, 312-587-8910
http://www.portillos.com/

Ajida
Japanese ramen, 30% off everyday 3pm-9pm. $$
201 North Wells, 312-332-6878
http://ajidachicago.com

Epic Burger
Organic, natural beef, turkey, veggie burgers, good fries and shakes too. $$
407 North Clark, 312-239-0110
http://epicburger.com

Lyfe Kitchen
Locally grown, vegan friendly, healthy food and smoothies. $$
413 North Clark, 312-836-5833
http://www.lyfekitchen.com

Slurping Turtle
Japanese noodle place. Unique, fun, bit pricey. $$$
116 W. Hubbard St, 312 464 0466
http://slurpingturtle.com/home.php

Meli Cafe
European organic breakfast and lunch cafe. Great menu, local food, A+ coffee! $$
540 North Wells, 312-527-1850
http://www.melicafe.com/
Drink

**Pepper Canister**
Pub with bar grub and tots! Popular at ID. $$
509 North Wells, 312-467-3300
[http://thepeppercanister.com](http://thepeppercanister.com)

**Shamrock Club**
Dive bar, free popcorn. $
210 West Kinzie, 312-321-9314

**Three Dots and a Dash**
Tiki bar with secret entrance, great cocktails, best if you get a table. $$
435 North Clark, 312-610-4220
[http://threedotschicago.com](http://threedotschicago.com)

Groceries

**Whole Foods**
Quality organic produce and fresh hot/cold salad bar available all day. $$$
30 West Huron, 312-932-9600

**Trader Joe’s**
Good place to stock up on inexpensive lunches, snacks, dairy, and produce. $$
44 East Ontario, 312-951-6369,

**Jewel-Osco**
Large grocery/drugstore to get the basics. $$
550 North State, 312-527-2162

**CVS Pharmacy**
Convenience/drugstore across the street from ID, great for quick basics. $$
121 West Kinzie, 312-970-2880