Harvard University is the oldest college in the United States (1636). Eight United State Presidents attended Harvard University and the name is known world-wide. Here is a self-guided Harvard University tour that will help to explore some the wonderful sites on campus.

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If you are looking for a student tour of the campus, you can find it on Harvard’s website. They also offer self-guided audio tours.

**Click here for a larger interactive map.**

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**How to Get to Harvard University**

Reaching the start of this tour is easy. The best way to access the area is by mass transit. You can take the red line T to Harvard Square MBTA Station. Use this Google
map for directions to Harvard Square. If you are looking to stay nearby the University, check out TripAdvisor's top 10 area hotels.

**Stop A** - Start your tour in Harvard Square outside the Harvard Square MBTA Station. Check out Out-of-Town-News. This newsstand has been in business since 1955 and the building it now occupies is a national historic landmark. The building which houses the newsstand was once a shelter for the Boston Elevated Railroad and sits directly out front of the Harvard Sq. MBTA Stop. It looks like and old bus stop.

**Stop B** - Walk left down JFK Street to Mount Auburn St. Look up at 5 JFK and you will see NPR's Car Talk "law firm" Dewey, Cheatem and Howe.

**Stop C** - Take a left from JFK St. onto Mt. Auburn St. and walk down Mt. Auburn St. about 200 yards (60 meters) and you will see one of the most unique buildings on campus, the Lampoon Building, also known as Lampoon Castle. Standing on the island in the center of Mt. Auburn St. is the best spot to view this building. The building houses the comedy magazine the Harvard Lampoon. This building, built in 1909, is in the form of human face wearing a Prussian helmet. The Ibis on top is 4 feet high and is made of copper and weighs about 70lbs. The building cost $40,000 to build in 1909 making it the most expensive headquarters for a college newspaper in the country. As you walk around the building, you will notice two dates, 1909 and 1876. The 1909 date refers to the year the building was completed and 1876 refers to when the Harvard Lampoon was
founded. Conon O’Brien is just one of the many famous names that wrote for that publication.

**Stop D** - While standing on the island on Mt. Auburn look to your right and will see Lowell House (1930) which is one of the residential houses on campus (the freshman dorms are called halls and the upper-class dorms are called houses). This building won the 1938 Harleston Parfer Medal for its design. It cost $3.6 million to build in 1930 and was named for the Lowell family whose name has been associated with Harvard since John Lowell graduated in 1721. The Lowell family coat of arms is visible on the tower with the motto “recognize the opportunity” written below the coat of arms. The tower houses 18 bells that range in size from 22lbs to 27,000 (the Mother Earth Bell). After the Harvard/Yale football game the Harvard score is rung out on the Mother Earth Bell while the Yale score is tolled on the bell of Pestilence, Famine and Despair.

**Stop E** - Continue up Mt. Auburn to Plympton St. and you will see Adams House (1900), named for John Adams and John Quincy Adams (who both attended Harvard University). There is a suite at Adams House that is called the FDR Suite where the United State’s 32nd president once lived while attending Harvard. The room was restored to its 1904 appearance when FDR attended the university. It is the only memorial to FDR on Harvard’s campus.

**Stop F** - Continue up Plympton St. and you will see the Harvard Crimson Building the newspaper for Harvard University. If you look up the at the large glass door you may be able to spot a big chair inside. On the chair are brass markers attached to the
chair’s back are the names of former newspaper presidents. FDR served as president of the Crimson, JFK was a business editor and Caroline Kennedy are just a few of the many writers for that newspaper.

**Stop G** - Continue up Plympton St. to Massachusetts Ave. cross Massachusetts Ave. and enter **Old Harvard Yard** through **Dexter Gate**. Notice the inscription carved across the top of the gate as you enter that reads “Enter To Grow In Wisdom” and on the inside (as you exit) it reads “Depart To Serve Better This Country And Thy Kind.”

**Stop H** - Take a left into the Old Yard and you will see **Wigglesworth Hall** (all the freshman dorms are located in Old Harvard Yard). Some of the better known residents of Wigglesworth Hall are Leonard Bernstein, Sen. Edward “Ted” Kennedy and Bill Gates.

**Stop I** -
Walk up the path and you will come to the Henry **Elkins Winder Memorial Library** (1915). This massive structure is the largest academic library as-well-as the third largest library in the United States. The library is six floors up and is four floors below the ground. Built in memory of Henry Elkins Winder, a graduate of Harvard University and rare book collector who was killed on the RMS Titanic in 1912 at the age of 27-years-old. The library has over 2 million books and 50 miles of books shelves.

**Stop J** - Walk around the Winder Library and follow the path. On your right you will see the **Dragon Statue**. This statue was presented to Harvard University by Chinese Alumni in 1936 on the university’s 300 anniversary. This marble statue weighs 27 tons
and was carved between 1796-1820 in Beijing and was kept at the Old Summer Palace before being donated to the University.

Stop K -
Continue down the path and on the left you will see Weld Hall where JFK resided as a freshman at Harvard University.

Stop L - As you reach the front of Henry Elkins Winder Memorial Library look directly across the Old Yard and you will see Memorial Church. This church was built in 1932. Inside these walls engraved alongside a sculptor named “The Sacrifice” are 373 names of alumni who were killed during WWI. Since then other memorials have been established inside the church for Harvard Students and Alumni who were killed in WWII, The Korean War and Vietnam.

Stop M - Take a left and follow the path around University Hall and you will come to the famous John Harvard Statue. This is one of the most photographed statues in the United State and the tradition is to touch John Harvard left foot and you will acquire some of the knowledge of Harvard University.

Stop N - Take the path towards the exit at Massachusetts Ave. Look left you will see Massachusetts Hall opened in 1720. Massachusetts Hall is the second oldest dorm building in the United States (Wren Hall on the campus of William Mary is the oldest). Samuel Adams, John Adams and John Hancock are among some of its former residents. The first two floors and part of the third floor of Massachusetts Hall now houses the office of the President of Harvard University Drew Gilpin Faust (the first woman
president at Harvard), the vice president and the treasurer of Harvard University. The fourth floor house freshman dorms.

**Stop 0 -** Take the path through **Johnston Gate** onto Massachusetts Ave. Johnston Gate was the first gate erected on Harvard Yard built between 1889-1890. After exiting Johnston Gate turn left down Massachusetts Ave and walk about 300 feet (10 meters) and you are at starting point at Out-of-Town News.