



HOUSING AFTER COLLEGE

FIRST APARTMENT GUIDE

Rent is often the biggest part of a person's monthly expenses.

APARTMENT SEARCH TIPS

1. Create a realistic budget. Decide what you can afford in rent, including monthly utilities to establish a price range.
You shouldn't spend more than 30% of your income on rent.
An affordability calculator can help you start this step:
http://www.housingconnections.org/index.php?option=com_calculator
2. Shop and compare. This apartment will be your home, perhaps for years, so ensure peace of mind by comparing prices, options and locations before taking the plunge.
3. Do a thorough inspection and take notes. Keep a record of each apartment you visit. Note what features are extra or missing. Take measurements of the rooms and doorways to ensure furniture fits on moving day. Turn on light switches, look inside closets, check water pressure, visit the laundry room, walk the grounds and ask neighbors what it's like to live there.
4. Ask lots of questions. Is a deposit required? Who controls the heat? Are appliances included? Is smoking allowed? Are pets allowed? When is the apartment available? Will they paint before you move in? Are utilities included?
5. Understand your lease. Your lease should clarify the rent, terms and duration of your agreement. Read it carefully and negotiate terms before signing. If you give a deposit, get a receipt.
6. Consider a roommate. A big advantage of having a roommate(s) is the ability to split the cost of rent and utilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.hercampus.com/real-world/post-grad-help-how-find-affordable-apartment>

<http://www.myfirstapartment.com/>

<http://money.usnews.com/money/personal-finance/articles/2012/05/21/tips-for-renting-your-first-apartment>

Visit the Office of Multicultural Affairs & Community Resources in Harrelson Student Center, 2nd floor to find out more information about affordable housing options.

HOUSING SITES

www.apartments.com, www.apartmentfinder.com, www.apartmentguide.com, www.columbia.craigslist.org, www.realtor.com



Division of Student Affairs

Multicultural Affairs & Community Resources