

The Smart Renter's Checklist

Choosing to live off campus is a decision that will have an impact on your college experience. The appeal of living on your own is enhanced by the opportunities it presents for more privacy and more personal space as well as a greater sense of freedom. However, it is important to identify and understand the responsibilities of living off campus and to be prepared to handle a range of added tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, and budgeting. Some of things you may want to think about before moving off campus and when looking for apartments are listed below.

Office of Orientation and Off-Campus Programs ~ 754 Ostrom Avenue ~ 315-443-1012 ~ oocp@syr.edu
 Student Legal Services ~ 760 Ostrom Avenue ~ 315-443-4532 ~ oocp.syr.edu

Determine your Needs

- ___ How close to campus and other Conveniences do you want to be?
- ___ What type of housing are you looking for: apartment, house, studio or shared rental?
- ___ How much can you afford for rent and utilities?
- ___ Do you need parking? Off-street or on-street?
- ___ How long of a lease do you need?
- ___ How many roommates will you have?
- ___ Will you have pets?
- ___ Do you want a furnished or unfurnished apartment?

View Rentals

(Take Notes and Ask Questions)

- ___ Utilize the *Apartment Hunting Checklist* to document the condition of the apartment.
- ___ Check for safety concerns: working locks on doors and windows, ample exterior lighting, solid exterior doors, working smoke detectors, adequate emergency escape routes and well maintained building and grounds.
- ___ Note utilities that are included with rent.
- ___ Note repairs that are needed.
- ___ Note distance to nearest bus stop.
- ___ Make sure there is ample space for all occupants and for studying.
- ___ Ask who is responsible for yard work and snow removal.

Search for Available Rentals

- ___ Orange Housing, www.orangehousing.com.
- ___ *Daily Orange* and other local newspapers.
- ___ Ask friends and classmates.
- ___ Attend the Off-Campus Student Housing Fair in September.

Seek out First Hand Information about the Apartment and Landlord

- ___ Speak with current tenants and neighbors
- ___ Ask for references.
- ___ Utilize the *Landlord Information Sharing Program*, a resource available at the Office of Orientation and Off-Campus Programs.
- ___ Contact the Division of Code Enforcement for information about violations and updated inspections, call 448-8695.
- ___ Check crime information for the area, www.syracusepolice.org.

Call about Potential Rentals

- ___ Find two or more rentals that fit within your needs.
- ___ Set-up a time to view each rental with the landlord.

Review the Lease

- ___ Utilize Student Legal Services, an attorney will review your lease free of charge, 760 Ostrom Avenue, 443-45432.
- ___ Review the lease with your parents.
- ___ Become familiar with common lease terms.