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The Commute: Everyone Starts Somewhere

As mentioned in my [previous blog post](#), I didn't come into this whole TWC/D.C. experience poised to tour and explore. I was even less prepared to ride a complicated metal worm under the dark depths of D.C.—at least that's how I saw it. I'm originally from Michigan, and I go to school in upstate New York at the University of Rochester. Neither places have an imbibed culture of a Metro system. If you want to get somewhere, you either procure a vehicle or tackle the boondoggle bus system of the area. Even still, I never entered the rite of passage of receiving a driver's license. It was an anxiety-inducing transition for me. I figured a way of bypassing the whole ordeal would be to become sustainability-savvy. I could ride a bike through Capital Bikeshare to my internship.

Done! Perfect! Not only would I avoid using the metal worm, I would achieve the toned thighs I had always wanted. This short victory was completely annihilated when I found out that my internship had a twenty to thirty minute commute to Arlington, Virginia. So I had to adjust...or conform. I can now say that I am a comfortable rider of the D.C. Metro system— and by comfortable, I mean I only ask stranger(s) if I'm going the right way maybe a couple times a commute. Once I got over the fear of being swallowed up by rushing crowds of people on their way to their jobs, it was all easier to digest and—well—ride. Here are some things that helped me to relax:



NoMa Gallaudet is a Stop on the Red Line
 NoMa Gallaudet is also the closest station to TWC's Residential and Academic Facility (RAF). Shady Grove and Glenmont are the outermost stops on the red line. If your commute contains those stops or anything in between, you will have a relatively straightforward commute. However, if your commute contains lines other than red, you will have to ride to a transfer station like the Metro Center (on the Orange Line) or Rosslyn (also on the Orange Line) or Fort Totten (on the Green Line).

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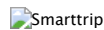
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Use Google Maps to Get an Idea of Your Commute

Because you'll never know (unless you check) that you may need to go to a transfer station. You can get a good estimate of how long your commute will be as well.



A SmarTrip Card May be Your Best Bet

Because it allows for you to add money as you need it. It's prepaid. If you ask the employees at the station, they can walk you through the whole process.



At Every Stop, Look Out the Window

If you are ever a bit bewildered about where you are (and you haven't already passed your stop). At every stop, you can look out of the window (on the left or the right), and you should be able to see a sign that will reveal where you have arrived. It could save you some panic.



The Metro, Just like Everything Else You're Experiencing, Is a Learning Process

Don't be too self-critical. TWC and the greater vibe of D.C. may stress the image of the suited professional, but everyone starts somewhere. It may be on the red line or a stroll down K Street. Don't be afraid to ask questions and don't be afraid to acknowledge that you feel a little bit lost, chances are someone beside you feels the exact same way.



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