



# The Oldest Apartment Buildings in the United States – That Still Rent Today!

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**They don't make 'em like they used to – nothing is truer if we look at apartment buildings that have been around since before 1950 and still welcome renters to this day. The top 20 oldest buildings renting today are more than 135 years old and are characteristic of the North and Northeast region.**

Modern interest in sustainability is bringing age-old buildings into the limelight not only for their undeniable charm, but also for their versatility and lasting potential. For instance, in the North, the harsher climate led to the use of stone and brick materials, which resulted in century-old structures that are still admired and inhabited today.

*"A building's endurance and durability can be attributed to the materials used back in the day," said Kurt Walker, a real estate investor and real estate agent for Cream City Home Buyers. "Raw materials used to cost a fraction of what they do today. Materials can make a building last more, but they can also cause a structure to wither."*

So, for Halloween and fans of the old, we decided to take a leap into the past: We're crossing the threshold of **America's oldest apartments buildings** and tapping into their everlasting charm. As years go by, architecture remains the thing that outlasts the past as much as it defines it — such as an 1850 Cincinnati structure known as the Pendleton that's home to the oldest apartments in the U.S. or the Newark YMCA in New Jersey, which was built in 1881.

# Look to the North & Northeast for Ye Olde Buildings



*Pendleton, Cincinnati, OH, built 1850*

Six of the 20 oldest apartment buildings are in prime locations such as upper-class Manhattan neighborhoods or near Yale University in the heart of New Haven, CT. As time went by, cities flourished around them and these structures became enduring staples of the community.

The oldest apartment building on our list is the quaint **Pendleton** in Cincinnati, OH. Dating back to before the Civil War, the red brick structure is alive with residents inhabiting its 78 rental units. And it's not just the 171-year-old Pendleton that still has some life left in it! Some of today's apartment communities witnessed the glitz and innovation of the Gilded Age, while others rode out two World Wars.

Check out the 20 oldest rental buildings in the U.S.:

## The Oldest Apartment Buildings in the United States

	Building Name	City	Address	Year Built	Building Age
1	Pendleton	Cincinnati, OH	415 East 13th Street	1850	171
2	Cambridge Oxford	New Haven, CT	32 High Street	1860	161
3	Anthony Mill	Coventry, RI	624 Washington Street	1868	153
4	SilverBrick Lofts	Springfield, MA	15 Taylor Street	1870	151
5	St. Martin's Manor	New Orleans, LA	1501 North Johnson Street	1872	149
6	234-238 East 33rd Street	Manhattan, NY	234 East 33rd Street	1880	141
7	307-309 Mott Street	Manhattan, NY	307 Mott Street	1880	141
8	9 Sewall Avenue	Boston, MA	9 Sewall Avenue	1880	141

9	Euclid Block Apartments	Cleveland, OH	2015 East 4th Street	1880	141
10	Francis John	Buffalo, NY	1201 Broadway Street	1880	141
11	Liberty View	Philadelphia, PA	2031 South Street	1880	141
12	Malvern	Cincinnati, OH	2026 Eleanor Place	1880	141
13	Massachusetts Avenue	Cambridge, MA	1622 Massachusetts Avenue	1880	141
14	The Massee	Macon, GA	347 College Street	1880	141
15	Northern Heights	Springfield, MA	769 Main Street	1880	141
16	Phoenix	Holyoke, MA	561 South Summer Street	1880	141
17	Wellington Community	Worcester, MA	714 Main Street	1880	141
18	Bourne Mill	Tiverton, RI	1 Mill Street	1881	140
19	Newark YMCA	Newark, NJ	600 Broad Street	1881	140
20	Stockbridge Court	Springfield, MA	45 Willow Street	1884	137

Source: RentCafe.com | Created with Datawrapper

Something must have been in the cement water back in 1880 because 12 of the oldest buildings we still rent today were completed in that year alone, back when household electrification wasn't even around. But, although electricity might not have been an amenity yet, with innovation and industrialization in full swing, building development witnessed huge progress. For example, the quality of the steel produced during this time became more dependable in construction. This makes some of these 141-year-old structures — such as the Newark, NJ YMCA — the first examples of successful steel-frame architecture.



Newark YMCA, Newark, NJ, built 1881



Modern living in a building dating back to the 1800s is not the premise of a reality show perfect for Halloween, but rather a reality for some renters. And, despite steady new construction, renting in older apartment buildings is pervasive. To that end, one thing real estate experts agree on when debating why someone would choose an older building over a newer one is charm. But, there are other, more practical reasons, too — good old insulation, in particular.

*"One of the biggest draws to buildings constructed before 1950 is charm," said Marina Vaamonde, founder and commercial real estate investor at PropertyCashin. "Many folks are attracted to the look and feel of these older buildings, and there is often a certain status that living in a well-maintained, pre-1950s apartment block brings. There are more practical benefits, however. One of the biggest is the soundproofing and insulation in a lot of older apartment blocks in cities like New York or Chicago. These buildings are often reported to be a lot quieter and warmer than modern ones."*

Barry Saywitz, president of The Saywitz Company, added: *"Renovated and/or upgraded older buildings tend to have a charm that you cannot find with a newer product. In many metropolitan areas, these are attractive and well-located. In many instances, the walls are solid and provide better insulation from weather and noise."*

Here are some of our favorite old buildings that stood the test of time and welcome renters to this day:

## Lofts at Anthony Mill, Coventry, RI, built 1868



Originally built more than 150 years ago, this former cotton mill in Rhode Island went on to become the largest building of its time and one of the finest mills in the state, with its iconic tower and belfry still in place today. Then, in 2012, the building was converted into apartments, upgraded, and remodeled to restore it to its former glory and beyond. Today, renting here means walks along the banks of the Pawtuxet River, refreshing bike trails, an indoor basketball court and even a theatre room -- why not?

But, it's not only Anthony Mill that stands out with its beautiful, rubble-stone architecture. The old buildings in the area are so revered that the entire Anthony Village Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## **Cambridge Oxford Apartments, New Haven, CT, built 1860**

Its proximity to the Yale University Campus is just the icing on this stained-glass-windowed cake. Built all the way back in 1860, Cambridge Oxford managed to keep its vintage allure in the face of necessary modernization and renovations. More than 150 years and 84 boutique apartments later, this property is one of New Haven's most desirable communities. Plus, New Haven has been a vivacious culture hub for a while, especially following a full-on revival of its downtown area a few years back. And the building's address on High Street alone is enough to make it top of the list for a renter looking for apartments with character.

## **St. Martin's Manor, New Orleans, LA, 1872**

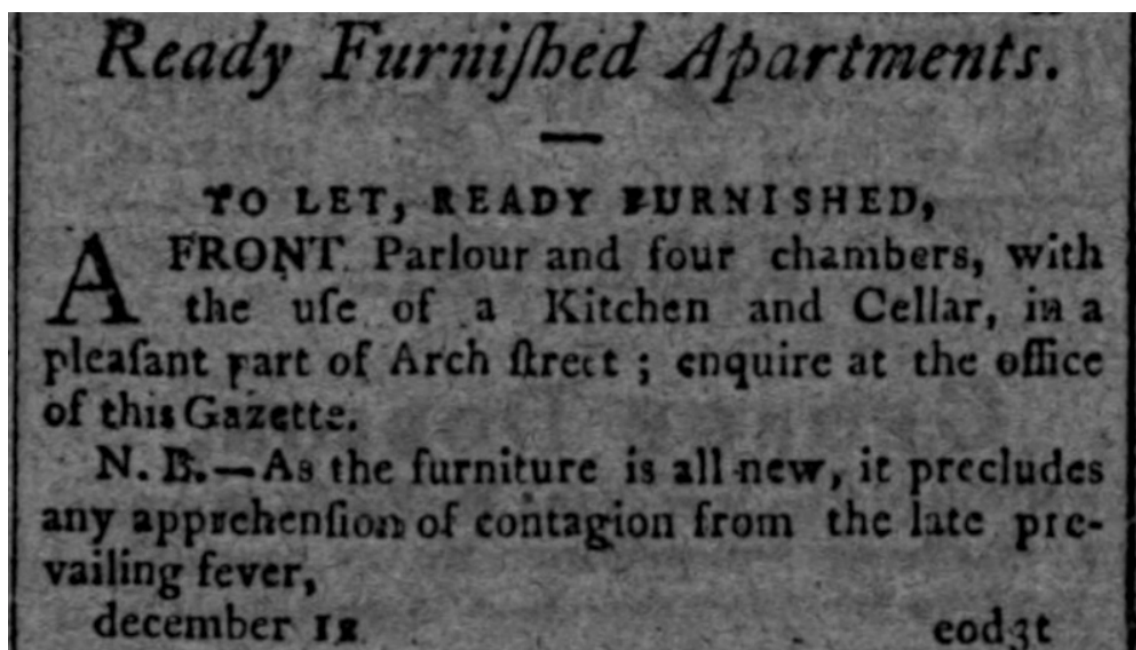




This New Orleans outlier proves that the South also has its share of beautiful, durable architecture. Now perfect for seniors or renters with physical disabilities looking for accessible and comfy living, St. Martin's has come a long way since its construction in 1872. Yet, as you step through its gates and reach the manicured greenery, peace and quiet come just as easy as it did generations ago. That might be because of the popular on-site chapel of The Promise Church or the safety that this gated community offers.

## Cities with Rental Buildings Still at it More Than a Century Later

Renting in historical hubs like Philadelphia or NYC has been around literally for ages – and we have the vintage rental ads to prove it. Manhattan alone, for instance, has 26% of the country's old building inventory. Therefore, it's no surprise that, when we look at the average age of some of the oldest buildings nationwide, history-packed places tend to rise to the top.



*Gazette of the United States & Philadelphia, rental ad offering yellow-fever-free furniture, 1798*

While Manhattan and Philly do make the top 20, it's **smaller Northern cities** like Boston, MA, Minneapolis, MN or Cincinnati, OH that boast the oldest buildings around. Specifically, old-timey buildings in former Massachusetts Bay colonies like Boston or Springfield are more than a century old on average, much like the 1800s gems of Minneapolis, MN and Cincinnati, OH. Ranging from a respectable, 105-year-old average to 92 years young, here are the cities with the oldest average age when it comes to present rental apartment buildings built prior to 1950:

# Oldest Renting Cities

	City	Average Age of Old Buildings	Oldest Building Age	Oldest Building Name
1	Boston, MA	105	141	9 Sewall Avenue
2	Minneapolis, MN	104	131	709 Douglas Avenue
3	Springfield, MA	101	151	SilverBrick Lofts
4	Cincinnati, OH	101	171	Pendleton
5	San Francisco, CA	100	116	400 Duboce
6	Manhattan, NY	100	141	234 - 238 East 33rd Street
7	Milwaukee, WI	97	123	The Colonial
8	Seattle, WA	96	120	Abbottsford
9	St. Louis, MO	96	117	Sherwood Court
10	Jersey City, NJ	96	131	Fairmount Avenue
11	Tacoma, WA	95	112	Bayview
12	Oakland, CA	95	110	Alician
13	Chicago, IL	94	134	51st & King Drive
14	St. Paul, MN	94	121	Heritage House
15	Cleveland, OH	93	141	Euclid Block Apartments
16	Rochester, NY	93	121	Chapel Hill
17	Indianapolis, IN	93	111	Carpenter
18	Philadelphia, PA	93	141	Liberty View
19	Pittsburgh, PA	93	118	Bellefield Dwellings
20	Newark, NJ	92	140	Newark YMCA



9 Sewall Avenue, Boston, MA, built 1880

**Boston** is the oldest city when it comes to the average age of its old buildings – 105 years old. Of course, you can't have such a rich history and be home to heritage protection organizations like The Boston Preservation Alliance without cherishing your olden buildings. While you can't rent the 1680s Paul Revere House, the oldest apartment building that does rent here is 141 years old and still stands tall on Sewall Avenue – an 18th-century road right by the historical Coolidge Corner.

Younger by a year, apartment buildings in **Minneapolis** have an average age of 104 years. The presence of Minneapolis on the list might come as a surprise, but its architectural fabric is admirably preserved. It also doesn't hurt that its heritage includes century-old buildings all across Main Street or that it was home to influential architects like Perry Crosier. You can still find Victorian-style buildings and colonial architecture peppered across Minneapolis — and Lowry Hill, the neighborhood that houses the oldest rental



*709 Douglas Avenue, Minneapolis, MN, built 1890*

Meanwhile, old buildings in **Cincinnati**, as well as **Springfield, MA**, are 101 years old, on average. While Cincinnati flaunts the 171-year-old Pendleton — the oldest apartment building on our list — Springfield's SilverBrick Lofts is some 20 years younger, with arched windows and high ceilings that are still as appealing as ever. Although significantly smaller than its Massachusetts sister, Springfield counts 90 entries on the National Register of Historic Places, including an array of historical districts like the Memorial Square District and the Smith Carriage Company District.