

Oh My! A guide to your new city

Subtitle: I do not recognize any name around here, Please help!

Meaning of "Oh My!": <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/my-oh-my>

This is not an exhaustive list of ideas and places, but it should help you get started discovering your new city. We do not have any specific interest including financial in any of those places, and they are not listed in any particular order. Try them at your own risk.

Emergency number in US is: 911

It is for medical emergencies, fire and the police in case of emergency.

COMMUNICATION

You'll learn quickly that a smart phone (cell phone) is becoming a necessity. It is to the point that you may only use your cell phone and can save by not having a land line for the phone. UNL has some contracts that might be advantageous (<http://sales.unl.edu/verizon-0>; UNL computer and phone shop on city campus) that might be advantageous. Be aware of your particular situation (international call direct or via calling card being one example). Shop around!

The carriers are Verizon, AT and T, Alltel, Sprint (not too great of a network), US Cellular, T-Mobile, and others that are non-contract carriers such as H2O wireless and PagePlus [small companies but good, we have been told]. You can also get the sim cards from places like Best Buy or Walmart.

Wifi for free, is usually synonym with coffee shop such as The Mills, The Bay, Scooter, Nu Vibe, and Starbucks. Other option includes Le Quartier (if you prefer your wifi with a side of fresh bread and European pastries).

For University WiFi, connect to UNL-Wireless-Registration and open the browser. It will take you to the registration page where you can register your device. After this, connect to UNL-Air WiFi.

Internet at home. You can find a list of internet providers at <http://broadbandnow.com/Nebraska/Lincoln>

LODGING

Most searches for rental properties are made via the Internet. The sites to look for rentals are:

- <https://www.zillow.com/>
- <https://www.trulia.com/>
- http://www.realtor.com/apartments/Lincoln_NE
- <http://postdoc.unl.edu/housing/>

Do not make any payments before you check the credibility of your place and the property owner.

Be aware that there is a lot of false advertisements for rentals on this site: <https://lincoln.craigslist.org/search/apa> [it is a very good site to find things to put in your place, but not for rentals]

For students, you have these additional resources:

- Single student: University housing 530 N 17th Street; housing@unl.edu access through MyRed
- Married students or students with children housing via UNL (<http://housing.unl.edu/residence-halls>)

Be aware of the distances. You will need a car or a bike very quickly depending where you live.

A plus in Lincoln is the presence of a well-maintained extensive bike trail system.

TRANSPORTATION

Many options:

- Bicycle:
 - o there is an extensive network of bike paths that are not visible while driving. Maps are available at the Visitor Center in Haymarket (7th and P Streets),
 - o rent a bike on site at Innovation campus via BikeLNK (membership required via your unl.edu email). We have one bike rack on the North side of our FIC building. UNL faculty, staff and students can buy an annual membership for only \$10. You must use the following code to qualify for the \$10 rate: BIKESUNL1718. It will cost you \$3/30 min after the first free 30min.
 - o Bike rental is an option (RentabikeNow on 27th Street), and it can be done for a full semester for about \$75 at UNL Campus Recreation Center (you will need to log in <https://crec.unl.edu/outdoor>)
- Bus
 - o Local: StarTran (the StarTran app allows to track the bus of interest)
 - Students are entitled to a free bus pass. You'll have to go to UNL's Parking and Transit Services, at 625 Stadium Drive, Suite A, with your N-card. OR new students can get it from the N-Card office. They might give it to you right away or mail to you based on the availability.
 - Others can by an annual bus pass using the payroll deduction.
 - You can buy monthly pass for less than 10 dollars through Token Transit
 - o Long distance (Arrow Stage Lines, Burlington Trailways, Windstar Lines, Dashabout Roadrunner)
 - o Lincoln-Omaha campuses via free N-E ride shuttle bus during the week <http://engineering.unl.edu/n-e-ride/>
- Uber (you need an app on your phone)
- Lyft (you need an app on your phone) (this is supposedly cheaper than Uber)
- Taxis (Yellow Cab, Servant Cab, Capital Cab, Happy Cab) [Be aware cash only]
- Driving. You'll most probably need to take care of your driver license at the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicle; <http://www.clickdmv.ne.gov/>). Your passport, I-20 and I-94 form might be part of the requested documents.
- Car rental (Alamo, Avis, Budget, Enterprise rent a car, Hertz, National Car Rental, Rent a van, Rent'N Drive)
- Short term car rental (by hour increment): ZipCar.com
- Train = Amtrak (discounts for students available)
- Airport
 - o Lincoln airport is next door (five miles northwest of downtown)
 - o Omaha airport (Eppley Airfield) is only 1h drive away and this other choice can save you money on some destinations
 - o Flight search sites include Kayak.com (yes, you read well), Expedia.com, CheapOair.com, Travelocity.com, and specific company such as United Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Alaska Airlines, Allegiant Air, American Airlines, Frontier and Southwest Airlines, to cite the ones leaving out of Lincoln and Omaha.

The nice thing about parking in city parking garages is that the first hour is free (you'll need a US credit or debit card to get out even during the free hour).

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND

You'll quickly learn that "there is an app for that!"

- Directions to a location:
 - o Waze on your smart phone
 - o Google map (web and phone versions)
 - o Maps on your iPhone
- Finding restaurant, coffee shop, etc.
 - o Yelp (this will also give you a price range from cheap [\$] to expensive [\$\$\$])

FOOD

The prices range very widely from one store to the other and within a store (from cheap to abusive pricing). Be informed, be aware ☺. Some of them are open 24h a day (yes, your 2 am ice cream craving can be satisfied year long). If you eat out of a can, with a plate, organic, gluten free, pescatarian, vegetarian, vegan or with any other dietary restrictions, you'll find what you need in many part of the city. Those stores include:

- Trader Jo
- Super Saver
- Sam's club (wholesaler where you buy in large quantities)
- Hy-Vee
- Target
- Fresh Thyme
- Aldi
- Walmart
- Natural Grocers
- Whole food (expensive side)
- So called "ethnic stores": several are located along 27th Street between Vine and Holdrege Street.
 - o Asian: Saigon Market on 26th Street, Nguyen Market and Oriental Market on 27th Street, and Beijing Market on O street
 - o Halal: All African Market on 27th Street
 - o Indian: Suji Grocery on O street
 - o Hispanic: Figueroa Market
 - o Mediterranean: Family Food Market on O street

Farmers' markets are shops that are temporarily set up and sell local produce. You may want to check out the farmers' market in the historic Haymarket downtown. It runs every Saturday from 8 a.m. to noon from mid-May to mid-October, with its peak season from mid-June to mid-August. Also, in the College view neighborhood, for more info check <http://www.sundayfarmersmarket.org/>

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

There is an App for that! Some of them allows you to know based on the bar code of the product if it is compatible with your needs. Others will tell you if a restaurant has meals that fit your needs. For gluten free diet there is multiple apps, "Find Me GF" is one of them

LUNCH

There is no cafeteria on site, here are some options if you have no time to prepare your own food that day:

- Backup on site:
 - o The Bistro in the connector with the other building
 - o The Mills has some food items
- Salad bars
 - o Hy-Vee
 - o Whole Foods
- Fresh ready meals
 - o Eat Fit and Go (84th Street and South Pointe locations)
 - o Source Eat Fit (70th Street and near South Pointe locations)
 - o Hy-Vee
- And the Frozen meal rescue in the frozen aisle of your preferred store

When you are on East Campus or Main Campus there is an app (yep, there is a theme) called UNL Dinning that will help you to know what is open.

TIPPING

The tips are not included in your bill (except very rare occasions mentioned on your bill). The most common recommendations are: 15% to 20% tip for sit-down restaurant service, 10% for servers at buffets (for help with drink orders and plate removal) and \$1 to \$2 per drink for bartenders, or 15% to 20% of the bar tab. As for cash-register coin jars, there's no obligation to add money to them, although it might be worth it if you receive super service or you're a regular customer. All the tips are calculated on the pre-tax amount.

Do not worry, there is an app to calculate tips, split bills etc. No top of the head calculation needed ☺.

FURNITURE

You can find new furniture at furniture stores around town or in large department stores like Walmart. To save money, you can buy used furniture at thrift shops like Goodwill stores, consignment shops, and garage sales. For students from abroad not familiar with the terms, a “garage sale,” “rummage sale,” “yard sale,” or “estate sale” is a sale held for a day or two by people selling their stuff out of their garage, yard, or home at whatever price they choose to set. You can find excellent items at a nice price (sometimes not even believable as it is so cheap) or expensive garbage. There are some sale advertisements on Craig's List as well as in the local newspaper, *The Lincoln Journal Star* (the ads are published during the week and online), and some dedicated websites such as <https://garagesalefinder.com/>.

A popular store in eastern Nebraska is Nebraska Furniture Mart in Omaha NE and its discount store, Ms. B Clearance, also in Omaha NE.

App and web-based sales of items by individuals in the area (any item):

- Facebook Marketplace (seems to work well in the recent months)
- letgo.com
- Craigslist

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CLOTHING

Lincoln has two malls where your shopping needs may be fulfilled:

- Gateway Mall
- SouthPointe Pavilions

The list of clothing stores in Lincoln is extensive, but here are some big chains that are favorites:

- Kohl's
- Shopko
- Sears
- JC Penney

Discounted clothing and home items like bedding (new)

- TJmax
- Marshalls
- Home Goods
- DSW (shoes)
- Payless (shoes)
- Play It Again Sports (sports-related items)

For previously worn items, search for local consignment stores or thrift shops, Goodwill stores, or garage sales.

Nebraska Crossing Outlets is a place with multiple factory outlets of a large number of brands. However, it is in Gretna, about a half-hour drive east from Lincoln. It is a good deal if you want to shop a lot and save money.

MULTIPLE

Clothing and furniture: "Garage sale" this concept might be new for many people coming from abroad. It is basically people selling their stuff out of their garage for highly variable prices. You can find excellent items at a very nice price (sometime not even believable as it is so cheap) or expensive garbage. There are some announcements on Craig List as well as on the local newspaper Lincoln Journal Star (the ads are published during the week and online), and some dedicated web sites.

App and web based sale of items by individual in the area (any item):

- Let Go
- Craigslist

Large quantity store from large pack of socks or huge bag of rice (membership required but you can find coupon to go once or a month for free)

- Costco (coming late 2017 or 2018)
- Sam's Club

You'll find it all under one roof from furniture to clothing via the food isle:

- Target
- WalMart

Malls are the places where your shopping needs might be fulfilled, they include:

- Gateway Mall
- SouthPointe Pavillions

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Store with cheap items (additional stores):

- Big Lots

USED ITEMS (often clothing or furniture)

Sometimes you do not want to buy all new and it is fine. From furniture to baby clothes that do not grow while the kid is enjoying the growth spur, here are some stores:

- Goodwill
- Play it Again Sports (sport related items)
- consignment stores

For person to person, see above (Craiglist, Let Go, etc.).

MONEY

Currency Exchange:

- Wells Fargo
- U.S. Bank
- UBT (they need 24h notice)

Banking:

- As a member of the University of Nebraska community you are entitled to a free checking account at the University of Nebraska Federal Credit Union.
- Many options are available. If you need international transfers, be specific while asking, some bank do not offer that option.

KIDS and SCHOOL (K12)

For native speakers. The Lincoln Public Schools District should have the answers to your questions (<https://www.lps.org/>; 5905 O St, Lincoln, NE 68510).

For non-native speakers. The District office of the Lincoln Public Schools will most probably refer you to go to “English language Learner Program (ELL)” located in the Park Middle School, 855 S, 8th Street (Entrance Gate is 11). At ELL, they assess the English skill of the Child and deliver their recommendation of admission to the nearby school from the residence.

Things for kids (particularly younger kids) to do.

Lincoln and Omaha zoos are excellent for kids. The Lincoln Children’s Museum is quite popular and the Nebraska History Museum also has lots of kid-friendly activities and free admission.

There are various activities specifically designed for small children including the Artreach project in the Summer (<https://www.shoppinggatewaymall.com/events/artreach-project-summer-camps>) and StoryTime at Indigo Books in the Haymarket district. The many parks of Lincoln are generally kid-friendly; Trago Park, very close to Innovation Campus, is particularly popular during warm weather.

WEATHER

An app to check the weather is from WeatherUnderground. Use “Storm” (for visualizing the weather) and “Wunderground” (for what to expect).

Tornadoes can strike Nebraska (yes, you read correctly!) and are most likely to occur in the spring or summer. If a tornado warning sounds, go to the basement of a building and stay away from windows.

COMMUNITY

Many communities exist:

- Student societies
 - o Students in engineering including biological engineering check <http://engineering.unl.edu/current-students/student-organizations/> and <http://engineering.unl.edu/current-students/all-student-organizations/> these lists include the ASABE (American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers)
 - o Microbiologist will find the ASM of interest
 - o Additional recognized student organizations can be found at (you'll have to figure out what is the name of some of those cryptic titles): <http://involved.unl.edu/student-organizations>
- Community of origin by country, language, ethnicity, etc.
 - o Latinos in Science and Engineering (<http://engineering.unl.edu/current-students/student-organizations/>)
 - o African American, National Society of Black Engineers (check <http://engineering.unl.edu/current-students/all-student-organizations/>)
 - o Additional recognized student organizations can be found at (you'll have to figure out what is the name of some of those cryptic titles): <http://involved.unl.edu/student-organizations>
- Religious communities. Please use Google search.
- Groups focused on an activity, with anything from meditation to hardcore coding. You might search meetup.com for these.

PHARMACY

You'll rarely see a "Pharmacy" sign. Some of them are open 24h a day. Here are some of those businesses incorporating a pharmacy (for those medications that need prescription from your doctor or not):

- CVS
- Walgreen
- Target
- Many grocery stores such as Hy-Vee
- Walmart

RECYCLING

In Lincoln, you'll find very different attitudes for recycling. Know that recycling sites exist if it is not offered where you live. You will need to separate the items (paper/glass/plastic). Check the sites at <https://lincoln.ne.gov/city/pworks/solid-waste/recycle/>.

For electric cables (the cable of the old radio, etc.) and old rechargeable batteries you can go to the entrance of Best Buy store. For electronics (old hard drive, printer, etc.) Staples offer to take it for free in a reasonable quantity.

VISITORS CENTER

The Lincoln Visitors Center is located at 201 N. 7th St., Lincoln, NE 68508 (telephone: 402-434-5348). It offers maps and information about current events and sites to see in Lincoln, as well as a wealth of other information about the capital city:

<http://www.exploredowntown.org/haymarket/go/lincoln-visitors-center>

UNL has a web site with some information: <http://globalnebraska.unl.edu/life-and-campus>

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IDIOMS

Sometime a colleague will tell you a sentence that does not make an *ounce of sense*, that might be an idiomatic expression. You'll find some help online for some (<http://www.smart-words.org/quotes-sayings/idioms-meaning.html>), but the best remedy is to tell the person: "*It beats me! I can't make a head or tail of what you said*". You got it. Just ask what the person meant. Do not wait.

BOOKS

Books for your courses

You can get rental textbooks from UNL online or from the University Bookstore in the union at both East and City Campus. They also do a price match for the books (if you find the same book at some other place or website for a lesser price). You can also buy or rent books from Amazon or eBay online.

Do not forget that there is the UNL library with paper and digital options.

Book for your leisure

Physical bookstores (bookshop) are becoming rare. Barnes and Noble is of them. Google "bookstore" to find the smaller ones.

Large online bookstores include Amazon.com, barnesandnoble.com and ebay.com.

Lincoln has a nice public library with satellites all over town to access books and more for free (www.lincolnlibraries.org).

NOW THAT YOU HAVE A .edu EMAIL ADDRESS

Discounts available to all higher education members:

- Apple has a discount via the apple store (online or via UNL)
- Microsoft office offer software at a great discount for educators
- The Washington post can be obtained at a discounted price with a valid .edu email address (students, employees, etc.)
- New York times can be obtained at a discounted price for educators

Discounts for students:

- New York times can be obtained at a drastically discounted price
- Microsoft office for students there is the possibility to get the software for free

Basically think about discounts that may apply to you. This can save you a lot of money.

WANT TO STIMULATE YOUR CREATIVITY?

Do you love to create and build all sorts of unique projects? Join Innovation Studio (<http://innovationstudio.unl.edu/>) and get access to an incredible facility with unique professional fabrication tools!

SOME ADDITIONAL HELP

A page for new students from abroad: <https://nse.unl.edu/international/arrival-orientation/>

Do not forget that we are here to help you succeed, thus feel free to reach out to your colleagues.

If you think that something is missing from the list (or not up-to-date), please send a message to era@izard.org with the subject "Oh My!", and tell us in short sentences what to add (or remove).

Thank you in advance for your contribution!