

Housing

Cornell's first-year students live in residential communities on north campus – close to two active community centers (Robert Purcell Community Center & Appel), three dining halls (RPCC, Appel and Risley), and two athletic facilities (Appel & Helen Newman), and within a short walk to academic buildings on central campus.

Here's some brief introduction to the residential halls. For official descriptions, please refer to <http://www.campuslife.cornell.edu/campuslife/housing/first-year-students.cfm>

These are some additional tips:

Balch Hall

Girls only dorm! Forget it, guys. As the freshmen door that is closest to the Central Campus (where most of your classes will take place), Balch is a very pretty ivy-covered Gothic building, completed with mullioned windows overlooking either the courtyard, gardens, or the famous Thurston Bridge. There are four spacious lounges in Balch where you can relax, eat, study, or practice the piano. It is known for having the biggest rooms on the North Campus with plenty of closet space for every girl. Check this out—every room even comes with its own sink! It is also connected to the Tatkon Center, which offers classes such as the freshman writing seminars, mathematics, and chemistry/biology supplementary sessions. This translates into walking right downstairs (especially if you're luckily placed into Unit 3) to your classes. Additionally, the Tatkon Cafe means a Balch girl never has to explore too far to get food. Oh, there is one more bonus for girls living in Balch: Last Call, one of the most popular A Cappella on campus, often has free showcases under the arch of Balch. Woooo! Although Balch is great in many ways, keep in mind that the dorm is still fairly old. Also, since it is all-girls, most of the hallways are quiet and may not be as social as buildings such as Donlon.



Court-Kay-Bauer and Mews Hall

Two of the newest dorms on campus (built 5 years ago). Extremely well living conditions. Adjustable air conditioning for the hot (but short) summer months, as well as adjustable heater for the cold long winters in Ithaca. Court Kay Bauer is composed of 3 perpendicularly laying buildings, commonly referred to as CKB, while Mews is divided up to a west and a east wing joined by a piano lounge called Lund Lounge. Very similar in outside appearance, these dorms are

similar on the inside as well. Rooms are arranged into suites, each suite composed of 2 doubles and 1 single. Suites share a private bathroom. Bathroom includes 2 sinks, 1 closed door shower and 1 closed door toilet. These two dorms are completely covered in carpet from hall to room, with available vacuum if you want to clean up your room.



Clara Dickson Hall

It is the biggest residential hall on campus, and probably among all the ivies. It is literally HUGE and very lively, and you can meet all sorts of people there. There's a pretty lawn in front of Dickson where students often play Frisbee when the weather turns warm outside. It feels home. By the way, there is one computer lab downstairs and sand volley ball courts just outside the door. Hurray!



Mary Donlon Hall

Famous party dorm! It is the second largest dorm besides Clara Dickson. If you are a very sociable person, then Donlon is your place to live. You will never get bored. But on the flip side, you may find it a little bit difficult to study in your own room. But you can study in the lounge on the first floor or go to the one in RPCC since Donlon is beside RPCC, one of the community centers.



Townhouse Community

We do not recommend living in townhouse for some obvious reasons. First of all, it is very far from Central campus, and it can be very painful to walk long distance in the morning to get to class. Second, almost everyone living in townhouse complains that it is anti-social, which is not surprising because it is far from other freshman dorms. While there certainly are many cons, there may be some good things to be said about the townhouses. It is very quiet, the houses are big, and you have your own kitchen. Additionally, the townhouses are all in really great conditions. The walls are sparkling white; the bathrooms looking surprising “un-college-dorm-like,” meaning they are really clean. Four people will live in a house in complete privacy because the RAs don’t usually go on rounds inside the houses. It would be a blast if you get along with your three roommates; however, if things don’t turn out to be so great, then facing them everyday may not be a happy experience. There is something to be noted though, from past experience, whenever someone requests the townhouses as their 1st choice, they have gotten it, so just a warning to rethink if you really are ready for the townhouses.



Risley

An artsy building on campus that houses some of the more liberal minds we have at Cornell. Some people call the building the Hogwarts dorm because if you look closely, Risley does look like one of the building straight from the Harry Potter’s series. The best part about Risley is that the dining hall is right downstairs from you. It also has its very own tennis courts for all of you tennis players (or potentially learns) out there! The residents of Risley put up plenty of shows, including many popular plays, on the weekends to keep you away from boredom. The hallways are pretty social and the people are really open. If you happen to be one of the lucky residents in Risley next year, remember to ask someone to tell you the story of a “human hallway” and how it came about- the story should blow your mind just a little. Unlike dorms like Balch though, some rooms in Risley are small and get heated up easily under the summer sun- The bright side of the situation is that you’ll stay very warm during the winter. However, similar to Balch though, Risley is one of the closet (if not the closet) dorms to Central. If you are living here next year, be excited and be up for explorations- with a liberal mind.



Low Rises

Low Rises are located at the far north, just one block away from the Townhouses. So they should be the second farthest from the central campus. There are 5 Low Rises, namely Low Rise 6&7, Ujama Residential College, Just About Music and HILC, Holland International Living Center. They are only 5 minutes away from the Appel Commons and 1 minute away from the Robert Purcell Community Center. There are two basketball courts and a soccer field just outside of Low Rise 7. Low Rises tend to be quiet and provides great privacy just like the Townhouses, but Low Risers don't have their own kitchens. There are 4 units in each Low Rise. They are like floors but they are not. That's why people get lost even if they have been to Low Rises for many times. The rooms are divided into suites, which compose a unit, but they are literally real suites unlike the ones in Mews. Each suite has a door to it and there are 6 to 7 people sharing a bathroom in each suite. The rooms are much bigger than those of Mews and Court-Kay-Bauer Complex. They are not air-conditioned but great heat is provided. Since the summer is pretty short and the temperature is fairly low in Ithaca, you can pretty much do without air-conditioners. The closing-off and often confusing room arrangements decided that Low Rises don't have the knack of being social dorms. But Low Risers do have parties on holidays and they can be CRAZY! And the program houses such as HILC and Just About Music provides a lot of field trips, concerts, and other activities which are fun to attend.

