

Part of the SU Abroad Housing fee covers local transportation costs in Florence. This amount, which you receive as a one-time disbursement during orientation, is 136.00 Euro (34.00 Euro x 4 months), equivalent to the price of 4 regular monthly bus passes. Think carefully about your personal living situation (proximity to the school and to the center), academic obligations (multiple site visits, internship location, etc.) and social habits as you decide what best suits your needs. It's up to you to decide how to allocate your funds for transportation, but if you plan wisely and use a combination of the options explained below, this amount should cover the majority – if not all – of your transportation costs.

On Foot

The best way to see Florence is on foot! The narrow twisting medieval streets and Roman grid plan of the historical city center make it ideal for exploring the city on foot. Street names sometimes change from corner to corner, even though it might not be apparent (Borgo San Lorenzo becomes Via Ginori which becomes Via San Gallo) so it is always a good idea to carry a map, preferably one with a street index. Free city maps are available in the SUF Student Life Office or at the tourist information office (APT) on Via Cavour, but you might want to invest in a sturdier map (*Streetwise* maps are plastic coated and include a street index) from a local bookshop or newspaper stand.

Street names are located on marble or granite plaques on the sides of buildings at street corners. There are two street numbering systems – black for private residences, red for businesses. Comfortable walking shoes are a must on the uneven cobblestoned streets and narrow sidewalks that are characteristic of most Italian cities. A word of caution: be sure to watch out for traffic, as it is not uncommon to find bikers, motor scooters and even the occasional car going the wrong way down a one-way street. Try to cross streets at designated crosswalks (white striped areas) but don't assume that vehicles will automatically stop for you!

By Bus

Should you want to explore further afield into the surrounding suburban areas and other local townships (the Cascine park, Bagno a Ripoli, the Oltrarno area, etc.) you can do so on Florence's extensive bus system. The orange ATAF city buses, run either in a loop (like the #12 and #13 that lead up to Piazzale Michelangelo and back) or from one end of the line, *capolinea*, to the other (like the #7 which runs between the Santa Maria Novella train station and Fiesole). Buses can be boarded only at the designated stops, *fermate*. Look for the orange ATAF sign; the number of the route is indicated below. A black arrow with dots indicates future stops on the route and the direction the bus is traveling. You can download route timetables and other information (in English) from www.ataf.net; bus maps are available in the SUF Student Life Office.

Before boarding, you must purchase an ATAF ticket at any authorized vendor such as a *Tabacchi* shop/coffee bar, newspaper stand or the ATAF office at the central train station. Tickets must be validated upon boarding the bus and remain valid for 70

minutes – no matter how many transfers you make. If you are unable to get a ticket before boarding, you can purchase one from the bus driver for an additional charge. The chart below outlines the different types of tickets.

ATAF Bus Tickets

| Type of Ticket | Cost | Validation period | Recommended for... |
|---|--|--|--|
| Monthly Bus Pass <i>Abbonamento Mensile</i> | 34,00 Euros = unlimited rides | A single calendar month (January, September, etc.) | Very frequent bus usage (daily) |
| Electronic Ticket <i>Carta Agile</i> | 20 Euros = 20 rides 10 Euros = 10 rides | Each validation is good for 70 consecutive minutes | Fairly frequent bus usage (several times a week) |
| Multi-ride Ticket <i>Biglietto Multiplo</i> | 4,50 Euros = 4 rides | Each validation is good for 70 consecutive minutes | Infrequent bus usage (once a week or less) |
| Single Ticket <i>Biglietto Singolo</i> | 1,20 Euros = 1 ride | 70 consecutive minutes | Very infrequent bus usage (for when you're caught in the rain) |
| Onboard <i>A bordo</i> | 2 Euros = 1 ride | 70 consecutive minutes | When you are in a pinch! |

Be aware of the following:

- Riding the bus without a properly validated ticket is illegal and can incur a hefty fine. It also gives Italians a bad impression of foreigners – remember, we are all ambassadors of our home country as well as guests in Florence.
- Discounted student bus passes are valid for European citizens only. If you are caught with one, you will most likely be fined. When purchasing a monthly pass, make it clear that you do not want the student pass, but the *abbonamento mensile normale* (cost: 34,00 Euros).
- Tickets are randomly checked by plain-clothed ATAF employees who will require you to provide accurate identification (a photocopy of your passport or your student ID card) as well as a properly validated bus ticket. The fine must usually be paid on the spot to the controller or within 5 working days of the issuance of the ticket at the ATAF office at the central train station.
- While the ATAF bus system provides comprehensive coverage of the city by day, there are only a few bus routes that operate late at night and these run rather infrequently. Plan accordingly.

By Taxi

Taxis in Florence are usually quick and reliable, but can be quite expensive! You will need to call a taxi (see numbers below) or get one at a designated taxi stand; you cannot hail a cab on the street as you may be used to doing in New York or London. When calling, you will need to specify the address from which to be picked up (street name and number or name of the hotel, restaurant, etc). You will be given the name and number of the cab that has been assigned to your service (i.e. "Roma 23"), along with the expected waiting time (usually 3-5 minutes, so be ready to go when you call). Once you are in the taxi, give the driver the address to which you are traveling.

Fares are posted inside the cab, but additional charges are included for: phone request services; travel on Sundays, holidays and late night travel; the transport of baggage; trips outside of the urban center. During the day, you should expect to pay between 8 and 12 Euros within the city limits, while at night the same ride will cost between 9 and 16 Euros. There is a 10% discount for single females traveling alone between 10pm and 2am, but you must ask the driver for the discount as soon as you get in the car. Tipping is a courtesy which is appreciated but not required. An easy rule of thumb is to simply round up to the next euro amount.

Taxi Numbers

055-4390

055-4242

055-4798

Taxi Stands

Piazza Beccaria, Piazza delle Cure, Piazzale Donatello, Viale Mazzini, Piazza San Marco, Piazza della Repubblica, Piazza del Duomo, Piazza Ferrucci, Piazzale Porta Romana, Piazza Alberti, Stazione Santa Maria Novella, Peretola (A. Vespucci) airport

By Bike

If you are cautious and ride defensively, a bike is a great way to get around Florence. The city is relatively flat and there are bike paths circling the entire historic center. Follow basic safety rules: wear a helmet, ride on the right-hand side of the road, follow traffic and obey traffic signals and signs. Be sure to invest in a sturdy lock, as bike theft is rampant!

Used bikes can be hard to find but some stores will rent bikes or sell them and then buy them back for a portion of the purchase price at the end of the semester. Below is a list of bicycle vendors that students have recommended.

Florence by Bike (San Marco area)

Via San Zanobi, 120-122r
055-480 814

Ciclicitta' (Piazza Ravenna area)

Via G.P. Orsini, 4/a
055-680 0069

Cerbai (Piazza Indipendenza area)

Via della Ruote, 28r
055-483 298

Berti Fernando Eredi

(Campo di Marte area)
Via Volturmo, 1/r
055-587 196

Cooperativa Ulisse
(San Salvi area)
Via San Salvi, 12
055-650 5295
Friday mornings only.