



2025 Cabot House Lottery Handbook

The Cabot Housing Lottery is designed to be as fair as possible to all Cabotians. You are encouraged to spend time reviewing the rules and make a thoughtful decision about your housing situation. Prioritize friendships over floorplans! Please read all of the information carefully BEFORE you ask questions. If you still have questions, you're welcome to reach out to me at ca-ha@fas.harvard.edu.

The lottery system is organized by seniority. All students who are registered in the lottery will be randomly assigned lottery numbers, which are re-generated annually and assigned according to class standing (i.e. Rising Junior, Rising Senior). The lottery number will determine the priority for all students and govern all rooming decisions for the following year.

Best wishes in the lottery and remember that even the student with the last pick still gets a room in an amazing House!

LOTTERY TIMELINE	
Saturday, March 15	Lottery Information Posted and Registration Opens
Wednesday, March 26	Q & A, Cabot Dhall, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Monday, March 31	Q & A, Cabot Dhall, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 3	2:00 pm Deadline to submit Registration form AND Blocking Group Forms (if applicable)
Friday, April 4	Lottery numbers drawn and uploaded to Lottery Results spreadsheet
Monday, April 7 <i>Admin Offices, Briggs Hall</i>	Senior Lottery: individuals + mixed Senior/Junior Blocking Groups 10:00 am Proxy due 4:00-9:00 p.m. Room Selection
Wednesday, April 9 <i>Admin Offices, Briggs Hall</i>	Junior Lottery: individuals + (tbd) mixed Senior/Junior Blocking Groups 10:00 am Proxy due 4:00-8:00 p.m. Room Selection

Eligibility

- Current Cabot House Sophomores and Juniors who will be in residence, fall of 2025
- Students who have been accepted into Cabot via the Inter-House Transfer process
- Students who are returning from a leave of absence, study abroad or off-campus housing and who completed and received an approved Returning Student Application (RSA)

Class Standing

The number of terms completed by the end of May, 2025 determines your class standing in the lottery. “Rising Junior” (3, 4 or 5) or a “Rising Senior” (6 or 7). Your class standing, in turn, determines your priority level in the lottery. Students are housed according to their class standing.

Students returning from a leave of absence, study abroad or off-campus housing in the fall of 2024 who missed the DSO deadline to complete a Returning Student Application (RSA), but submitted the Application, can be added to the space-available waitlist, but they are not guaranteed on-campus housing and therefore, are not eligible to participate in the lottery.

Registration

You must submit your

[Registration Form](#), [Blocking Group Registration Form](#) and [Bedroom Assignment Form](#) (if applicable) to ca-ha@fas.harvard.edu by **2:00 pm, Thursday, April 3**

A late submission (*or Blocking Groups with even one late submission*) will cause you/your Blocking Group to be dropped to the end of the list for your class standing. All other students and Blocking Groups will draw first.

The Lottery

There will be two separate lotteries, each of which are run using a random number generator:

- 1) Senior - Singles and Blocking Groups, including mixed Senior & Junior Groups
- 2) Junior - Singles and Blocking Groups, including mixed Senior & Junior Groups

Each person, regardless of whether they are entering the lottery as an individual or part of a Blocking Group, is assigned a “value” based on the number of academic terms completed as of the end of May, 2025. The maximum “value” is 7 (a senior with only 1 term left to complete before graduation).

Once the lottery numbers are drawn and distributed, you may not:

- Exchange with or give your lottery number to someone else
- Change your Blocking Group size or switch people in/out of your Blocking Group

Your lottery number and time slot when you select your room will be uploaded into the [Lottery Results spreadsheet](#) on Friday, April 4. A Zoom link will be provided if you opt to select your room via Zoom instead of in person or you are not able to be at the lottery in person.

Room Selection

A room/suite may not be “kept” from one year to the next; however, if your current room is available at the time of your room selection, you are welcome to pick it again. All rooms and suites will be available, unless otherwise designated. Some rooms may not be available in the lottery due to accommodations and pre-placements by the House Administrator.

Every effort will be made to update the [List of Available Rooms](#) spreadsheet in a timely manner and before Room Pick Day to let you know if a room is no longer available. Given this possibility, it is a good idea to consider a number of room options before you select your room. You’re advised to check the List of Available Rooms frequently.

Lottery numbers will be called in ascending order (#1, #2, #3...). Only one student from a Blocking Group is required to attend the lottery (but all are welcome!). The lottery will move quickly, so be prepared ahead of time! You will only have 3 minutes (individuals/single rooms) or 5 minutes (Blocking Groups) to select your room. If, after your allotted time, you have not selected your room, the next student/Blocking Group will enter and you will go to the end of the lottery line for your class standing.

You can either select the same number of beds as there are students OR add one more person to a suite to keep your Blocking Group together, SO LONG AS an extra bed has not already been added to that suite by the House Administrator. For example, if a triple (a suite with 3 bedrooms) is designated as a 4-person suite this year, only 4 people may be in that suite, not 5.

The number of beds may not exceed the number of students. For example, a blocking group of two students can not select a 3-person suite. Please keep in mind that at the time of your Blocking Group’s selection, there may not be suites available and/or enough suites available to match your configuration, in which case, you may need to select singles to house everyone in your group.

You may not change your room/suite, move into what you may think is an open room or make any other changes to your housing assignment.

Students who do not appear at their designated time slot and who have not chosen a proxy, will be assigned a room by the House Administrator after all other room assignments in their class standing have been made. If you show up late, you will not be allowed to select a room until the last person/Blocking Groups of your class standing has chosen.

Once you have selected your room, no changes are allowed. Lottery selections are final.

Proxy

If you are currently studying abroad, on leave or unable to attend on lottery day, you may elect a proxy to select your room on your behalf. You are welcome to request that the House Administrator serve as your Proxy by emailing the [Proxy Form](#) to ca-ha@fas.harvard.edu by **10:00am on Monday, April 7 (seniors) or Wednesday, April 9 (juniors).**

You must provide the Proxy the following information: your day/time slot, the name of your Blocking Group (if applicable) and a list of ranked housing preferences to aid in room selection and select a room on your behalf. Proxy decisions are as final as if you had been at the Lottery yourself.

A Blocking Group may enter the lottery by Proxy under these same guidelines. Please note that ALL members of the rooming group must be copied on the email.

Free Agent

Any student may wish to enter the housing lottery as a single, however once all singles are gone, remaining "Free Agents" will be placed over the summer.

Blocking Groups

A blocking group consists of two or more students who wish to choose their rooms/suite at the same time in the lottery. Each member of the Blocking Group will have a "value" assigned to them, based on academic terms completed by the end of May, 2025. In respect to the lottery, singles would be treated as a Blocking Group of 1 person.

For example:

- Adam, John, Rob, Kevin and Eric are in a blocking Group.
- Adam = 7 (terms completed) and everyone else = 6 (terms completed).
- The sum of their scores is 31. Since 7 is the maximum value that anyone could have and there are 5 people in the group, we divide by 35.
- Therefore, their score is 31/35 (the algorithm will translate this into a decimal).

- If there are multiple groups with this same score, then a random number generator will be run to determine their order.
- Naturally, blocking groups with only seniors (6+ terms completed) will rise to the top.
- A blocking group with both seniors and juniors will naturally be sorted according to the ratio of seniors to juniors (the more seniors than juniors, the higher the score).

Blocking groups can be between two and eight people and can choose any combination of suites and/or singles where the total number of beds matches the number of members in your group OR you may add one more person to a given suite to keep your Blocking Group together SO LONG AS an extra bed has not already been added to that suite by the House Administrator. In doing so, please keep in mind that one of you may end up with a bed in the shared common room, depending on the bedroom size and whether it is large enough to accommodate two beds/sets of furniture.

It is strongly advised that you communicate with your blocking group members to prepare for contingencies in case your preferred housing choices are not available by the time your lottery number is called. The lottery moves quickly and it will likely be difficult to make these decisions on the spot. Have these discussions early and make sure all members are in agreement about your plans.

Please think carefully about which students you want to live with before forming a blocking group. Also make sure that you are fully committed to living in a variety of rooming arrangements with the students in your group in case your preferred housing choices are not available.

Also, please be up front with your future roommates about your leave plans because if you choose to enter the lottery and join a blocking group, but then take a leave of absence, participate in a study abroad program or decide to live off campus, the blocking group may be split apart and re-housed in other rooms OR they may be required to accept a "Free Agent".

You may choose to live as a gender inclusive rooming group, sharing a full bathroom/suite bathroom/sinkroom. By entering the lottery in an inclusive group, you are indicating your comfort with sharing a bathroom or suite with other members of your housing group. It is your choice to share this information with parents or guardians if they have concerns. Gender mix has no impact on the lottery.

After the Lottery

Rising Sophomores who have not yet lived in Cabot will be assigned housing over the summer according to a StarRez Housing Questionnaire and Cabot Housing Preference Survey. Second Round Inter-House Transfers and students who did not complete the Registration Form on-time will be assigned housing during the summer months.

The House Administrator reserves the right to change student room assignments at any time to accommodate occupancy limitations. This is rare and every attempt will be made to avoid doing this if at all possible.

If a blocking group selects more than its fair share of bedspace, either a Free Agent will be assigned to the suite during the summer months or the blocking group members will be assigned to different bedspaces. Misrepresentation on the part of any member in a blocking group during the lottery will result in the chosen housing unit being forfeited and a new assignment being made over the summer by the House Administrator.

If a member of your blocking group cancels their housing for any reason after the lottery, the House Administrator will place a Free Agent in the bed space to accommodate all students in need of housing.

If something changes about your rooming situation (e.g. suite-mate going abroad, injury making selected room inaccessible), all housing changes must be made through the House Administrator. You may not trade rooms or roommates, nor may you give your room away. In the unusual event that a change is necessary, all changes will be executed with respect to personal considerations and issues of priority. In the end, the House Administrator reserves the right to house students and make room placements as they see fit and in the best interest of the House.