Look Before You Move
KNOW YOUR NEXT NEIGHBORHOOD BEFORE YOU MOVE



LOOK BEFORE YOU MOVE / PERSONAL RESEARCH

Your Personal Move Guide

Boston, MA

Prepared for Avery

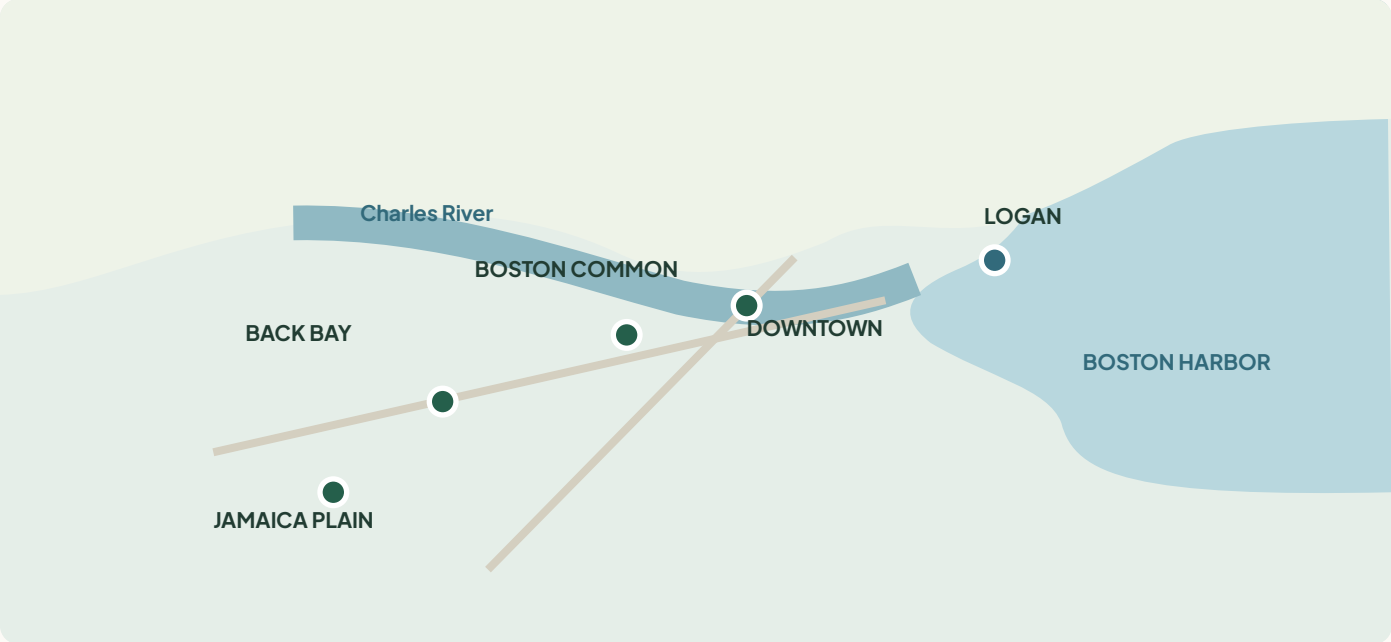
Moving from Chicago, IL · Renting · Two bedrooms · Working remotely

October 2026 · Fictional customer, researched places

START HERE

Boston, MA, in context

A quick sense of the city before the details. These are places and connections to investigate, not a verdict on where to live.



Original LBYM orientation sketch · approximate only, not for navigation

What matters for this move

Your two-bedroom budget is $3,200 before utilities and fees. You also asked where flooding matters and whether downtown works by transit. Those questions shape this Guide.

Keep the address in mind

Citywide research tells you where to look closer. Flood exposure, internet service and a transit trip all need an actual apartment address.

01 / HOUSING

What $3,200 finds - and what it may not

Two different views of rent help answer different questions. The older Census survey gives a broad comparison; current advertisements show what a small set of properties is asking now.

Older citywide rent context

Chicago · 2 bedrooms $1,467

Boston · 2 bedrooms $2,248

Your base-rent budget $3,200

Census survey, 2020–24. These figures include some utilities; your budget is for rent before utilities.

Current asking-rent check

$3,635

Middle advertised rent in 12 two-bedroom offerings

$3,500 – $3,900

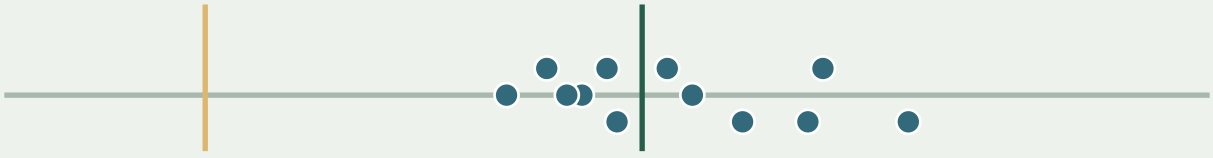
0 of 12 were at or below your $3,200 budget.

For your search

In this check, the middle advertised rent sat $435 above your budget. That does not mean every Boston two-bedroom costs this much: the 12 offerings came from 4 properties and are not a citywide sample.

Advertised rents checked October 18, 2026; prices and availability can change. Fees, concessions and utilities need a unit-by-unit check.

How the advertised rents cluster



$3,200 budget $3,635 middle Each dot = one advertised unit

HOUSING / CONTINUED

The rent is only the start

These advertisements are useful orientation, not a set of homes selected for you.

The 12 offerings we checked

Fenway / Boston University **$3,540** Babcock Tower · 08B	Fenway / Boston University **$3,575** Babcock Tower · 16H	Fenway / Boston University **$3,800** Babcock Tower · 01H
Fenway / Boston University **$3,815** Babcock Tower · 10C	Jamaica Plain **$3,560** MetroMark · 2501	Jamaica Plain **$3,610** MetroMark · 2221
Jamaica Plain **$3,660** MetroMark · 2314	Jamaica Plain **$3,685** MetroMark · 2628	Jamaica Plain **$3,735** MetroMark · 2201
North End **$3,600** 195 Endicott · 3	North End **$3,500** N. Margin · 10	North End **$3,900** N. Margin · 6

Ask for the full monthly number

The advertised rent may leave out required fees, utilities, parking or pet costs. Ask for a written breakdown for the exact unit and lease term before comparing it with your $3,200 base-rent budget.

A Boston renter detail

Since August 1, 2025, Massachusetts says the person who hires a rental broker pays that broker's fee. If a landlord hired the broker, the landlord cannot make Avery pay that fee as a condition of renting. A broker Avery chooses to hire for her own search is different. Ask who engaged the broker and get all move-in charges in writing.

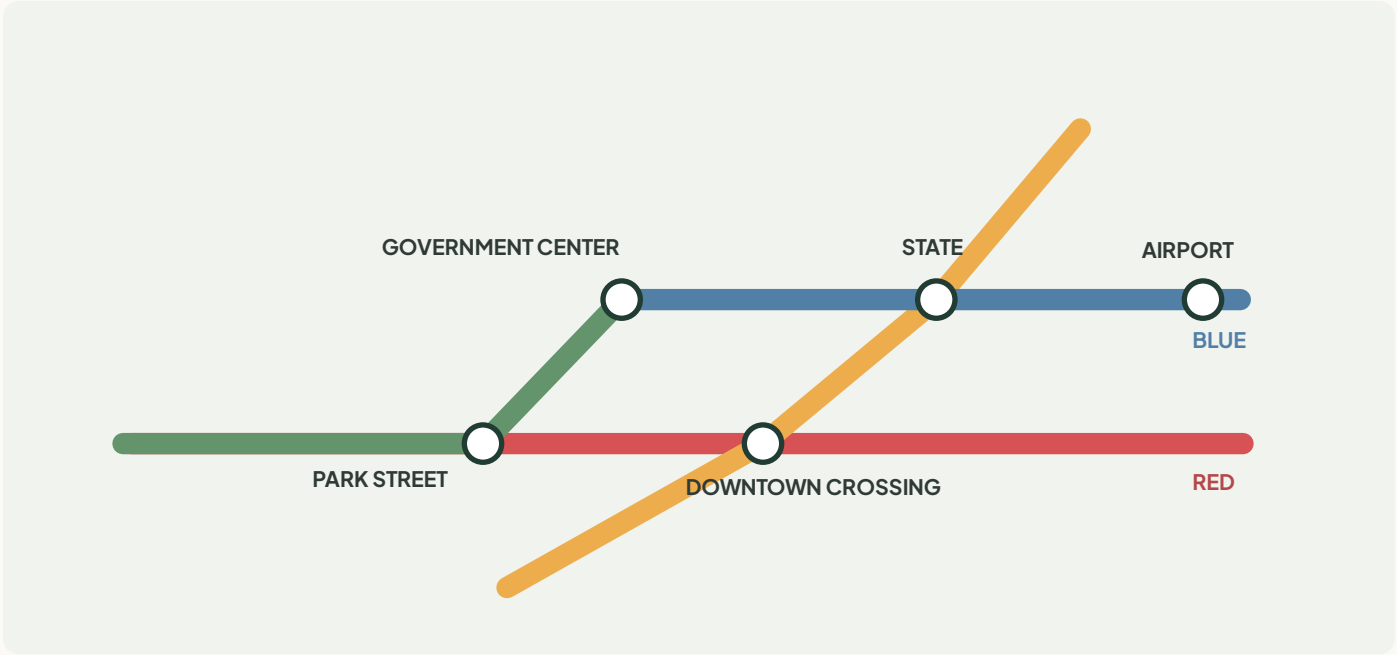
How this check was made

We recorded 12 distinct publicly advertised two-bedroom units at 4 properties on October 18. It favors larger managed buildings and a few areas; it cannot estimate Boston's market or guarantee an available home.

02 / GETTING AROUND

Downtown by transit

Yes – central Boston has several subway transfer points. The useful next question is the door-to-door trip from a particular apartment.



Original LBYM connection sketch · selected downtown lines and stations only

Downtown connections

Downtown Crossing links the Red and Orange lines. Park Street links Red and Green; State links Orange and Blue. Together these transfers give central Boston useful choices across the four subway lines. A specific apartment may still involve a long walk or a bus, so Avery should test her own trip.

From Logan

Logan is across the harbor from downtown Boston. The Blue Line goes to Airport station, with a shuttle onward to terminals. The Silver Line SL1 serves terminals from South Station. Avery has at least two transit paths to compare, and the better one depends on where she rents and when she flies.

For a remote worker

Boston's Bluebikes program serves a network across Boston and neighboring communities. Downtown and Back Bay have subway, walking and bike-share choices; the useful test is the actual route from a rental to Avery's usual errands. If Avery keeps a car, Boston's resident parking permit rules depend on the registered address and neighborhood.

03 / FLOODING

Take the water seriously - address by address

Your concern is well placed. Boston has harbor and river edges with mapped flood exposure, but a city name alone cannot tell you the risk at a rental.



Where to look first

FEMA maps show flood conditions around Boston Harbor and the Charles and Neponset rivers. Boston has also completed coastal flood plans for Charlestown, Dorchester, Downtown/North End, East Boston and South Boston, studying how coastal risk may change through 2070. These are areas to investigate, not a claim that every home in them floods. Check any serious apartment on FEMA's current address map and the City's future-flood viewer.

What a map cannot tell you

The exact floor, entrances, utilities and building history can change the practical risk. Check an actual address before relying on a citywide description.

Why your concern deserves a closer look

Historic flooding is not hypothetical here: FEMA records one to three feet of water around several downtown wharves during the 1978 nor'easter and flooding at some East Boston locations. That history makes an address-level check important, but it cannot say whether a particular unit will flood.

A three-step flood check

01 Enter the exact address in FEMA's current National Flood Hazard Layer and save the map result.

02 Ask the landlord about past water entry, basement equipment and any required flood coverage.

03 Compare the building's entrance and unit level with the mapped area; do not assume a higher-floor unit has no disruption risk.

04 / EVERYDAY LIFE

What a normal week might involve

A few concrete places and connections make the city easier to picture. These are reference points, not endorsements.



Boston Common

The Common sits close to downtown and Back Bay. For a remote worker, it is a useful central landmark, but your actual daily routine will depend on where you rent.

Everyday stops

Trader Joe's lists stores at 500 Boylston Street and 899 Boylston Street in Back Bay and 44 Thomson Place in Fort Point. CVS lists pharmacies at 191 Stuart Street and 333 Washington Street. These are examples, not a promise of a short walk from an unknown apartment.

Healthcare

Massachusetts General Hospital is at 55 Fruit Street near the Charles River. Boston Medical Center's Menino Pavilion is at 751 Albany Street in the South End area. Both are major care landmarks, but actual access and insurance-network fit depend on Avery's plan and address.

05 / COST AND SEASONS

A few differences from Chicago

These comparisons are a starting point for planning, not a prediction of what you will spend or experience at one address.

Typical snowfall



1991–2020 weather-station normals, not a forecast.

Average temperature

January · Boston 29.9°F / Chicago 25.2°F

July · Boston 74.1°F / Chicago 75.4°F

Boston is somewhat milder in these monthly averages, yet its airport station records more annual snow.

Taxes and renter costs

Massachusetts lists a 5% rate for most ordinary income in 2026 and a 6.25% state sales tax. Illinois lists a 4.95% individual income-tax rate. These headline rates are close for ordinary income, but they do not tell Avery her personal tax bill or total cost of living.

Working from home

Boston's 2025 digital-equity plan names Comcast cable, Verizon Fios fiber and Astound cable among residential providers. It reports Fios availability to about 63% of residential units and Astound cable to about 43%; Comcast reaches most units. Avery should check the exact building and unit before assuming fiber or a backup connection.

NEXT STEPS

Before you choose an apartment

You have a useful citywide picture. These checks turn it into an address-level decision.

01 For any rental you consider, check the current rent, fees, utilities, and lease terms against your budget.

02 Check the official hazard map for each actual address and ask about the building's history and insurance costs.

03 Confirm the available internet plans and speeds for the exact address before committing to a home.

04 Test the full trip from a possible home, including the walk, wait, and return service.

A few more for your move

If you keep a car, check resident-parking eligibility and the actual block rules. Ask for the total move-in amount in writing. Because you work remotely, confirm internet service for the exact unit before you sign.

Useful starting points

Check a flood zone with FEMA →

Plan a trip with the MBTA →

Review resident parking rules →

How we research places →