



HOUSING SUMMARY

How is API's process for assigning housing organized?

All API students are asked to complete a housing questionnaire. In a limited number of API programs, students complete the housing questionnaire at the time of application. In the majority of cases, however, students complete a housing questionnaire after they have been accepted and specify which type of housing is their preference. **Housing questionnaires are processed in order of receipt from students; as such, if certain types of housing are limited and the number of requests exceed the number of placements, available housing will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.**

All API students are guaranteed housing through API if their application is received prior to the API deadline. While we cannot guarantee that all applicants will be placed in their first housing choice, we make every attempt to accommodate all requests. Students are asked to rate their top three housing preferences on the housing form. If more requests for a particular kind of housing are received than are available, students are placed in the next best available option (for example, if more apartments are requested than are available, students may be assigned to host families and vice versa.) Housing assignments are made on a rolling basis, so students are encouraged to complete and return their housing preferences as soon as possible. Late applicants can generally be accommodated in API housing, and students are advised at the point of application if certain types of housing placements have already been filled.

The process of assigning housing varies from site to site. Students studying with API in Florence, for example, complete a housing form with their general application. All program participants in Florence are placed in student apartments. API staff in Florence works very hard to find housing that is as uniform as possible; all of our Florentine housing is located in the historical center, within a reasonable distance from LdM. However, because there are natural variances among different apartments, including proximity to the university, access to internet, size, etc., API places students in apartments according to random assignment as housing applications are received. Therefore, to keep the process of assigning apartments as fair as possible, unless specific medical rationale is given, the only specific housing requests that can be accommodated are roommate requests. (Roommate requests must be mutual to be honored.) With random assignment of apartments in Florence housing, we feel confident that all students have had an equal opportunity to be placed in preferred apartments.

In contrast with Florence, students who select to study in Spain and wish to live in a homestay can identify a great deal of preference, including the level of interaction they wish to have with the family, the number of children they would like to live with, etc. Students are asked to rank their preferences in order of importance, in the event that API cannot accommodate them all.

What types of housing is available in API programs?

Country	Housing Types Available
Argentina	Host families or student apartments
Costa Rica	Host families
England	Student apartments or student dormitories
France	Grenoble: Host families or residence halls Paris: Host families, residence hall or independent apartments (known as studettes)
Hungary	Student apartments
Ireland	Student apartments
Italy	Apartments (all sites) or host families (LdM Rome, Syracuse and Tuscania only, carries an additional fee)
Mexico	TBD
Poland	Semester: student apartments; Summer: student dormitory
Spain	Host families, residencias (student dormitories), apartments (Barcelona, Madrid)

HOST FAMILIES: Host families are local families who have agreed to host an international student. Living with a host family provides a unique opportunity to interact with a local family on a daily basis, to live in a home environment, to experience local culture firsthand, and to eat traditional cuisine daily. Host families may be comprised of a single woman (with or without children), a traditional two-parent household, or a retirement-age couple.

Students are expected to behave as guests in their homes at all times. While host families provide students with meals if the student is at home, laundry service, linens and a key to come and go, visitors are not allowed unless previously approved by the family. Students may receive limited calls on the host family phone, but it is better to use their own cell phones whenever possible. Host "mothers" take pride in having a clean and tidy home, so students must make sure to keep the home and their room neat. Students should be aware that host mothers or cleaning staff may enter their rooms periodically to straighten up or clean.

Program prices are based on double occupancy; most often, two students share one bedroom in a family's home. It is possible that a student may receive a single room because of a family's situation; however, this is not standard. **Students can reserve a single placement only by paying an additional fee prior to the program start date.** In certain cases, there may also be other non-API students in the home, but API students will not share a bedroom with them.

STUDENT RESIDENCES AND DORMITORIES:

England: In England, certain universities, including the University of Westminster and the University of Leeds, have student dormitories that are quite similar to an American-style dormitory.

France: In Paris, a small number of placements are available in the Cité, a French dormitory for students. Each student in this option would have his/her own room.

Hungary: Students may elect to live with their Hungarian peers in Budapest in student dormitories located very close to Corvinus University.

Poland (summer only): Students selecting the summer session in Krakow will be placed in a Jagiellonian dormitory and share the dormitory with other visiting international students.

Spain: "Residencias," as they are called in Spain, are usually small and family-run. Residencias typically house international students and occasionally other local students. Traditionally, 1-2 students share a bedroom and the bathroom is shared by multiple residents. All students have access to the common living and TV areas. Residencias are co-ed and usually accommodate 2-30 students. They generally encourage more independence and provide less cultural interaction with Spaniards than living with a host family.

Meals are provided in a common dining hall (at specified dining times) and regular cleaning is provided. Some residencias do not serve meals on weekends or holidays. Students should budget for independent meals during school breaks and weekends. Laundry service or facilities are available, but students in some residencias will have to pay for their laundry.

Note: Residencias are not the equivalent of American "dorms;" they are arranged more like traditional boarding houses. There is usually a "house mother" and social rules regarding noise and visitors apply, as there will be many others living in the residencia.

APARTMENTS: In cities such as Barcelona, Budapest, Florence, Krakow, and Madrid, student apartments require more independence and provide less cultural interaction with host nationals. **This option may be co-ed in some instances, but individual bedrooms are single sex.** The number of API students housed in each apartment varies by city and by apartment complex. The majority of the rooms in student apartments are double rooms. However, based on what is available at the time, some students may be assigned to a single room. If students prefer a single room, they can note this on their housing forms but single rooms are only guaranteed with an additional fee.

The other apartments in the building are likely to be rented or owned by local families, so students will need to be respectful of neighbors and keep the noise level at a minimum.

PREMIUM HOUSING (AVAILABLE IN BARCELONA ONLY): While ALL API housing is safe and comfortable, we are pleased to offer a "premium housing" option in Barcelona. Students selecting this option will live in a residence hall that is truly an apartment-style student community. The community contains a small workout facility, a small computer lab, a TV lounge, a music lounge, and study lounges. Students will share a double room with another API student. Each room has its own bathroom and kitchen facilities. The kitchen is equipped with a refrigerator, cooking utensils, a microwave and a stovetop. All bedrooms are fully furnished with two beds, a desk, and a dresser.

Students will be provided with sheets and towels; rooms, sheets, towels, and common areas are cleaned weekly. Each bedroom also has an internet connection and telephone line.

*The residence hall option requires more independence and provides less cultural interaction with locals. There will be API, international (non-API) and Spanish students sharing the community. **Because it costs significantly more per month to house students in this community, additional housing charges will be billed to the student or home university.***

INDEPENDENT HOUSING: If the options described above do not meet your students' needs or if an individual student has family or friends in the host city, students may choose to opt out of the API-arranged housing. API staff will assist students in how to begin a search for an apartment, but API is not responsible, nor available, to identify specific alternate options for the student. Students who choose to find their own housing will receive a program discount reflected on the API invoice. Independent housing is NOT recommended for students staying less than one academic year, or for any student who does not have command of the local language.

How does API handle housing change requests if a student is dissatisfied with housing upon arrival?

Accommodations are contracted for, and paid for, a full semester or summer session at a time. If students choose to move out of their pre-arranged housing contract prior to completing the semester, they are not entitled to any type of housing refund. API directors are available to help students with housing issues and serve as a liaison with the host family or residence hall. On-site requests for voluntary housing changes are considered on a case-by-case basis and rarely accommodated. The following guidelines are in place and followed for ALL requests for housing changes:

- **If students at any time feel that their health or safety is in jeopardy, they should speak with API directors immediately. Directors will assess their needs and provide interim housing as warranted.**
- API recognizes that many students experience an initial period of cultural adjustment. In some cases, students may have unrealistic expectations or misperceptions resulting not necessarily from the accommodations, but from the event of moving overseas for the first time. It is also normal, for example, for host families to have an adjustment period while getting to know the student. All "homes" may not be what students are accustomed to, nor will they all be located immediately in the center of town; this does not constitute a valid reason to change. *Changes in accommodations will be made for serious needs only.*
- Based on individual circumstances, if a problem arises, students may not be moved from their original accommodation for 2-4 weeks after the problem is reported, as it takes time to arrange for alternate housing.
- If a student insists on a move that API staff does not deem mandatory, there will be charges for moving as well as additional fees that may be required to cover the original commitment. Students' financial reimbursement for housing will be based on the balance after all expenses associated with the student's housing have been finalized.

- Changes from one type of housing to another cannot be accommodated. If a change is necessary and students originally requested a host family, they will generally be placed in a new host family; if the student originally requested a student apartment, (s)he will be placed in a new student apartment.

We urge students to carefully consider their housing choice prior to submitting the housing questionnaire.

How does API work to establish realistic housing expectations among our students?

API's orientation materials have extensive information about housing. Students can review a list detailing "what to expect" and "what not to expect" in their housing. Likewise, in the final packet, students receive either general information about local housing standards (in the case of Florence, for example) or specific placement information about their new host family, apartment or residence hall.

API also has a program for students to speak with API alumni known as the Peer Mentor program. If students wish to know more specifics about housing in their new host city, they are encouraged to contact a Peer Mentor.