

An aerial photograph of the Harvard University campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, featuring the Charles River, various brick buildings, and green spaces. A large, semi-transparent red geometric shape is overlaid on the right side of the image.

HARVARD LAW COUPLES
AND FAMILIES ASSOCIATION

HLCFA SURVIVAL GUIDE

Navigating life at HLS,
Cambridge, and beyond

*Info gathered from Harvard websites, the Harvard International Office website, and HSSPA survival guide.

HLCFA Survival Guide

To help you and your family adjust to your new life in our wonderful city, we have compiled the most important information you need to know into one handy guide! Use the HLCFA Survival Guide to learn how to navigate Cambridge, what amenities you have while at HLS, great activities in the area, and more.

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Intro to HLCFA

Welcome to the Couples and Families Association of Harvard Law School! (HLCFA) We are a social organization for HLS students, their significant others (girl/boyfriends, fiancés, spouses, partners, and children). Our organization offers many activities over the course of the year to provide support and a community for those students who have come to Harvard with partners or families. We serve as a resource for questions about HLS, living in the greater Boston area, and the nature of experiencing Harvard Law as a couple or family. HLCFA has enhanced the law school experience for hundreds of students and non-student partners. We are excited you are here!

Contact info

- **Email:** hlcfa@mail.law.harvard.edu
- **Visit our Website:** <https://orgs.law.harvard.edu/hlcfa/>
- **Subscribe to our newsletter for updates and upcoming events:**
<http://eepurl.com/gl7-En>
- **Join us on Facebook:** Harvard Law Couples & Family Association (HLCFA)
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hlcfa>
- **Follow our Instagram:** [@harvardlawcouplesandfamilies](https://www.instagram.com/harvardlawcouplesandfamilies)

Parent Support Sites:

Harvard Law Parent support website:

<https://hls.harvard.edu/dean-of-students/student-support/support-for-hls-parents/>

Harvard Housing Parent support website:

<https://www.huhousing.harvard.edu/community-events/parenting-resources>

Academic Info and Harvard Perks

Harvard Library Card

Significant others are eligible for a Harvard Library Card. To apply, take the student's Harvard ID card and the partner's photo ID to the PRIVILEGES DESK on the first floor (Room 130) of Widener Library. If your family names are not the same, you will need proof of marriage and shared residency (bring several pieces of mail to confirm this). The cost of the card is \$5. This card will allow partners to use most of the Harvard libraries, to borrow books and other materials (with some restrictions), and to gain free entrance to Harvard museums. In addition, you can use it for the HARVARD SHUTTLE BUSES; download the Harvard App to see shuttle routes and times. You can store Crimson Cash (Harvard's "electronic money") on your card and use it to enter the Holyoke Center and other restricted Harvard buildings. For more information call (617) 495-4166.

Auditing Courses at Harvard

As the spouse or partner of a Harvard affiliate, you may be able to audit courses at Harvard, i.e., attend lectures not as part of a degree course, without receiving academic credit. You do, however, need the permission of the lecturer. You may contact the lecturer in advance, but usually the best way is simply to sit in on the first session of the course that you are interested in; at the end speak to the lecturer, explain your situation, and ask for permission to audit the course. Permission is usually not granted for small seminars or language courses. For a listing of available courses, see the course catalog (courses.my.harvard.edu). In addition, some graduate schools will also allow you to audit. Note that unlike at the Extension School, there is no fee for auditing "regular" Harvard classes.

Language Exchange at the Harvard Language Center

The Language Exchange Program offers the opportunity to exchange informal conversation in your own language for conversation in your target language with another member of the Harvard community. Spouses and partners of faculty, staff, students, and visiting scholars are eligible to participate in the exchange. To use this program, spouses and partners who do not have a HarvardKey login will need to contact Harvard IT in order to obtain a Harvard Key Light.

<https://language.fas.harvard.edu/language-exchange-harvard-language-center>

Gym Membership

Spouses, qualified domestic partners, and dependents of Harvard students may use recreational facilities by purchasing a family membership. Visit recreation.gocrimson.com for updated rates. Family memberships must be purchased in-person at the Membership Office in the Malkin Athletic Center. Passes can be purchased by semester or for the duration of the academic year and include use of all the recreation centers and entrance to various group fitness classes.

Navigating Cambridge: Stores, Restaurants, and Hospitals

Nearby Grocery Stores

- Aldi (\$\$)
- Costco (\$\$)
- HMart (\$\$)
- Market Basket (\$)
- Russo's (\$\$)
- Shaw's/Star Market (\$\$)
- Stop & Shop (\$\$)
- Target (\$\$)
- Trader Joe's (\$\$)
- Wegmans (\$\$)
- Whole Foods (\$\$\$)

Specialty Stores/Shopping Centers:

- **Arsenal Yards:** Accessible by bus and subway, this new mall has stores such as Aldo, Ann Taylor factory store, Express, Gap outlet, Marshalls, Old Navy outlet, BBB, and a Target just across the street. **485 Arsenal St, Watertown**
- **Assembly Row:** Outdoor Mall with various stores: J. Crew Outlet, Loft Outlet, BBB, TJMaxx, Christmas Tree Shop, Legoland, J.P. Licks, Off 5th, Steve Madden, Beer Garden (during the summer months), Gymboree, Motherhood Maternity etc. **100 Foley Street, Somerville, MA**
- **Cambridgeside Galleria:** Indoor Mall with: Guess, Aeropostale, Ann Taylor, Banana Republic, The Children's Place, Gap, Hollister, H&M, J. Crew, Victoria's Secret, Old Navy, T.J. Maxx, Sephora. **100 Cambridgeside Pl, Cambridge**
- **Downtown Crossing:** Outside shopping center in the heart of Boston's downtown. Stores include: DSW, Forever 21, Gap factory store, H&M, Macy's, Marshalls, Primark, T.J. Maxx, and The Children's place. Just take the Redline to Downtown Crossing.
- **Faneuil Hall:** Located in downtown Boston with over 150 stores including many boutiques, small stores, craft stands, flower stands, restaurants, and bars. On the weekends, Faneuil Hall is packed with street performers and musicians who entertain you as you shop.
- **Haymarket (Downtown Boston):** Fridays and Saturdays outdoor market with lots of cheap produce.

Restaurants

Popular Restaurants in Harvard Square

- **Alden and Harlow:** Serves thoughtfully sourced, honest American food in a subterranean, modern, and comfortable space
- **Grafton Street:** Stylist yet relaxed gastropub serving upscale comfort food, cocktails, and a robust craft brew list

- **Maharaja:** Delectable Indian cuisine once voted the best Indian Restaurant in New England
- **Mr. Bartley's Burger Cottage:** Harvard Square institution since 1960, well-known for celebrity visits. Great burgers, fries, frappes, and kitschy décor
- **Nine Tastes:** A mixture of hot spices and fresh herbs combine to make the scintillating tastes of Thai cuisine
- **Orinoco Harvard Square:** Latin kitchen inspired by rustic, family-run eateries found in Venezuela
- **Russell House Tavern:** Upscale New American fare, craft cocktails and microbrews in a chic gathering spot
- **Tanjore Bar:** Indian dishes and lunch buffet. Incredible Garlic Naan and Chicken Tikka Masala
- **Toscano's:** Authentic Italian cuisine, specialties include pasta and risotto

Cheap Eats and Cafes in Harvard Square

- **Bluestone Lane Harvard Square Café:** Inviting space for coastal-Australia inspired artisanal coffee and espresso drinks, baked goods, and quick breakfasts or lunches
- **Clover Food Lab:** Fast-food vegetarian and vegan chain with daily menu changes using seasonal ingredients
- **Felipe's Taqueria:** The best burritos and fajitas in Harvard Square. Large dining spaces and options to go
- **Flour Bakery + Cafe:** Buttery pastries, homemade cookies, gorgeous cakes, and sandwiches, soups, and salads
- **Friendly Toast:** Funky, all-day breakfast spot, with hearty meals and vegan options
- **Hi-Rise:** Family-owned bakery with extensive menu using fresh hand-selected ingredients
- **Pinocchio's:** Long-standing Harvard pizzeria, known for Sicilian style pizza and subs
- **Pokeworks:** Delicious Hawaiian-inspired poke using high quality and fresh food
- **Shake Shack:** Modern day version of a roadside burger stand serving delicious burgers, shakes, and fresh cut fries
- **Sweet Greens:** Seasonal, healthy salads and grain bowls made in-house from scratch, using whole produce delivered daily
- **Tatte:** Beautiful selection of mouthwatering pastries and delicious lunch options make this Instagram-able location a local favorite
- **Tasty Burger:** flavorful burgers, variety of sides including "totchos" and milkshakes

North End Dining

- **Bricco:** Sophisticated spot for modern takes on Italian fare, cocktails & late-night brick-oven pizza.
- **La Familia Giorgio's:** Giant portions of classic Roman-style fare and lengthy wine list define this family-friendly fixture. Good prices, though they do have a plate fee if you want to share.
- **Giacomo's:** No reservations, very long lines, and tight seating area, but great food.
- **Carmelina's:** Popular, open-air restaurant serving classic Italian dishes with a modern flair. Must get reservations in advance.

Desserts Around Town

- **Mike's Pastry:** North End and Harvard Square locations. Renowned Italian pastries. Cannoli in multiple flavors, gelati, and biscotti. Cash only in North End.

- **Toscanini's:** Central Square. Favorite for espresso and gourmet ice cream in a range of unique flavors that change often.
- **JP Licks:** Multiple locations, including Harvard Square. With kosher, dairy free, and vegan options. This local chain is known for its signature flavors of ice cream and frozen yogurt, plus house-roasted coffee. Students get a discount on coffee in the Harvard Square location.

Hospitals

- **Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center:** 330 Brookline Ave, Boston, MA
- **Brigham and Women's Hospital:** Rated #13 hospital in the USA, 75 Francis St, Boston, MA
- **Boston Children's Hospital:** 300 Longwood Ave, Boston, MA
- **Mass General Hospital:** Rated #3 hospital in the USA, 55 Fruit St, Boston, Ma
- **Mount Auburn Hospital:** Conveniently located 1 mile from Harvard Law School, 330 Mount Auburn St. Cambridge, MA
- Urgent Care for HLS Students can be found at the **Smith Campus Center**, 3rd Floor 75 Mt. Auburn Street 8:00 am – 10:00 pm, 7 days a week

Transportation: Cars and Public Transit Information

Harvard Transportation

Harvard offers shuttles, discount transit passes, and parking options. For more information visit <https://www.transportation.harvard.edu>

Car Registration & Permits

- **Registration Fee:** \$60
- **License Plates:** \$50 for front and back, you put them on yourself. In MA it is required to have a license plate on the front of your car for toll road purposes, so make sure to plan for that installation or you will fail your Safety Inspection
- **RMV Locations:**
 - 136 Blackmore Street, Boston, MA
 - 550 Arsenal Street, Watertown, MA (located inside the Watertown Mall)
 - Phone 857-368-8000
- **Title Transfer for Car Purchase:** \$75
- **Driver's License:** \$115 to change your out-of-state
- In some cases, a Massachusetts driver's license and Massachusetts auto-insurance are required to get a parking pass. Please click on the link below to see the list of what you need to get a Massachusetts license. (<https://www.mass.gov/how-to/transfer-your-out-of-state-drivers-license-to-massachusetts>)

State Vehicle Inspection

- Many gas stations perform the inspection
- You must obtain a vehicle inspection sticker within 7 days of the registration date
- Cost is \$35
- Must get it renewed annually

City Vehicle Assessment Tax

Comes in the mail (excise tax). The excise is based on the value of the vehicle. (A percentage of the manufacturer's list price in the year of manufacture).

Parking Information

Parking Permits

You must have a permit to park almost anywhere (except metered parking)

- Cambridge: \$25 (**includes a guest pass**), annual renewal. Click below for application and materials. (<https://www.cambridgema.gov/iwantto/applyforaparkingpermit>)

Parking & Parking Tickets

Parking in Boston is expensive. There is very little free parking in the city itself (unless you live there and have a parking permit for that specific neighborhood).

- Most meters allow you to pay by credit card or use an app specified at the meter such as Passport or ParkMobile.
- Parking garages are throughout the city, but they're significantly more expensive than meters. They run about \$10-40/hour and \$30+/day.
- Download and utilize apps such as SpotHero and SpotAngels to find and reserve parking spots near locations you want to visit for (usually) cheaper prices than at actual venues.
- If it's a Sunday, all meters throughout Boston/Cambridge are completely free. That means even where the meters list a two-hour time limit, you're able to park free for as long as you want. Free parking is also available on many holidays.
- Know your license plate in case you are towed.
- Read ALL parking signage! Note street cleaning dates and parking time limits.
- Tip: You can park in the Haymarket parking garage at Boston Public Market and get it validated for just a few dollars an hour by buying anything in the market (or at the gas convenience store across the street if the market is closed). By far one of the cheapest parking options in downtown Boston.

Notes About Tickets/Towing

Even if you're careful, the poor signage and the good Boston meter maids will inevitably get you at least once. Tickets are usually about \$25. Don't worry! Consider it initiation to Boston parking. Before paying, write a short letter to appeal – you'll find you can get out of tickets on occasion. It's worth a shot.

If you are not careful, you can get towed. They will ticket you before you get towed then charge a fee per day that your car is in the tow yard. It gets pricey fast. Know your license plate number and watch out for penalties.

Moving Trucks

Some cities/neighborhoods allow residents to reserve a space in front of their building for moving vans. This is highly recommended – especially if you're moving on Boston Moving Day (September 1).

Snow Emergency

Cambridge has special parking rules in a snow emergency.

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/snow>

Some people who park on the street will shovel out their car and place a lawn chair there to hold their place. This is allowed in some cities for a certain length of time (typically 48 hours) after a snowstorm.

Street Cleaning

Don't want to get towed? Always triple- check the signage where you are parking to be sure it's not a street cleaning day. In Cambridge, street cleaning is April through December

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/services/streetcleaning>

"The T" (Subway/Train)

Day, week, and month passes are available. Ask at any T Station about getting a free Charlie Card – It's a plastic reloadable ticket (like a credit card) that gets you a slightly discounted fare.

Children under 12 are free. Harvard students can get discounted MBTA passes (see <https://hls.harvard.edu/dept/dos/campus-resources/mbta-semester-pass-program/>).

Schedule & Planning

- <https://www.mbta.com/schedules> - this page will give you bus and T schedules, routes, and has a trip-planning tool to know which to use.
- In Google Maps, you will see the public transportation options to get to your destination. Please note that the train/bus may be a little early or late, so plan accordingly.
- **Whiz, ProximiT, TracktheT** are three apps/tools that you can use to better approximate when the train/bus will arrive.

General Tips

- Every stop on the red line has elevator and/or escalator access
- Get off at South Station to catch the silver line directly to the airport, or use the airport stop on the blue line. When arriving at Logan Airport (BOS), take a no-cost Silver Line Bus from the airport to South Station and transfer to other T lines to get you home without spending a dime.
- Most green line stops are above ground. You must request above ground stops on the green line – depending on the type of trolley, you either press the strip or pull the cord.

Biking for Transportation

Many people choose to ride bikes around town and there are many bike lanes. Please note that bikes can legally take a full lane of traffic if there are no bike lanes or the bike lanes are not safe. It is safest to take the full lane, so you don't get hit by doors or pushed out of the lane by aggressive drivers.

BLUEbikes is the most popular bike-share program in the Boston area with several locations around town. Harvard students can receive a discount:

<https://www.transportation.harvard.edu/commuterchoice/bike/bluebikes-bike-share-program>

You can get a monthly pass for unlimited 45-minute rides. This is a great option if you want to commute by bike or go for a ride but don't want to purchase a bike or don't have space for one. For more information: <https://www.bluebikes.com/how-it-works>

Biking Tips:

- If you are using your own bike, buy a good U-lock. Always lock your bike, and when possible, bring your bike inside.
- If you are using your own bike, invest in good lights and a helmet to keep yourself safe.
- Wear bright-clothing or reflective fabrics when riding during low visibility times.

Activities and Local Sights

There are so many beautiful things to see and exciting things to explore around Cambridge and Boston. Dive into the history via the Freedom Trail in Boston or discover new sights around town.

Harvard Museums

Harvard has several museums and often it is possible to get free entry using your Harvard ID or Special Borrower's Card. Check out the list of museums here

<http://www.harvard.edu/resources-offices/museums>

Current schedules and events

You can find across the internet and Facebook, but here are two popular ones:

- Family Friendly lists- Mommy Poppins: <https://mommypoppins.com/boston>
- General lists- Boston.com: <https://www.boston.com/tag/bosten/>

Outings and Innings

Outings & Innings is an internal Harvard University service for Harvard affiliates that offers a selection of event tickets, access to high-demand events, significant savings on many offerings, and no hefty transaction fees! O&I is a one-stop resource for tickets and discounts up to 50% off. The website is accessible only by HUID and PIN, but a spouse or partner can be linked to the primary ID holder. Visit <https://outingsandinings.harvard.edu> to sign-up

Museums

Boston has so many museums – there's something for everyone. *Check out the local public library for free and deeply discounted passes.* Many of the museums have a designated free day/night. EBP and WIC also offer discounts on tickets.

- Museum of Fine Art (MFA) Boston: public library offers discounted passes
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum: public library offers discounted passes
- Museum of Science: public library offers discounted passes
- Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA): free on Thursday Nights
- Children's Museum: \$1 on Friday Nights

Public Libraries

As a Massachusetts resident, you are eligible for a Boston Public Library card AND a Cambridge (or Minuteman Library Network) card. All you need is an ID and proof of your current address such as a letter, bill, or apartment lease. Once you have your library card, you can also get access to eBooks through the Minuteman Library Network on the Libby app. You can also use your library card to reserve free and discounted museum passes for museums and attractions all throughout the Boston area. Check your local branch's website for a schedule of kid-friendly activities and story time updated all throughout the week.

- Acton Memorial Library
- Arlington, Robbins Library

- Boston Public Library (Honan-Allston Branch, Brighton Branch, Faneuil Branch)
- Brookline Public Library
- Cambridge Public Library
- Harvard Public Library
- Edith M Fox Library (There is a good children's thrift store located inside)
- Coop Bookstore in Harvard Square (Not a public library, but they hold a story time every Tuesday at 11 up on the 3rd floor.)

Parks, Playgrounds, & Splash Pads

- Arnold Arboretum (Jamaica Plain, 617-524-1718)
- Artesani Park and Splash Pad
- Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary
- Bergin Playground (Haskell Street)
- Beaver Brook spray deck and playground (Belmont)
- Boston Common
- Breakheart Reservation (state park/beach/playground/maple sugaring in the spring)
- Castle Island (South Boston the Boston Harbor)
- Magazine Beach (outdoor pool)
- McCrehan Memorial Swimming and Wading Pool (outdoor, Cambridge.)
- Southwest Corridor Park (multiple playgrounds, two spray pools)
- Trapelo Road Playground (Belmont)

Beaches/Lakes/Ponds

- Nahant Beach (DCR pass)
- Wingaersheek Beach
- Walden Pond (DCR pass)
- Kayak/Canoe on Charles River thorough <https://paddleboston.com/>

For more outdoor recreation, consider looking into these passes:

- DCR State Parks Pass: <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/purchase-an-annual-parking-pass-for-massachusetts-state-parks>
- Nature Parks Pass: <https://www.massaudubon.org>

Farms

Watch for berry picking in summer, apple picking in the fall, maple sugaring in the winter, and farm animals year-round.

- Davis Family Farm
- Drumlin Farms
- Honey Pot Farms
- Russell's Orchard
- Wards Berry Farm
- Wilson Farm

Local Hikes

- Audubon Nature Preserves
- Blue Hills Reservation (Milton)
- Middlesex Fells (Medford)

Day Trips

- Ben & Jerry's factory in VT
- Berkshires/Tanglewood
- Canobie Lake Park (amusement park)
- Cranberry Festival in CT
- De Cordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln, MA
- Lexington and Concord (Historical sights and famous authors' homes)
- Manchester-by-the-Sea, MA (aka Singing Beach)
- Mystic, CT
- Newport, RI (see the mansions, Cliff Walk, lunch downtown)
- Ogunquit, ME for the beach
- Parker's Maple Barn
- Springfield: Dr. Seuss square, Eric Carle Museum, Big E
- Storybook Land
- White Mountains (Flume Gorge) in NH
- Woodstock, VT

Child Care and Schools

On-campus Childcare

- Six nonprofit, independent childcare centers are located on our campuses – five on the Cambridge campus and one in Allston near Harvard Business School. Each center is independent and makes its own decisions regarding enrollment and curriculum.
- If you are interested in a place at one of these centers, you should visit those that interest you and apply as early as possible as places are limited. Generally, contracts run from September through July in the childcare centers, although mid-year slots open occasionally.
- To learn more about the on-campus childcare centers:
 - [Review contact information and rates](#)
 - [View the centers on a map](#)

Off-campus Childcare

High-quality, affordable childcare is in high demand in the greater Boston area. The following resources are designed to make your search a little easier:

- Use [Harvard's online childcare bulletin board](#) to exchange childcare information with others in our community.
- To get a list of licensed family day care providers and group child care centers in your community, visit the [Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care](#)
- Several nonprofit agencies are members of the [Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Agency](#) and can help you find childcare.
- [Child Care Circuit](#) serves several towns near Harvard's campuses including Arlington, Belmont, Medford, Newton, and Watertown, as well as many others.
- [Community Care for Kids](#) serves Braintree, Cohasset, Dedham, Hull, Milton, Needham, Quincy, Randolph, Wellesley, Weston, and Weymouth.
- [Cambridge's Department of Human Services Program](#) (DHSP) offers pre-school and afterschool care for children ages 2.9 through 5 years of age. Children can be placed on a waitlist beginning at one year of age. Placements are made based on availability; therefore, it's important to add your child to the waitlist as soon as possible. Please visit the [DHSP](#) website for more information.

Harvard Care.com Service

Harvard Law provides students with free access to a [Care.com](#) membership, subsidized in-home child and backup adult care, and subsidized backup care at child care centers.

[Learn More about the Care.com Membership](#) at:

https://hls.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Flyer21_Care-Membership_Harvard-Law_052022_FINAL.pdf

Public School for School-aged Children

Each city or town has its own public schools for school-aged children. You must contact your local school department to inquire about its enrollment procedure. Information about Cambridge Public School District can be found at <https://www.cpsd.us/> or by contacting the Family Resource Center, 617-349-6551. Please visit [Harvard's Work/Life](#) (<http://hr.harvard.edu/childcare>) website for additional information about childcare and parenting support

Private School for School-aged Children

Several private and independent schools exist in the Cambridge/Boston areas. The [Association of Independent Schools of New England](#) is a useful resource to start with:

Association of Independent Schools of New England

aisne.org

600 Longwater Drive, Suite 208, Norwell

781-982-8600

info@aisne.org

Misc:

Harvard Grad Market

Join this Facebook group to buy and sell used furniture from other incoming and outgoing graduate students! We have heard that it is possible to completely furnish an apartment using only this Facebook group.

Buy Nothing Groups

Join this Facebook group to find, give, and trade items for free. No selling allowed! It is a great way to reduce waste and stay on a budget.

Additional Clubs/Groups

- While HLCFA strives to be an inclusive and comprehensive for Law Students and their partners/families. But we know we can't provide all the resources you may need! There are several other groups and **student organizations** which can enrich your experiences here at HLS. From general college life to religious affiliation groups, to cultural/racial initiatives, search the list of student organizations here: <https://hls.harvard.edu/student-life/office-of-community-engagement-equity-and-belonging/student-orgs/student-organization-directory/>
- The Harvard Students Spouses and Partners Association (HSSPA) is a Harvard-wide group and another great resource for HLS couples and families.