



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

English Language Institute
Faculty of Education



STUDENT HANDBOOK



A MULTICULTURAL EXPERIENCE



Living in homestay is a challenging experience. Our tips for having a successful stay are: take your time, be patient, understand everyone is different, learn by trying new things.

Who is Canadian?

People in Canada come from around the world. They all speak English with different accents. Many of them speak multiple languages.

Who are our families?

- Do not compare families with your friends. Each family is different. Some families might be large with children and pets. Other families could be a retired person or couple.
- All ELI Homestay families have been carefully chosen and personally interviewed by the Homestay team.

How can you benefit?

The most important thing to remember is to be open-minded. It will take time to get used to living in your new home.



Student Responsibilities

Communicate directly with your host family or homestay staff, if you have a problem or concern

Be friendly and polite when communicating with your family. Respect everyone's privacy, culture and beliefs

Be open-minded about new people, food and activities

Follow the rules and routines of the household

Learn to prepare your own breakfast and lunch

Let your host family know your preferences and interests. They want to know how to make you feel comfortable

Keep your bedroom and bathroom clean. No food or garbage in your room.

Tell your homestay family if you will be late or miss dinner

Do not invite guests to the home until you check with your homestay family



Host Family Responsibilities

Hosts communicate with you or homestay staff if there are problems

Your homestay family is polite, respects your privacy, cultures and beliefs

Hosts will tell you the house rules

Hosts provide a comfortable bedroom with a bed, desk, lamp and internet

Hosts provide bed sheets and towels

Host families provide three meals a day

Host families will do your laundry or allow you to use their machines

Host families will help you practice speaking English

Host families will show you their neighbourhoods and how to get to UBC

HOST FAMILY LIFE

Bedroom



You will have your own room. You must keep your room clean and neat. Do not keep food or garbage in your room.

Your bedroom is your private space. Bedroom doors in Canada usually do not have locks. Family members knock before entering. Your host family will only come in if you allow them or unless there is an emergency. It is also common for families to have bedrooms in the basement.

Bathroom

You may share the bathroom with other members of the family, so it is important to keep the bathroom clean after you use it. Keep your showers short as hot water is limited in homes. Please use your own shampoo, conditioner, soap and hair dryer. Only flush toilet paper down the toilet, pads, tampons, Q-tips, etc. should be thrown in the garbage.



Laundry

Your hosts will let you know about laundry rules in their home. Some hosts will do your laundry for you. Some hosts will show you how to use the machines and give you laundry soap. If you want to wash your clothes by hand, ask where you should hang it to dry.



HOST FAMILY LIFE

Food



Try new food! The food you eat in homestay will be different from food in your country. Be open to the foods that you are served. Tell your homestay what you like and don't like and tell them if you have any allergies.

Tell your host if you will not be home for dinner. Let your hosts know if you have too much or not enough food for your meals. Let them know if you would like to cook together.

Substance Use

You must be 19 years old to buy cigarettes, alcohol and cannabis. If you are under 19, it is illegal to use any of these substances.

There is no smoking inside your homestay. Some families will allow smoking outside. Please ask what the rules are. If you do not follow the house rules, you may be asked to leave.



Payment



Your homestay fee includes:

- a private room with a bed and a study space
- three meals a day
- bedsheets and towels

If you are paying your host directly, pay within two days of arrival.

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES



Try to talk to your homestay family about difficulties or concerns you may have. Your host will ask if you feel happy and comfortable in their home. When you speak about challenges, be polite about how you feel. Use these steps below to help:

01

START WITH A POSITIVE SENTENCE

"Thank you for dinner" or "I enjoy living with you"

02

TALK ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM

"I am not used to eating _" or "I am having a hard time with the shower schedule."

03

GIVE A SUGGESTION/ASK A QUESTION

"Is it ok if I have something else?" or "Could I please shower in the evening?"

04

LISTEN

"Thank you."

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Talk to your homestay if...	Talk to the staff if...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• you want to practice speaking more English with them• you don't like a certain food• you lost your key• you are not getting enough lunch• you are cold in your room• you need more light in your room• you need to change your shower schedule• you want to do your own laundry	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• someone in the home is talking to you inappropriately• someone in the home is touching you inappropriately• someone in the home is bullying you• someone in the home is not respecting your privacy and your private space• you have talked to your homestay family, but you continue to have problems
Do	Do Not
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• leave your passport and valuables in your homestay home• keep your homestay family's house safe - close all windows and lock all doors if you leave the house• If you need help with a problem, inform the homestay office or student advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• do not carry your passport or large amounts of cash with you• do not give out your family's address or phone number to a stranger• do not bring guests to the homestay without asking• do not stay silent if you feel unsafe or uncomfortable

Departures

If you want to change your homestay:

1. Remember to give your homestay a chance
2. Try to work out your problem first
3. Talk to the homestay department
4. Give 2 weeks notice if you are going to move

MEET THE TEAM



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