

Accommodation Guide to the Czech Republic

One of the most important things is accommodation. The following material serves as a guide through the housing market in Prague.

Important! Connection to Long-Term Visa

If you are planning on applying for long-term visa (over 90 days stay) to the Czech Republic, it is very important to start looking for a long-term place to stay as soon as possible. A long-term housing contract is a part of your visa application and without it, it is not possible to apply for a visa. We recommend starting the search for a long-term place to stay even before your arrival to Prague. Getting long-term accommodation right away shortens your visa process significantly. Of course we understand that it is a challenge to find a place to stay while in a different country, so we offer the option to arrange short-term accommodation for the duration of your TEFL course (we will provide more details about that later). *When looking for a flat, make sure the owner knows and agrees to sign the legal documentation for your visa – (confirmation of the accommodation form and the business address agreement).*



Looking for a place

When you are looking for a place, you can either use a real estate agent or search on your own.

If you decide to get help from a real estate agent, you need to be aware that it will cost you more money at the beginning as the real estate agents will usually charge 1-2 months rent for their services. As an example, if you agree to rent that is 10,000 CZK, you might need to put in a safety deposit for the owner, which is usually 1 months rent, as well and pay another 1-2 months rent (10-20,000 CZK) to the real estate agency. In this scenario, you could end up paying 30,000-40,000 CZK in the beginning, which is a significant amount and likely requires having some savings.

When you are looking for a place on your own, be careful as well because the owner might want you to pay more than you would if you were using a real estate agent. Also, be very careful to rent an apartment straight from an owner as there is no agency to check if you are being taken advantage of. For example, the owner might want you to register utility bills such as electricity, internet, and gas in your name, which can be a challenge for someone who doesn't speak Czech. Depending on the situation, you might also experience communication issues with the landlord since the older generation doesn't speak English very much or very well.

The good news is that there are multiple foreigner-friendly websites that are very useful when looking for accommodation and have helped our students in the past.

1. Expats: <http://www.expats.cz/praguerealestate/?Nav>
2. Foreigners: <http://www.foreigners.cz/real-estate/apartment/rent/prague>
3. PragueTV: <https://prague.tv/en/s27/c2-Real-Estate>
4. PragueTV flat-share: <https://prague.tv/en/s29/Classifieds/c149-Flat-share>

5. BezRealitky: <https://www.bezrealitky.cz/> (in Czech)

Don't underestimate Facebook because there are a lot of good deals there as well! If you see an flat you like, you need to be quick because the offers are usually gone within minutes. Here are some of the Facebook groups (but you can find a lot more):

1. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/524182954269921/?fref=ts>
2. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/housinginprague/?fref=ts>
3. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/flatsprague/?fref=ts>

Live TEFL Tip: The popularity of Airbnb is rapidly increasing in Prague and it could be a good and affordable solution if you are looking for something short-term. <https://www.airbnb.cz/>

Types of houses in Prague

Činžovní dům (činžák) – Four or five-story pre-war buildings, constructed in the 1920s and 1930s, often without elevators.



Panelák= Block of flats – nine to eleven story buildings that were constructed in the outskirts during the communist era. The goal was to build cheaply and effectively so the apartments in these buildings look similar all over the country. The condition of their interior may vary greatly, even within the same building. Since many of these apartment complexes have not been remodeled after their construction (which may date back to the 1950s), their condition really depends on how the previous tenants have taken care of the flat.



Rodinný dům- Detached or semi-detached single-family houses.

Ownership

The ownership of a flat you are renting is important as you need a signature of the owner for a confirmation of your rent for visa purposes. There are two main types of ownership.

Osobní – the flat is owned by an individual person, you need a signature of that person, if it is owned by more than one person, you need a signature of the majority of owners.

Družstevní – the flat is owned by a housing cooperative which is an entity/company (with a lot of members) that owns the real estate. Each shareholder has the right to occupy one housing unit within the real estate. In this case you mainly need a signature of the housing cooperative executives.

Apartment Categorization

When looking for a flat you will come across following categorization of flats.

Garsonka = one room with a kitchen in it

1+kk = one room + kitchenette

1+1 = one room + full kitchen

2+kk = two rooms + kitchenette

2+1 = two rooms + full kitchen

Prices

The prices of accommodation differ in Prague and it mostly depends on factors such as location (center vs. suburb), size, and whether it is a furnished or unfurnished flat.

The flats in the center are the most expensive ones and the average price for a 2+kk in the center is 15,000 CZK per month. The average price for a flat 2+kk in the suburbs is around 10,000 CZK. When you are renting just a room, count on paying 8,000-10,000 CZK per month. Our recommendation is not to agree with rent much higher than 10,000 CZK as if you go higher, you might have difficulties paying it.

Average rent suburbs vs. center

12,000 CZK for a studio in the center

15,000 CZK for a 2-room flat in the center

9,000 CZK for a studio in suburbs

12,000 CZK for a 2-room flat in suburbs

Utilities may or may not be included in the rental price. Make sure to check this prior to signing any agreement as utilities can add a significant amount to your monthly expenses. For apartments in the price range mentioned above, utilities usually cost between 1,500 CZK and 4,000 CZK. Be careful as the prices are usually listed as the price for rent + price for services and utilities. (e.g. 8,000 + 2,500, in this case you will be paying 10,500 CZK all together). The services and utilities usually include a fee for cleaning the common rooms of the building, fee for garbage pick up, electricity, and gas. The electricity and gas are usually in a form of a flexible deposit – if you use more gas and electricity than what you are paying for, you will have to pay the rest once the yearly bill of cost comes. If you are using less, your money will be returned.

Live TEFL Tip: Flat-share is a great way how to save money because you can afford more expensive flats and still pay less than 10,000 CZK.

Live TEFL Tip: Don't be afraid of renting a place outside the center of Prague. Prague is well known for its reliable public transport so commuting from the suburb to the city center won't take more than 30 min, in many cases even less. Although Prague has 22 districts officially, our recommendation is not to look further than Prague 15. Even though the further from the center, the cheaper, it might not be practical for you because your commute time could increase too much. We can always offer advice if you find a flat in the suburban areas but are concerned about the commute time.

Pets

Landlords are not always willing to allow smoking inside the apartment or allowing pets in their flats, so it is a bit more challenging to find a place where you can stay with your pet. It is also easier to find a place with a small animal than with a bigger one and the usual condition is that your pet does not disturb the neighbors. Don't be discouraged if it takes you a bit longer to find a place where pets are allowed, it is certainly possible!

Prague Districts Explained



Prague 1 – Staré Město, Nové Město, Josefov, Malá Strana

Prague 1 is the very center of the city. As it is one of the oldest parts of Prague, you will find many old buildings, monuments, sights and historical treasures. The city center is full of restaurants, cafés, bars, and shops, but it is also the most favorite tourist district, meaning that the prices are higher than in other parts of Prague. You will mostly find older five story buildings there with nicely renovated flats. Since it is the center of Prague, the prices for housing are the most expensive.

**Prague 2 – Vinohrady, Vyšehrad**

Prague 2 is a popular district with foreigners as it is very close to the center but the prices are a bit lower than in the center itself. The former vineyard district has one of the nicest parks in Prague - Riegrovy Sady, which is famous for its beer gardens and great views of the Prague Castle. Another interesting feature of Prague 2 is the Vyšehrad fortress, which is one of the initial settlements preceding the actual city of Prague. In general, Prague 2 can offer a lot of cheap bars, restaurant, and cafés, but also beautiful pre-war architecture. It is close to the center so the flats are still quite expensive but many have had luck finding affordable places as well.

Prague 3 – Žižkov

Žižkov is popular with foreigners as well. One of the most dominant sights of Žižkov is the TV tower which you can visit and go to the top of. In the past, Žižkov was a district occupied mainly by workers, so you will find simple 4-story buildings there. Recently, there has been a lot of investment going into rebuilding and renovating the district so Žižkov has risen in popularity.

Prague 4 – Nusle, Podolí, Braník

Parts of Prague 4 are desired mainly because of its location near the Vltava River and the affordable housing. At the moment, there is no direct metro connection but a lot of buses and trams go there so you can get to the city center very fast. It is considered one of the safest districts with a lot of cheap dining facilities, access to the river, and golf courses. There are many panel buildings from the post-war era with flats for affordable prices.



Prague 5 – Smíchov, Radlice, Košíře, Motol

Prague 5 is known for its vivid nightlife, especially Smíchov and Anděl, which is close to the



Vltava river. At Anděl, there is one of the biggest shopping centers in Prague, surrounded by different small shops, a park, non-stop KFC and two cinemas. It is a former industrial district but now many offices are in the area. Up the hill from Anděl, you will find more residential parts of Prague 5 with simple five story buildings from the pre-war era and if you continue further you will find suburbs with many block of flats. The more up the hill, the more

affordable the housing. The suburbs are still very well connected with trams and buses.

Prague 6 – Dejvice, Břevnov, Bubeneč

Prague 6 is a district that is closest to the Prague airport and some parts are very close to Prague Castle. There are many villas in the area and the highest number of embassies of any districts in the city. Divoká Šárka, one of the most beautiful parks in Prague, is situated in this area and is ideal for any type of sport. Housing is mostly block of flats on the outskirts and five story buildings closer to the center.

Prague 7 – Letná, Holešovice, Troja

Once a purely industrial part of the city, Holešovice is now growing in popularity due to investment and flats in the neighborhood are in high demand. Holešovice is one of the parts of Prague that ended up on the Independent List as one of the ‘coolest neighborhoods in Europe’ and is getting more expensive. It is mostly made of pre-war buildings that have been reconstructed in recent years and modern buildings are being built every day. It is very close to the Prague Zoo and it has two of Prague’s most beautiful parks: Letná and Stromovka. Letná has famous beer gardens and lovely Prague views and Stromovka is a park full of squirrels, paths, ponds, and ducks. Both of these parks are hosting summer music festivals regularly or run/sport competitions. Prague 7 has a lot to offer in terms of culture as well. The main exhibition center, Výstaviště, or modern art gallery, DOX, are located there.

**Prague 8 – Karlín, Libeň, Kobylisy**

Karlín, once a forgotten district, has been experiencing its rebirth in recent years. You will find nice architecture of pre-war buildings there and flats that are becoming quite expensive. A lot of cozy cafés, pubs, and restaurants are located there along with many office buildings and places for leisure, such as music halls or theaters. Karlín is very close to the river and therefore it is one of the most affected districts when floods come. The main bus station Florenc is also situated in Prague 8, with buses leaving to all parts of Europe. Libeň and Kobylisy are highly residential areas with few cafes and restaurants, but well-connected via the metro, trams, and busses.

Prague 9 – Vysočany, Prosek, Letňany, Černý Most

Prague 9 is a mostly residential district. It is quite far from the city center but it is well-connected with the center through the metro. You will find affordable housing in Prague 9, mostly block of flats and suburbs with lots of shops. Černý Most is known as the main shopping area as many stores with furniture (including IKEA), electronics, and hobby items chose Černý Most as their base. Prague 9 has a lot to offer in terms of culture as well. The famous O2 arena can be found there as well as theaters, exhibitions or cinema. There is a big swimming pool next to an ice arena, where you can play hockey or ice skate.

**Prague 10 – Strašnice, Vršovice, Hostivař**

Prague 10 is another of the residential districts of Prague full of parks, bordering with a forest. One of the nicest outdoor areas there is the Hostivař dam which is open for swimming in the summer and for ice skating in the winter. There is a metro station one part of Prague 10, but it is mostly connected with the buses and trams. Strašnice and Vršovice are closer to the center and you can find many four-story buildings for affordable prices. Further away from the center in Hostivař, there are mainly neighborhoods filled with block of flats.

**Found a flat, what now?*****Viewing***

When a landlord agrees to show you the flat you are interested in, we recommend taking a friend with you as it is always better to have someone else's opinion and set of eyes. Be careful for fake adverts, for example: places that are too luxurious according to pictures, in a very good location and very big but for a price that is too low...these suggests that it is a fake advert or not an honest practice so always be aware. No matter where you are in the world, it is always risky to rent a place without seeing it first.

Signing a contract

The standard length of a contract in the Czech Republic is 1 year but you can agree on a longer/shorter period with the owner. The landlords are usually less open to shorter contract lengths than the longer ones, but it depends on what you agree to with them.

The contracts must always be in writing and all parties need to have a copy of the contract. If the owner does not want to write out an agreement, either insist on it or walk away. A verbal contract has no legality and leaves you completely unprotected. Before signing the contract, have a native Czech speaker look at it to avoid agreeing to a contract which is not in your best interest or is unfair. Feel free to send it to us at Live TEFL Prague; we will be happy to read through it and look for potential issues. Don't be afraid to suggest changes and adjust the contract that was initially offered in order to create a contract that works for you best. Sometimes landlords try suggesting a contract with many conditions for the tenant but limits your rights, (which does not happen only in the case of foreigners) so always read through the contract! If there is anything that you don't understand in the contract, don't be afraid to ask about it.

Here are a few tips what to look at when signing a contract.

- Make sure that there is a way for you to terminate the contract. The usual practice is that you can terminate under the condition of three-month notice. Make sure that the same goes to the landlord and if they decide to terminate the contract, they have to give you at least three-month notice as well and have to provide a reason for termination.
- Make sure that the rent is clearly stated and the specifics of the payment are in the contract, especially stating when rent is due and how you need to pay it (bank account/cash etc.).
- Do not pay anything before you have it all in writing and when you do make a deposit or payment, always ask for a receipt.
- It is also quite usual for the landlords to require safety deposits. The safety deposit usually equals 1-2 months rent and is used in case of emergencies or to repair any damages made by the tenant or the tenant's guests. When you are moving out and the flat is in the same condition as when you moved in, the safety deposit will be returned to you. When you are moving in, we recommend taking pictures of things in the flat that are slightly broken, dirty, or worn out so it can't be used against you later.
- One last thing, if there is anything that runs on gas in your flat, make sure it is checked. The landlord should not have a problem of showing you the receipt or the confirmation that the gas heater/kitchen stove or any other equipment have been properly checked and are good to work. (the gas-run equipment need to be checked every year which is given by law to prevent any problems, explosions and so on).

Live TEFL Assistance

We understand that it might be challenging to find a place to stay while you are not physically present in the country. Please get in touch with us and we will help you get a short-term place to stay for the duration of your course. Most of the accommodation is offered by teachers and friends of our language school who rent their flats or rooms in their flats to give our students a head start in Prague.

Throughout the course, you will also have multiple sessions with us on how to find accommodation after the course. We help with the search, translations, and if needed, we can go to the viewing with you as well.

We hope this Accommodation Guide has been helpful to you! Please be in touch with us if you would like more information or have any questions about renting a flat in Prague. We are here to help you!

--

Your Live TEFL Prague Team