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# HOMESTAY GUIDE

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Homestays provide an excellent opportunity to practice English, to learn about another culture, and to establish relationships with local Canadians. Your host family has been carefully selected to ensure that you will be comfortable and welcome in your new home. In order to make the homestay a meaningful and positive experience, students are encouraged to behave as a family member, to respect the family's way of life and to act in a caring manner. We hope this guide will help you to adjust to life with your Canadian family and help make your homestay experience an enjoyable and memorable one.

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## MEALS:

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**Typical Breakfast Foods:** toast, cereal, eggs, bacon, muffins, coffee, juice, etc.

During the week, many Canadians have a simple breakfast that may consist only of juice, toast, and coffee. In many families, each family member prepares his/her own breakfast. Ask your family what their breakfast routine is and where you can find the food if you have to prepare breakfast yourself. Be sure to ask for instructions on how to use any appliances you are unfamiliar with. On weekends, a larger breakfast is often eaten late and is called "brunch."



**Typical Lunch Foods:** sandwiches, leftovers, fruit, cookies, muffins, etc.



Most Canadians, prepare their own lunch either the night before or in the morning just before they go to work or school. A typical lunch is a sandwich, a piece of fruit, cookies or treat, and a drink, which is put in a bag and carried to work or school. Some popular sandwiches are peanut butter & jam, ham & cheese, egg salad, and tomato and cheese. Again, use your English to find out where the available food for lunch is kept if you are going to make it yourself.

**Typical Dinner Foods:** meat, vegetables, pasta, salad, rice, potatoes, stir fry.



Traditionally, dinner is the main meal of the day. All family members are generally expected to be present and to assist in some way in either the preparation, serving, or clean-up of this meal. (Often every member of the family will take part in some way in the dinner preparation, table preparation, or clean-up.) Most families have established a set time for this meal and family members planning to be late or absent will make sure that the cook is informed. Please be sure to let the person preparing the meal know if you plan to be late or absent for a meal.

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### HOT WATER/SHOWER/BATHROOM:

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Canadian homes have a hot water tank, which heats and holds hot water for all uses in the home. Generally Canadians take showers for fifteen minutes or less and if the hot water is used for 30 or 40 minutes it will eventually run out. When this happens, little or no hot water will be available while the tank reheats. Be careful not to use too much hot water when others may require it. In most cases you will have to share the bathroom with the other family members so make sure to wipe up any water from the floor after showering and to clean up and throw away any hair from the bathtub, sink, or floor before leaving the bathroom.

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### TRANSPORTATION:

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Before you start school, please find out from your host family which bus or buses you are to take and where the nearest bus stop is. Be sure to find out how to get home from school as well. If you get lost or confused during your commute, you can ask the bus driver to help you get to your destination. Be sure to always carry your host family's address and phone number in case you get lost.

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### LAUNDRY AND CLEANING:

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Most families ask the students to do their laundry once a week. Please make sure you learn how to use the laundry machine properly. You may want to write down the instructions in your own language when they are given to you. You are expected to make your bed every day and clean your room at least once a week.



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### FAMILY RULES:

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chores.

In North America the equality of the sexes is more advanced than in Asian countries. For example, the father may cook the meal and the mother may mow the lawn. Even young children are generally given some sort of household chores to complete. Male and females share a mutual respect in the home, and for a homestay guest to really feel like a family member and have a successful stay it is important to join in and help out with household

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### TELEPHONE:

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Local calls are free of charge. Please keep your calls to a reasonable time length. Long distance calls have to be made either collect or with a telephone card. Please inform your host family before you make a call.

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### SMOKING:

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There is absolutely NO-SMOKING inside the host family's house, unless you have clear permission to do so from the host family.



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### EXPENSES:

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The homestay fee only covers 1 private furnished room and 3 meals a day. All other expenses are the student's responsibility. If you want to invite your friends to dinner or to family activities, you have to get the family's permission beforehand and find out if there are any expenses that you will need to be responsible for.

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### PROBLEMS:

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Everyday problems can be usually be settled by speaking directly with the host family about the problem and working out an acceptable solution. This is usually enough to resolve most misunderstandings that occasionally come up. If the problem can't be resolved by speaking with the host family or is more serious in nature, please contact the homestay coordinator.



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### CONTACT INFORMATION:

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BANFF EDUCATION CENTRE: 1-866-678-3945

HOMESTAY COORDINATOR: 1-866-762-0963

[homestay@bec.ca](mailto:homestay@bec.ca)