



The Canada Homestay Network

Student Guide

What makes a great homestay experience?
- Openness & patience.



*Welcome to the Canada Homestay Network (CHN)
Homestay Program - we're glad you're staying with us!*

Your Role as an International Student

Your homestay provides the greatest opportunities for learning the English language. It is also the ideal setting for learning new skills and experiencing Canadian life. Your host will welcome you into their home as a member of their family. This means that you will be treated informally, not like a "guest".

Just like a member of the family, you will be expected to keep your bedroom clean and tidy, and clean up after yourself in the kitchen and around the house.

Your experience in homestay will depend on your own attitude. How can you enjoy living in Canada? Come with an open mind: be friendly, give people the benefit of the doubt, and be ready to accept the ways in which Canada and the people you meet here are different and unique- in the very same way you would like people to appreciate you.

The first few weeks of living in a new country with

a new family may seem difficult at times. You may feel homesick or frustrated with your new environment and the language. This is natural. Give yourself time to adjust to your new surroundings.



Home

Please respect your host family's home. You can expect your homestay family to give you:

1. A safe, secure and comfortable home. (Please ask your homestay family to explain fire drill procedures);
2. A private bedroom, with:
 - a. A window;
 - b. Bed and sheets, blankets, pillow, dresser or other drawers, desk, chair, lamp, closet;
 - c. Adequate heat, light and ventilation;
3. Access to bathroom and bathing facilities;
4. Access to laundry facilities, procedures, routines and laundry powder or liquid soap;
5. Meals as requested on your chosen meal plan; &
6. A key to the house and instructions on how to use a security system, if the family has one.

Please note: you will be responsible any household items that you damage, break or lose, including anything that you borrow from your host family.



Bathroom Use

Please ask your family about any rules regarding the bathroom. For example, when you can shower and for how long. Your family may ask that you limit your use of perfumed toiletries while in the home.

It is not necessary for you to wait until your host parents have showered before taking your shower, but be sure to leave enough hot water for everybody. When taking a shower, close the shower door or place the shower curtain inside the tub to prevent the bathroom floor from getting wet. Please tidy and dry

the bathroom immediately after you use it.

It is ok to put toilet paper in the toilet and flush it. Please do not put anything else in the toilet.

Personal toiletries like shampoo, soap, toothpaste, and deoderant are your own responsibility- your host family will not provide these for you.



Meals

Typical meal times in Canada may be different than what you are used to. Please tell your host what you like to eat, especially if you have allergies or other restrictions. Please note that choosing a meal plan does not mean that you get to select what your host makes. Your host will offer you familiar foods some of the time, but you should try to become familiar with and enjoy Canadian cuisine. Be flexible and try new foods.

The main meal in Canada is dinner (in the evening), which your host will prepare. Ask your host what time dinner will be ready, and try to be home on time. Please tell your host if you will be late for dinner. If you do not plan to be home, you must tell your host in the morning so they know in advance. Dinner time is conversation time.

Most students are asked to prepare their own breakfast. Your family will show you which foods you can use for breakfast.

If you are on the lunch program, the family will show you which foods you can use to prepare your own lunch. In Canada, lunch is typically the smallest meal of the day, and is usually served cold. If you are not on the lunch program, your lunch is your own responsibility.

If your host happens to be away for a meal, food will be available for you to eat, or to make yourself. Extra snacks or food you want is your own responsibility.



Laundry

Your host may ask you to do your own laundry. If so, they will show you how to use the machines and will give you laundry detergent. Please ask your host where to keep dirty laundry and when you can wash it. You will be required to wash your own bed linens once a week. You may ask your family for assistance.



Travel

Adult students are encouraged to explore and experience Canadian culture through travel during their stay. However, this travel should not interfere with academic studies and generally speaking should be limited to school holiday periods. CHN assumes no responsibility for you if you travel.

Please make sure that you fill up the machine- do not wash only a few items every day or so.



Overnight Guests

No overnight guests are allowed at your house, unless your host invites them. If you wish to have a guest, then you must ask for permission in advance. The guest could be asked to pay the host.



Telephones

You can purchase a "pay as you go" cell phone to use while in Canada, but are advised not to enter into a contract with a phone company. Be cautious of 'free phone' offers - they come with hidden contracts.

Your host family will let you use the house phone for local calls only. Please use Skype or your cell phone to place any long distance or international calls.

Please be considerate: keep calls short, speak quietly, and do not receive calls during dinnertime, late at night, or very early in the morning unless it is an emergency. If you need to speak to your family at night because of the time zone difference, please discuss this with your host family.



Computers & Internet Access

All host families are required to provide internet access to their students, either wired or wireless. Please be respectful of your host family's bandwidth allowances when using the internet. Students should not use their host family's computer. If you need to use a computer and you did not bring your own, there are many places where you can go to use one, such as your school, local public library or internet café. For more information on allowable bandwidth usage, please review CHN's Adult Student Internet Guide.



Money & Valuables

For security purposes, all students should open a bank account. Please rest assured that using a bank account and bank card is common in Canada and is the safest way to protect your money.

Do not lend money to or borrow money from other students or family members. Try not to carry around or display large amounts of cash or valuables.

It is your responsibility to obtain travel insurance to cover loss, theft or damage of your belongings. If you purchase anything in Canada, please ensure that your policy will cover your new valuables.



Health Care

All students must have health insurance. Payment for medical services not covered by your insurance company is your responsibility.



Smoking

The legal age for smoking in Canada is either 18 or 19, depending on the province. Students who smoke should only do so outside the home in an area designated by their host family. Your host family may not allow smoking on their property. Please be respectful of their rules and of the neighbours. Do not throw cigarette butts on the ground.



Alcohol & Illicit Drugs

The legal age for drinking alcohol in Canada is either 18 or 19, depending on the province. If you drink alcohol underage, drink to excess, use or distribute illicit drugs and/or use false identification, you will be expelled from the Homestay Program.



Homestay Fees *For students staying for more than one month*

In some communities, students pay fees per session instead of all at once. A session is usually 4 weeks, but can vary depending on the school. When paying per session, we must receive the fees **3 weeks before the next session**, in order to save your place with the homestay family. If you do not pay on time you will have



Leaving Homestay & Refunds

If you decide to leave your homestay, you must tell us three weeks before your departure date. You will receive a full refund less our Standard Services Fee if you give the required notice in writing. There will be no refund if you give less than three weeks notice.

to pay a late fee and may not be able to stay with the same family. If you pay late, a \$100 charge will be added to your invoice. If you have to be relocated due to late notice, you will also be charged a \$150 re-registration fee.

It is important that you speak with your CHN Relationship Manager about any financial questions. **Please do not talk to your host about money, the cost of hosting, or homestay fees.**



Zone 1 & Zone 2

In certain communities, students can choose to live in homestays that are either in Zone 1 or Zone 2. These zones cost different amounts and are based on travel time to the school. If you are a Zone 2 student and have decided that you would like to change to Zone 1, please let us know. You will also be required to pay a one time upgrade fee. A change in homestay may require some time to arrange.

Zone 1 - Closer to the school (Check your school information page about travel times)

Zone 2 - Farther from the school (Check your school information page about travel times)



Changing Families

Your homestay experience is an important part of your stay in Canada. It gives you the opportunity to become a member of a Canadian family.

If you are having difficulty adjusting to your host family, try to communicate your problems and concerns to them. Most issues and misunderstandings can be resolved in this way. If this does not work, contact us. We will assess the situation and, together with you and the host family, will determine a reasonable solution. **Please tell us if you are not happy, or if you want us to speak to the host for you. We cannot help you if you don't tell us about the problem.** If the solution to the issue involves a change in homestay, please be patient and respect the hospitality of your host family. A new homestay may take time to arrange.



Communicating with CHN

Please contact us any time you have any questions or concerns by dialing your local office and pressing "5" to reach our team in charge of adult programs. **In case of an emergency, please dial your local office and press "1".**

Western Canada Head Office

Toll-free: 1 877 441 4443
 Fax: 866 844 9062
 Mail: 1031 St. David, Victoria,
 BC V8S 4Y7

Eastern Canada Head Office

Toll-free: 1 877 441 4443
 Fax: 613 693 0878 or
 416 853 0924

Community	Phone Number	Email Address
Vancouver	778 327 6829	vancouverinfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Victoria	250 412 3813	victoriainfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Calgary	403 456 6426	calgaryinfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Edmonton	780 328 6479	edmontoninfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Saskatoon	306 667 3825	saskatooninfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Winnipeg	204 202 1557	winnipeginfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Toronto	416 926 0355	torontoinfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Ottawa	613 686 6764	ottawainfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Windsor	519 916 5290	windsorinfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Montreal	514 907 0028	montrealinfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Fredericton	877 441 4443	frederictoninfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca
Saint John	877 441 4443	saintjohninfo@canadahomestaynetwork.ca