



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
W A S H I N G T O N , D C

## Off-Campus Housing Guide

A comprehensive guide to setting students up  
for success off-campus and beyond.

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# Table of Contents

Welcome	1
Preparations for Moving Off Campus	2
The Search	9
Living Off Campus	20
AU Conflict Mediation Services	24
Tips to a 'Greener' Home Life	24
Maintaining Campus Involvement	26
Moving Out	28
Helpful Numbers	29
Appendix—Glossary	30
Forms	32
Inventory and Condition Report	33
Maintenance Log	36
Roommate Agreement	37
Example Letter — Tenant Notice to Vacate	39

# Welcome!

Enclosed is a comprehensive guide designed to help you through the process of finding off-campus housing and setting you up to be successful while living off campus. You will find beneficial information about searching, renting, and moving out. If you are starting the process of finding housing for the first time, congrats! You are about to embark on a new and important chapter of your life. If you are familiar with the renting process and are looking to learn more about tips and resources for student living off campus, welcome. We hope the information you find builds upon the knowledge you have already acquired.

Housing and Dining Programs' mission is to develop inclusive, student-centered residential communities that enhance the academic experience of each resident while providing services that support the greater university community.

Our mission has led us to believe that this guide is a necessary service to provide for our students. We are committed to delivering quality opportunities and services that anticipate the needs and exceed the expectations of the university community by ensuring that the residential and dining experience for AU students is our highest priority.

This guide is intended to be useful not only for searching but also during and after your rental period. If at any time you have off-campus housing questions e-mail: [offcampushousing@american.edu](mailto:offcampushousing@american.edu).

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Whether this is your first time moving into a property or you are a seasoned veteran, the process of finding housing can be challenging. Renting is complex because it involves various responsibilities, obligations, and rights.

Breaking up the process into four main phases will help manage the transition. We will focus on the preparations for moving off campus, the search, living off campus, and moving out.

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# Preparations for Moving Off Campus

Preparing for your search is essential to your success in finding housing. During this stage you should be considering where you want to live, how much you can spend, your roommate situation, and what housing amenities are essential to your happiness.

## Timeline

Giving ample amount of time to search for an apartment will alleviate some of the stress that comes with living off campus. We suggest that you begin visiting properties three months prior to signing a lease and signing a lease within 30 days of move-in date.

Below is an estimated timeline for an average off-campus housing search. Keep in mind that any of these steps may be extended or shortened depending on your need. The pages following the timeline present in-depth information on each of the steps.

<b>3-6 Months Prior to Move-in Date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Determine housing necessities</li><li>• Decide on possible locations (safety, proximity to campus, etc.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Budget</li><li>• Decide roommate situation</li></ul>
<b>1-3 Months Prior to Move-in Date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin visiting properties</li><li>• Know the different types of housing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know the questions to ask while searching</li><li>• Learn your area's tenant's rights</li></ul>
<b>1 Month Prior to Move-in Date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know the ins and outs of signing a lease</li><li>• Make the security deposit</li><li>• Decide on renter's insurance</li></ul>	
<b>Moving In</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take inventory of apartment conditions</li><li>• Do a brief cleaning of your own</li></ul>	
<b>During Your Rental Period</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be a good neighbor</li><li>• Register your car</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and follow the property rules</li><li>• Be careful not to damage the property</li></ul>
<b>Moving Out</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Request your security deposit back</li><li>• Clean your apartment thoroughly</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete change of address form at the post office</li></ul>

## Determining Necessities

The first step in your search should always be defining what you are looking for in off-campus housing. It is especially important to determine needs versus wants. Making a list of things that are deal breakers along with a list of things you are willing to compromise on will be helpful in your quest.

Things to consider during your search include:

### Academic Needs

- Access to study space either within the building or nearby
- Ability to go to class, library, advisors, study groups, etc. easily
- Access to computer and Internet whenever necessary

### Affordability Concerns

- Utilities included in the rent (heat, water, electricity, garbage pickup)
- Parking
- Additional fees for subleasing
- Cable and Internet
- Necessity and quantity of roommates

### Physical Needs

- Proximity to American University or public transit
- Enough space to live and study
- Fitness/recreational facilities onsite or nearby
- Laundry facilities
- Closeness to grocery store, banks, restaurants
- Parking
- Furnishings
- Smoking and pet policies

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“The distance consideration is a very personalized thing because while your roommate’s idea of a “doable” walk may be within 3 miles from campus, you may not be as willing to make the 3-mile trudge home after a long day of classes/activities. Make sure that the location in which you live is agreeable to everyone involved.”

## **Location**

The location of your future home affects every facet of your life: it shapes the price and safety of the neighborhood, the lifestyle you lead, and your everyday commute. There are always trade-offs, with cheaper rent usually comes higher crime rates and a longer commute.

Neighborhoods vary in personality and character, just as people do; it is important to live in a place that fits your lifestyle and personality. You should like being in your neighborhood because you will spend a lot of time there. Below, you will find neighborhoods throughout the city:

**AU Park**—AU Park, named after the university, was developed by the W. C. and A. N. Miller Company in the 1920s. The neighborhood, in addition to housing roughly 2,700 single-family homes of varying architectural styles, is also home to AU's Washington College of Law, the Georgetown Day School, and the chancery of the diplomatic mission of Japan. Friendship Park, also known as Turtle Park, offers neighborhood residents a place to meet and engage in athletic activities. AU Park is served by Wagshal's Deli and Market, Chicken Out, Le Pain Quotidien, and Super Fresh supermarket.

**Spring Valley**—Spring Valley is an area near AU Park mostly known for its large homes and tree-lined streets. Everyday conveniences are within reach; however, there is little retail in the area. It is a safe, quiet neighborhood making it easy to own a car; however, the Metro train station is far away. There are some apartment buildings and houses available to students, but most choose to live in Tenleytown.

**Tenleytown**—Tenleytown, named after a roadside tavern owned by John Tennally in the eighteenth century, boasts the highest elevation in the District. In fact, it was the site of Fort Reno, one of the forts to prevent invasions against the capital during the Civil War. It is adjacent to Spring Valley and hosts the Tenleytown/American University Metro stop, making it the ideal place for students. Tenleytown consists of a variety of houses and apartments for students within walking distance to campus. There are more than just the necessities nearby: A myriad of restaurants, grocery stores, and ease of access to other parts of the city are all within reach.

**Friendship Heights**—Friendship Heights, directly north of Tenleytown, is known for the quality of the stores and restaurants. Stores in the area include Tiffany & Co., Saks Fifth Avenue, and Neiman Marcus, while restaurants include Cheesecake Factory, Meiah, and Bambule. Not many live on the main strip, but around it are townhouses and single-family homes for families and students alike. The area is expensive but conveniently located with all the necessities close at hand.

**Georgetown**—Georgetown, founded in 1751 by George Beall and George Gordon, is situated at the farthest point upstream that ocean-going boats could navigate the Potomac River, and it grew as a trade port for goods being transferred to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal. Two-hundred-year-old buildings, cobblestone streets, and Georgetown University provide the neighborhood with an old-world charm. Specialty shops, boutiques, cafés, and some national chains make up most of Wisconsin Avenue Northwest and M Street Northwest. Georgetown housing consists of mostly beautiful row houses and some apartments in the form of English basements. There are Metro buses that can take students up Wisconsin where they can either walk or take the shuttle to campus.

**Van Ness**—Van Ness, technically called Forest Hills, is often mislabeled because of the Metro stop named after the Van Ness Campus of UDC. Van Ness lies between Connecticut Avenue and Rock Creek Park and roughly Nebraska Avenue and Tilden Street to the north and south, respectively. The neighborhood is home to numerous high-rise apartment buildings as well as the University of the District of Columbia, the Levine School of Music, the Edmund Burke School, and the Hillwood Museum. The neighborhood is served by Potbelly's, Epicurean and Co., Pier 1 Imports, and Giant Food, among others.

**Glover Park**—Glover Park is another neighborhood in Northwest, less than half a mile from Georgetown. Housing in the area is a mix of apartments and porch-front row houses built in the 1920s and 1930s when it began to develop. It is also the home of the U.S. Naval Observatory, Number One Observatory Circle (home of the vice president), and several embassies. The western part of the neighborhood is an extension of Rock Creek Park. There are also several restaurants in the area, including Heritage India, Bourbon, and Sushi Ko. There are no Metro rail stations that serve this neighborhood, but there are some Metro buses available for students to take to go to campus.

**Adams Morgan**—Adams Morgan's mix of bars, coffee shops, eclectic restaurants, and funky shops guarantees a good time in this vibrant Washington, D.C., neighborhood. Adams Morgan's signature sights can be found along 18th Street in the form of murals, which include the Toulouse-Latrec and Madams Organ. Most of Adams Morgan's housing consists of pre-war and converted row house apartments, condominiums, and co-ops. The Woodley Park/Adams Morgan Metro stop on the Red Line serves this neighborhood and is only minutes to the Tenleytown/American University Metro station.

**Capitol Hill**—Originally known as Jenkins Hill, Capitol Hill is the home of the U.S. Capitol Building, the Supreme Court, and the Library of Congress. Located within walking distance to several Metro stations (Union Station–Red Line, Capitol South–Blue and Orange Lines, Eastern Market–Blue and Orange Lines, and Stadium-Armory–Blue and Orange Lines,) residents quick, affordable access to the rest of the city. Eastern Market, one of the city’s only remaining public markets, can be found at Seventh Street and North Carolina Avenue Southeast. It has been in continuous operation since 1873, and its Market Lunch boasts the best crab cakes in DC. Most of the nineteenth-and twentieth-century townhouses located “on the Hill” are just steps from one of the many corner shops found here.

**Brookland**—Brookland, named after the Colonel Jehiel Brooks’ family estate, is known for all of the religious institutions that surround it. The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic University, Trinity College, and the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center surround this Northeast Washington, D.C., neighborhood. It is served by the Brookland-CUA Metrorail Station. Col. Brooks’ Tavern and Kelly’s Ellis Island Pub offer residents a place to grab a drink and a bite to eat, and 12th Street Northeast provides the neighborhood with a strip of pharmacies, hardware stores, and eateries. Architecturally, Brookland has every style found in D.C., including Victorian, bungalow, Queen Anne, and Georgian.

**For more information about these and other neighborhoods please visit the following links:**

***Washington City Paper:***

[www.washingtoncitypaper.com/neighborhoods/](http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/neighborhoods/)

**RentWiki:**

[www.rentwiki.com/wiki/Washington\\_DC/Cities](http://www.rentwiki.com/wiki/Washington_DC/Cities)

## Types of Housing

Knowing the different housing options will open your search to opportunities you might not have thought of before. Below are four options for renting property:

### Apartments

- Usually requires a 12-month lease with the company.
- Different requirements apply to many buildings (minimum/maximum income, credit rating, etc).
- A range for all, some, or none of the utilities (including electricity, water, heat/AC) may be part of the rent.
- Property management company is responsible for maintenance of public areas and some aspects of the unit.

### Rooms in Private Apartments/House

- Your roommates may either own or rent the property.
- You may not necessarily be asked to sign a lease, but get something in writing.

### Group Homes

- There is a single person who owns the space and acts as a landlord/owner.
- You work out rental details with that person.
- Common areas and bathrooms may be shared by everyone in the house.
- House and/or community rules may be in place.

### Subletting

- Subletting is taking a space in someone else's apartment while that person is not there.
- You may have a sublet agreement with the leasing office. (Encouraged)
- Responsibility depends on the agreement.

## Students with Disabilities

Listed below are resources for locating accessible housing in the Washington, D.C., area:

### Washington, D.C., Area Metro-Accessible Apartments

Use this search tool to find Metro-accessible apartments in Washington, D.C.:

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/vm/rentals/Metro\\_Accessible/DC\\_Metro\\_Accessible/index.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/vm/rentals/Metro_Accessible/DC_Metro_Accessible/index.html).

### National Accessible Apartment Clearinghouse (NAAC)

NAAC maintains a database of accessible apartments in 40 states: [www.accessibleapartments.org/](http://www.accessibleapartments.org/).

### Disability Guide

This user-friendly resource for people with disabilities includes information on area accessible transportation, lodging, personal assistant services, and more: [www.disabilityguide.org](http://www.disabilityguide.org).

## Transportation

Longer travel time can also increase your transportation cost (for both public transit and car). Below are some costs relating to transportation:

**ZipCar**—A car-sharing business that allows members to rent cars by the hour or by the day. Vehicles are available throughout the city. Membership plans start at \$50/year plus hourly/daily rental.

**Zimride**—A database of rides available and needed to various locations. Share rides to and from airports, bus and train stations, or just for short trips to the grocery store. Zimride will match you up with other students making similar treks whether across the country or just around town.

**AU Parking**—Parking at American University is \$467 per semester for full-time students or \$179 per semester for part-time students. Prices are subject to change. Please visit [www.american.edu/finance/ts/parkingpolicy.html](http://www.american.edu/finance/ts/parkingpolicy.html) for more information.

## Budgeting

Budgets consist of your income and your expenses. It is usually best to list these in separate monthly columns; if there are other incomes or expenses that occur on a different time frame, divide these into monthly amounts.

An example of a monthly budget sheet is in the appendix.

The table below compares 2009–2010 AU housing to common apartment complexes where AU students live.

### Monthly Cost of Living: American University On-Campus vs. Off-Campus Housing

UNIT TYPE	RENT	WATER	GAS	ELECTRICITY	COST
<b>On-Campus Housing</b>					
Single Occupancy (including Nebraska Hall)	\$1353	Included	Included	Included	\$1353
Double Occupancy	\$1078.75	Included	Included	Included	\$1078.75
<b>Berkshire</b>					
Studio	\$1209	Included	Included	Included	\$1209
One-Bedroom	\$1595	Included	Included	Included	\$1595
Two-Bedroom (with Roommate)	\$1197.50	Included	Included	Included	\$1197.50
<b>Connecticut Heights</b>					
Studio	\$1100	Included	Included	Included	\$1100
One-Bedroom	\$1400	Included	Included	Included	\$1400
Two-Bedroom (with Roommate)	\$1050	Included	Included	Included	\$1050

## Roommates

Selecting a responsible roommate is as important as choosing a place to live. There are significant matters on the line for people who decide to live together; these include legal, financial, and personal issues. It is important that each person has a clear understanding of expectations and remember those expectations once roommates are living with each other.

One way to clarify some concerns is to create a written agreement with your roommates. The idea is to assign responsibilities to minimize future disputes and confusion throughout the lease terms. This may include the rent amount for each person; process of paying utilities; responsibility for security deposit; payment for damages to the property; and rules regarding guests, quiet time, and cleaning. A sample roommate agreement can be found in the appendix.

**The District of Columbia prohibits more than six unrelated occupants per unit.**

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## The Search

American University's Off-Campus Housing Office has identified helpful links aimed to assist you with your housing search. Many students choose to live in apartments while others find houses and rooms. The links below will help you find the most cost-efficient housing option.

The third-party AU Off-Campus Housing Posting Site is a great place to find different housing options, roommates, and even furniture.

<http://www.american.edu/ocl/housing/Off-Campus-Housing-Postings.cfm>

Realtor.com is another great Internet resource. It has listings for rooms, apartments and houses.

[http://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-search/Washington\\_DC/type-rentals](http://www.realtor.com/realestateandhomes-search/Washington_DC/type-rentals)

Craigslist is great for finding furniture and housing. AU recommends that you use your best judgment when using sites such as craigslist.

<http://washingtondc.craigslist.org/>

Checking these three sites for properties will allow you to see the majority of properties that are available for rent in D.C. While there are other rental sites it is our belief that checking these three will provide you with a successful search.

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“The key to finding housing is to have several backups. If your first choice falls through, you won't be left homeless.”

*Listed below are common apartment complexes where AU students choose to live.  
The properties are a good place to begin but have not been screened by the university.*

<b>BUILDING NAME</b>	<b>ADDRESS</b>	<b>DISTANCE</b>	<b>STUDIO</b>	<b>1BR</b>	<b>2BR</b>	<b>CONTACT NUMBER</b>
<b>Berkshire</b>	4201 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	.3 mi	\$1159-1359	\$1595-1359	\$2395-2695	877-392-7479
<b>Avalon</b>	4100 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	.4 mi	\$1485	\$1880	\$2915	866-430-9729
<b>4000 Massachusetts Ave. Apartments</b>	4000 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	.6 mi	\$1275	\$1475	\$2000-2100	888-372-6150
<b>Vaughan Place</b>	3401 38th St., NW Washington, DC 20016	.9 mi	\$1400s	\$1650-2200	\$2500-3500	202-806-8880
<b>Archstone-Alban Towers</b>	3700 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	1 mi	-----	\$1500-2400	\$2700-2900	888-577-3362
<b>Cathedral Court</b>	3701 Massachusetts Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	1 mi	-----	\$1500-2000	\$1900-2400	202-684-8614
<b>Archstone-Tunlaw Gardens</b>	3903 Davis Pl., NW Washington, DC 20007	1.2 mi	-----	\$1500s	\$2500s	866-956-5236
<b>Archstone-Glover Park</b>	3850 Tunlaw Rd., NW Washington, DC 20007	1.2 mi	-----	\$1610-1660	\$2285-2305	888-995-0395
<b>The Chesapeake</b>	4601 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20016	1.3 mi	\$1275-1390	\$1500-1800	\$2110-2355	888-294-2949
<b>Park Crest at Glover Park</b>	2324 41st St., NW Washington, DC 20007	1.4 mi	\$1005	\$1305-1850	\$2040-2480	886-561-1770
<b>Archstone-The Ablemarle</b>	4501 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.5 mi	-----	\$1600-1900	\$2700-3100	888-577-3362
<b>The Saratoga</b>	4601 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.5 mi	\$1450	\$1615	\$2690	888-294-2949
<b>Archstone-The Consulate</b>	2950 Van Ness St., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.6 mi	-----	\$1600	\$2400	888-591-3243
<b>The Ellicott House</b>	4849 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.6 mi	\$1279-1375	\$1495-1595	-----	888-849-1201
<b>WRIT-3801 Connecticut Ave.</b>	3801 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.7 mi	\$1116-1287	\$1595-1871	-----	888-265-0706
<b>Cathedral Mansions</b>	3000 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.9 mi	\$1005-1305	\$1510	\$2280	866-286-1700
<b>WRIT-The Kenmore</b>	5415 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	1.9 mi	\$928-1100	\$1325-1410	\$2030-2139	888-778-5563
<b>Archstone-Connecticut Heights</b>	4850 Connecticut Ave., NW Washington, DC 20008	2 mi	\$1200	\$1400	\$1800	888-201-4219
<b>Highland House</b>	5530 Wisconsin Ave., NW Washington, DC 20815	2 mi	-----	\$1820-2020	\$2665-3565	301-654-8000
<b>Camdem Grand Parc</b>	910 15th St., NW Washington, DC 20005	4 mi	\$1600s	\$1924-2862	\$1924-2862	866-932-4197

## Visiting a Potential Home

- Make sure to meet with the property manager.
- Bring a journal to write the likes/dislikes of the property.
- Review the property thoroughly.
- Check important components of the property:
  - water pressure
  - plumbing
  - appliances
  - closet space
  - light fixtures
  - cupboards
  - doors
  - windows
- Take note of the neighborhood.  
Would you feel safe walking alone at night?



*Remember  
to never visit  
properties alone.*

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE



“When I moved back to D.C. after coming back from studying abroad, I tried to do all of my apartment hunting online. I finally secured a place—the first place that answered my ad. When I finally arrived, I gave the place a once over before officially signing the lease. The apartment was small, but not too bad. I’m a student so I didn’t expect much. By the first night, I had seen nine cockroaches roaming around my room and bathroom. It was the beginning of a three-month war between myself and the landlord to fix this problem. Eventually I ended up breaking my lease (having to pay an absurd penalty, because having dozens of cockroaches roaming around at night does NOT, in fact, mean an infestation) after finding bugs the size of a Post-it note underneath my radiator and having my heat break for two days straight when there was ice on the ground. My advice to anyone getting an apartment is to do all the research you can on multiple apartments and leave plenty of time to check out a few before you make any decision.”

### Asking Questions

Asking questions is just as important as visiting potential homes and neighborhoods. Below are some questions to ask and consider when looking at properties:

#### General

- When is rent due? Is there a grace period?
- What are the late fees? When do they take effect?
- How should I pay rent? Where do I have to go?
- What, if any, utilities are included?
- Are utilities charged to individual apartments or averaged between residents?
- Where can I submit a complaint about management or maintenance?

## **Maintenance**

- How do I file a request for maintenance services?
- How long does it usually take for services to be completed?
- How does management staff handle complaints about maintenance?
- What are your most common maintenance requests?
- When is the last time the unit I'm looking at was updated or remodeled?
- What modifications do you make to units between tenants?
- How do you handle pest control? What are your most common pests?
- Does maintenance ever enter apartments without giving notice?

## **Parking**

- What is the parking situation?
- Is it included in the rent?
- Do residents have assigned spots?
- Do I need a parking pass?
- Can I get covered parking? A garage?
- Are car break-ins a problem?

## **Community**

- Does management organize any community events? What types?
- What facilities are offered (pool, gym, business center)? What are the hours? Can my guests use these facilities? How can I submit a request to have the facilities cleaned or updated?
- Is there a community bulletin board or other way for residents to communicate?
- How can I report problems with another resident? How do you handle such issues?

- What is the most common complaint by residents about other residents?
- Do you get cell phone reception?
- When is trash pickup?
- Near public transportation?
- Near a grocery store?
- Near a gas station?
- Are there sidewalks to run on?
- Is there a health club? When is it open? Can you bring a guest?
- Where is the nearest Laundromat?
- Where is the nearest 24-hour drugstore?
- Is the area fully developed? Is a new building going up across the street that will ruin your view or make a lot of noise in the morning?
- Is it easy to get to a highway?
- Are there good take-out places nearby?
- Is there a history of theft, vandalism, or other crime?

### **Safety Issues**

- How safe is the apartment?
- Have you had any break-ins in the past year? How did you address them?
- What is the most common safety complaint of residents?
- Do the windows lock?
- Does the door have a deadbolt? Can I have one installed?
- How can I verify that you've changed the locks between residents?

## **Other Considerations**

- How much noise comes through the walls? Are they party walls?
- Do headlights come in the windows from passing traffic?
- Do street lights shine in the bedroom windows?
- Can you hear people in the hallway?
- Can you hear the elevator?
- Are there businesses close by that open early (before you want to wake up) and make a lot of noise?
- Is there an intersection nearby that causes traffic to back up with the result of people honking their horns in front of your windows?
- Can you hear traffic from nearby roads/highways?
- Do airplanes constantly fly over your roof?
- Are there bugs?
- Do the people with the balcony below/above/next to the apartment smoke? Does that smoke come into the apartment?
- Is there a bar across the street that has live music at night? Do the owners leave the door open so the whole neighborhood can hear the music?
- Are there dogs nearby that bark constantly?

## **Signing the Lease**

Leases are legally binding documents and breaking one may be both problematic and expensive: Reading and understanding your lease is the best way to protect your rights as a tenant. Oral leases are binding but difficult to prove in court. Any changes should appear in the lease before it is signed, and it should be initialed by all parties.

Confirm that the following points are included in your lease:

- names and addresses of landlords and tenants
- rent, security deposit, and other costs
- details related to security deposit (ex.: conditions for return, date of return, etc.)
- repair responsibilities
- details regarding subletting
- conditions for the landlord entering your property
- Inspection date, by whom, use of rental inventory, etc.
- conditions for terminating lease
- restrictions on smoking, noise, storage, pets, etc.

Another important part of signing your lease is understanding what it all means. The following are summaries of your rights as a tenant in Washington, D.C.

## **Tenants' Rights**

Disclaimer: This is not a legally binding document, simply a collection of information and resources which can orient you in the process of renting while in Washington, D.C. This document affords you no legal protection, and in the case of any renting dispute or legal matter consult the Tenant Advocate, an attorney, and relevant D.C. Code.

## *As a tenant in Washington, D.C., I should be aware of . . .*

### ***Entering Legal Agreements: the Lease***

A lease is an agreement establishing the responsibilities, rules, and obligations between landlord and tenant. I have the right to read over the lease before I sign it and negotiate with the landlord about lease provisions as there are illegal lease clauses that can be stricken from a lease. The responsibilities, rules, and obligations established in the lease cannot be changed without my and my landlord's consent. Furthermore, after I sign a lease, the landlord must give me an exact and signed copy of the lease within 7 days. (*14 D.C.M.R. §§ 101, 106 & 300-399*)

### ***Security Deposits***

Typically an additional month's rent paid prior to inhabiting the unit, a security deposit must be put into an escrow account that accrues interest. Upon completion of the lease, I am entitled to receive the security deposit back in full with interest within 45 days of the completion of the lease unless there was damage to the unit beyond reasonable wear and tear. If there was damage to the unit, I am entitled to receipts for anything purchased for the unit and any remaining money from the security deposit. To protect my security deposit from being used inappropriately, I have the right to request a moving-out inspection with the landlord and be present for said inspection. If during the inspection damage beyond normal usage is found, the aforementioned process will be followed. (*14 D.C.M.R. §§ 300-311*)

### ***Paying Rent***

The rent amount and the schedule in which it should be paid must be agreed upon by both parties and included in the lease. All rent increases must follow D.C. code and regulations regarding rent. A landlord must issue proper written notice of a rent increase at least 30 days before the next rent payment date. I also have the right to request a receipt of all rent payments from the landlord. (*For prior agreed upon rent see D.C. Official Code § 42.3502.22; for rent control and ceilings see D.C. Official Code § 42-3502.05-42.3502.16; for rent receipt see 14 D.C.M.R. §§ 306.*)

### ***Living Conditions of the Unit: Live in a Clean, Safe, and Well-kept Property***

One of the mutual responsibilities of signing a lease is that the landlord must provide the tenant with a unit that is clean, safe, and in good condition. The unit must follow all relevant D.C. Codes such as fire codes and those related to potentially harmful substances such as asbestos. Also included in the condition of the unit are any common areas on the property, pest and rodent control, as well as heat, electricity, and ventilation. To ensure that the landlord fulfills this responsibil-

ity, I have the right to inspect the property prior to moving in and to request that the owner repair any damaged part of the unit. Also, as a tenant, I have the responsibility of maintaining its cleanliness, safety, and condition. If something compromises any of these aspects, I should consult my landlord or the D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate if it concerns a breach in the lease or D.C. regulations. (14 D.C.M.R. §§ 301, 400-999)

### ***The Enjoyment of the Property and Right to Live with Privacy***

As a tenant, I have the right to privacy in the unit. The landlord cannot interfere with my quiet enjoyment of the property and cannot try to force me to vacate the premise. This includes construction projects and unwanted efforts on behalf of the landlord to make the unit uncomfortable to inhabit. (D.C. Official Code § 42-3402.10)

### ***Inhabiting the Property until the Lease Expires***

The landlord can evict me only for failure to pay rent, not fulfilling obligations listed in the lease, or committing an illegal act in my unit. The landlord must give me a Notice to Vacate and an opportunity to address the lease violation. Even if I have received a Notice to Vacate I cannot be evicted until the landlord goes to Landlord-Tenant court, files a lawsuit and obtains a judgment against me. I have the right to challenge the eviction in D.C. court. I have the right to contact the D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate with any eviction problem. If the property owner wants to sell the property he or she must give me the chance to purchase my unit. The property owner must assist me in relocation in the occurrence of major renovations or building construction. I can stay in my unit once the lease has expired, following the provisions of my expired lease on a month-by-month basis. (For eviction issues D.C. Official Code § 42-3505.01, for selling property D.C. Official Code § 42-3404.02, for conversion D.C. Official Code § 42-3402.02, for relocation D.C. Official Code § 42-3507)

### ***Discrimination***

Discrimination can be based on characteristics including race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, familial status, age, marital status, personal appearance, place of residence/business, sexual orientation, family responsibility, political affiliation, student matriculation, source of income, and gender identification or expression. Even if I am only a prospective renter, I still may not be discriminated against and refused the opportunity to rent a property based on the aforementioned characteristics. Discrimination can be in the form of, but is not limited to, refusal to rent, renting on unfavorable terms, creating a hostile living environment or otherwise preventing my enjoyment, or unjustly altering obligations and responsibilities as a tenant. (D.C. Official Code § 2-1401.01 et seq.)

## ***Retaliation***

It is against the law for the landlord to retaliate against me for voicing any complaints regarding alleged violations. Retaliation can include, but is not limited to, rent increases, repossession of the unit prior to termination of the lease, a decrease in services of the landlord, or an increase in obligations as a tenant. (*D.C. Official Code §42-3505.02*)

## ***What to Do if I am Being Abused***

I should bring complaints or a civil suit against my landlord to the appropriate legal body if he or she does not fulfill his or her responsibilities or obligations agreed upon in the lease or violates one of the above mentioned rights or D.C. housing regulations. If I suspect my rights are being violated, a good initial step is calling the D.C. Office of the Tenant Advocate.

(Renter's Rights: Quinn Pregliasco, Ellie Ezzell, Aaron Luce, Jeniffer Kim, Jonathan Freimark, Jonathan Baker, and Brian Goodrich.)

## **Occupying the Property**

While off-campus living offers many rewards, it also carries certain responsibilities. Respect for your neighbors is an important part of living both on and off campus, but living in a neighborhood is quite different from living in a residence hall. While you may view your residency as temporary, you should recognize the fact that most of your neighbors have made a long-term commitment to living in the community.

As a student living in the community, you are a representative of American University, and your conduct will reflect directly on the university. Remember that Washington, D.C., and the surrounding cities have strict regulations regarding noise levels and the consumption of alcohol. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these regulations and to comply with them. Your neighbors may contact local law enforcement agencies if they feel you are violating the regulations.

Students' behavior can greatly influence the quality of life and overall climate of the neighborhood. A respectful and courteous attitude is usually reciprocated and makes the neighborhood a more pleasant place to live. Read on for tips and resources that will help you make your off-campus living experience a success.\*

\*Adapted from the *Student Handbook and Planner*

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# Living Off Campus

## Personal Safety Tips

Living in the Washington metropolitan area, as in any large urban area, requires taking adequate safety precautions. Be observant at all times—anticipation is a major factor in preventing crimes.

- If someone knocks on your door, identify the person before you open the door.
- When traveling at night try to arrange to go with one or more friends. If walking, stay in well-lighted, heavily traveled areas. Walk with confidence to convey with body language that you are aware and in control.
- Always have your keys in hand when you approach your house or apartment.
- If you have to use a public laundry facility, try to go with a friend during daytime hours if at all possible.
- Make sure that your door has a deadbolt lock and keep your door locked at all times. Also check all windows to see whether they are secure and have adequate locks. Provide coverings for your windows and pull the shades or close the drapes at night.
- Never leave an extra key outside for any reason; leave one with a friend nearby instead.

How safe is your neighborhood? Find out by visiting the following Web sites:

- [www.spotcrime.com/dc/washington](http://www.spotcrime.com/dc/washington)
- [www.spotcrime.com/md](http://www.spotcrime.com/md)
- [www.spotcrime.com/va](http://www.spotcrime.com/va)

## Fire Prevention and Safety

Every year, college students nationwide die as a result of fires that could have been prevented. Implementing fire prevention and safety practices could save your life! Please take the time to read these important bullet points.

- Do not put flammable items near portable electric heaters, wood stoves, kerosene heaters, or cooking equipment.
- When using a portable electric heater, operate it on the floor without an extension cord.
- Do not use wood burning stoves and fireplaces unless they are properly installed, meet building codes, and professionally cleaned.
- Never place or store pot holders, plastic utensils, towels, and other non-cooking equipment on or near the range because these items can be ignited.
- Store flammable liquids, such as gasoline, paint thinners, etc. outside of the house.
- Find multiple exits and have a meeting place so that a head count may be done and it can be determined whether anyone is still inside.
- Place smoke detectors 6–12 inches below the ceiling on the wall and regularly check the battery on smoke detectors.

### STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“Get your neighbors a gift and exchange phone numbers just in case either one of you needs anything from the other.”

# Good Neighbor, Good Citizen

## 10 Tips to be a Better Neighbor

As a student who lives off campus, you are automatically a member of a neighborhood and community. Remaining in good standing with your community and consequently with American University is important for all students. Your neighbors in your new community may not be as accepting of college student behavior as peers in the residence halls. Consider the following top 10 tips to help you be a successful off-campus student:

**10. Get to know your neighbors.** Forming relationships with your neighbors will encourage them to engage with you about an issue before consulting landlords and/or other authorities.

**9. If you see a crime in process, report it.** Sounds like a no-brainer, but it is always a good idea to look out for your neighbors—they will be more likely to look out for you. If something seems suspicious, call it in; it can't hurt to have it reported.

**8. Adjust your behavior around neighborhood children.** More than anyone else, children will be watching and repeating what you say and do; make sure your conversations and language in front of children are appropriate.

**7. Keep visible property clean.** While your landlord probably cares most about the inside of your property, your neighbors pay close attention to the exterior. It is important to know and understand your responsibilities around snow removal and keeping your sidewalks clear.

**6. Keep trash contained.** Having adequate trash and recycling containers is essential. Uncovered trash cans or bags can lead to unwanted pests, which can lead to unhappy neighbors and fines. Know your trash pickup days so that you can put your trash out on the evening before and bring your trash cans back onto your property the next day. Find out more by calling the Department of Public Works (DPW) at 202-727-1000.

**5. Keep noise within your unit.** Keep your music to a reasonable level, especially at night. If you are sharing walls with others also remember to vacuum, hang pictures, exercise, etc. during the day.

**4. Your pet, your responsibility.** Keep your pets on your property or on a leash. Keep in mind that not all people enjoy your pets. Respect them by keeping your pets in your space.

**3. Have social gatherings, not parties.** There is a clear difference between hanging out with a few friends and hanging out with 50 unknown people. If you are planning to have a party, tell your neighbors and give them your number. This way they can come to you with complaints and not the police. And remember: Clean up before sun up! Take a look around outside to make sure there are no party favors on your lawn, or the lawn of one of your neighbors.

**2. Know community and local rules.** Different communities have different expectations for their residents. Get to know these rules by asking your landlord. This is especially important for getting information on parking, trash pickup, and quiet hours.

**1. Be a representative of AU at all times.** Neighbors will assume that your behavior represents the behavior of all AU students. As an AU student, you can be held responsible for your behavior on or off campus.

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## Good Neighbor Guidelines

*Cited from the American University 2010–2011 Student Handbook*

([www.american.edu/handbook](http://www.american.edu/handbook))

As members of a community, we all have responsibilities to the city where we live and to our neighbors. It is important to foster good relations with one another in order to maintain and enhance the quality of life, safety, and desirability of the neighborhood we share. To help maintain good relations with your neighbors, keep the following in mind.

You are part of a community and your actions affect your neighbors. While you may view your residency as temporary, be considerate of the fact that most of your neighbors have chosen their homes as their primary residence. As a courtesy, you should notify your neighbors if you plan to have a gathering or a party. Remember that the District and the surrounding cities have strict regulations regarding noise levels and the consumption of alcohol. It is your responsibility to be familiar with them and comply with them.

Your neighborhood may have requirements regarding the upkeep of your front and back yards. You should help foster a sense of community in your neighborhood by involving yourself in neighborhood events such as meetings, crime watch prevention groups, and opportunities for community service.

### Roommate Communication and Negotiation

Most students believe that finding the perfect apartment is the key to off-campus housing success. Finding a compatible roommate or roommates can make or break a living experience—even in the perfect apartment.

Clear and open communication is essential. Communicate and negotiate house rules and have a mutual understanding of those rules. Topics to consider: bills, housekeeping, overnight company (friends, significant others, parents), long-term visitors, drinking and smoking, sharing (food, clothing, computers, etc.).

If there is a misunderstanding, talk about it in person. Do not message/text someone sitting in the next bedroom. Small misunderstandings without proper dialogue can lead to major confrontations. Always be understanding and respectful of one another.

Keep common areas clean. This should be part of the roommate negotiation process. Working together to keep common areas clean will help reduce tension in the house or apartment. Options can include cleaning schedules, a scheduled all-roommate cleaning day, hiring a housecleaner for a monthly visit, etc.

Best friends do not always make ideal roommates. You might like hanging out together, but do you want to hang out 24/7? Those little tics and quirks that make him or her a fun friend might not seem so fun when you're sharing a room or apartment. Be sure to talk through potential challenges before making the move together and keep the lines of communication wide open.

## STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

“One of the most important aspects when living with someone else, regardless of whether it’s on campus or off campus, is communication. No matter how good of friends you are when you move in with someone, there are certain things about a person that you won’t be able to know until you live together. It’s important to be able to express your expectations (such as rent being paid in a timely manner, how often the common space is cleaned, etc.) in order to maintain an amicable living situation.”

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# American University Conflict Mediation Services

*Contributed by the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution*

## **What Does Conflict Resolution Services Do?**

We provide free, confidential, and voluntary conflict resolution services to AU student, faculty, and staff. This includes direct services, such as conflict coaching and mediation. Part of our mission is also outreach and education about conflict, alternative dispute resolution, and mediation. Each semester we provide free mediation training for those interested. This training qualifies AU community members to serve as volunteer mediators.

## **What is Mediation?**

Mediation is a voluntary, confidential process in which an impartial third party assists people in finding a mutually acceptable solution to their dispute. Mediation can resolve conflicts without legal and/or conduct intervention. Mediation acknowledges that some conflict is natural. Choosing to respect others while working towards a peaceful resolution is the key to a successful outcome.

## **What is Conflict Coaching?**

Conflict coaching assists individuals in finding ways to manage or address individual conflicts in their lives. Generally this occurs in a one-on-one meeting. This service is available if another party declines mediation or if an individual wants to address conflict without a third party but needs assistance in planning to do so.

## **Benefits of Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution's mediation and conflict coaching are usually faster and less costly than other methods of dispute resolution.

- Conflict resolution does not create “winners” and “losers” but seeks mutually satisfying solutions for all parties.
- Conflict resolution addresses not only a current conflict but helps those involved learn how to address conflict as it occurs naturally in life.
- While conflict resolution can involve third parties, the final decision is made by the parties directly involved, not by someone outside the conflict.
- Conflict resolution can address each conflict and party individually rather than using a generalized solution.

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### **Who are the Volunteers?**

Conflict Resolution Services is run largely by volunteers who have been trained for a minimum of 20 hours in mediation. Many seek additional training. Conflict Resolution Services also offers internship opportunities for interested students.

### **How Can I Use Conflict Resolution Services?**

The first step in using any of our services is to contact the office at 202-885-1313 or [conflictresolution@american.edu](mailto:conflictresolution@american.edu). A staff member or volunteer will respond to your request and arrange an initial appointment. Our general office hours are 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Monday–Friday, but we offer flexible scheduling as needed.

### **How Can I Receive Training in Conflict Resolution?**

Each semester, we offer a free 20-hour mediation training for interested students, faculty, and staff. Visit our Web site to apply and find dates for the next training. We also offer ongoing educational opportunities and simulations. Contact us or visit our Facebook group “AU Conflict Resolution Services” for more information.

### **Office Profile**

American University’s Conflict Resolution Services is part of the Office of Campus Life. The office staff includes the director, the assistant director, an administrative assistant, graduate students, and work-study students. The assistant director maintains primary responsibility for oversight of the program and serves as the first point of contact. Our staff selects, trains, and supervises mediators; conducts intake interviews and conflict coaching sessions; facilitates mediation sessions; designs and implements programs; and provides outreach activities to students, staff, and faculty, in conjunction with Campus Life, Human Resources, and Academic Affairs.

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## Tips to a 'Greener' Home Life

*Contributed by Sophia Benedicktus, assistant director of operations  
(Housing and Dining Programs)*

### **What is Sustainability?**

Sustainability is meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

### **Ways You Can Get Involved at Home:**

#### **Energy**

- Replace incandescent lightbulbs with light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs.
- Use power strips and turn them off when you are away for long periods to conserve energy.
- Buy Energy Star appliances and electronics (computers, laptops, lamps, etc.).
- Use alternative methods of transportation, such as riding the Metro, using the free AU bike share program, or trying AU's new ride share program called Zimride.

#### **Food**

- Shop at the farmers market on the quad every Wednesday for fresh produce.
- Use the campus organic garden.
- Buy reusable utensils.

#### **Trees**

- Print documents double-sided.
- Use Blackboard to submit assignments electronically.
- Purchase recycled paper for assignments.

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## **Waste**

- Recycle paper, plastic, and metal.
- Keep and sort recycling bins at your residence.
- Buy in bulk to reduce packaging.

## **Water**

- Kick the bottle water habit; fill your reusable container at the tap.
- Turn off water while brushing your teeth.
- Take shorter showers to conserve water.

## **Join Eco-Sense**

Eco-Sense is the American University student organization dedicated to promoting environmental sustainability on campus, in the community, and in our students' everyday lives through awareness, volunteering, promotion of sustainability best-practice on campus, eco-certification, and political activism. All actions are aimed at incorporating social justice issues as well creating a healthy and environmentally sustainable future for all. For more information contact [au\\_eco\\_sense@yahoo.com](mailto:au_eco_sense@yahoo.com).

## Maintaining Campus Involvement

On-campus residents have an easy connection to the campus community. As an off-campus student, it is important that you make the extra effort to be involved. Take advantage of the many events throughout the year to get connected to campus, discover involvement and leadership opportunities, and learn more about campus life.

Did you know that research shows that the more involved and engaged you are in your university experience, the more likely you are to be academically successful (Alexander Astin's *Theory of Student Involvement*, 1984)? Involved students are more likely to succeed academically, personally, and socially.

American University offers many options for involvement. There are more than 220 student organizations on campus through Student Activities. Student organizations sponsor over 2,000 individual events annually that include concerts, conferences, lectures/speakers, general meetings, movies, receptions, special events, and workshops.

Multicultural Affairs, the GLBTA Resource Center, and the Women's Resource Center all sponsor programs and events on campus. If you're interested in service opportunities, get involved with the Center for Community Engagement and Service. The center offers service opportunities in Washington, D.C., and around the world through its Alternative Break programs.

Student employment on campus is another option for campus involvement. Contact individual departments for specific opportunities or visit the student employment listings on the American University Human Resources Web site ([american.edu/hr/](http://american.edu/hr/)).

Here are some other ideas for getting involved:

Stay informed on daily announcements, memos, reminders, and event info (see *Today@AU* and *myAU* portal).

- Join a student organization (see [www.american.edu/ocl/activities](http://www.american.edu/ocl/activities)).
- Participate in student government (see [www.ausg.org](http://www.ausg.org)).
- Write an article for the *Eagle*.
- Play an intramural sport.
- Attend an athletic event.

Make the most out of your AU experience!



*Be an active,  
involved member  
of the campus  
community.*

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# Moving Out

Moving out is another important aspect of renting property. It is often not as easy as removing your items and turning in your key. It is important to understand that even if you move out of an apartment, there is still a possibility that you can encounter a legal dispute with your former landlord. It will be difficult to have your full security deposit returned to you if your landlord claims that you've damaged the apartment.

To avoid fines, not getting your deposit back, etc., here are a few tips:

## **Notify Your Landlord**

If you're moving out, ESPECIALLY if you are breaking your lease, it is important that you have properly notified your landlord of your departure.

Even if you're not breaking your lease, it's important that you give your landlord notification of your intent to move out at least 30 days before you actually do. It allows your landlord to find a new tenant for your apartment, but this may also serve as an incentive for the property management to help you clean and move out of the apartment.

## **Replace Lost Keys**

If you do not replace lost keys, the replacement cost and potentially a penalty fee will be deducted from your total security deposit. Make sure you discuss the situation with your landlord before moving out to avoid excessive costs.

## **Clean Up**

You do not have to leave your apartment in perfect condition; there is an expected amount of wear and tear. If you are responsible for serious damage to the apartment, make sure to repair what you can at your own expense before moving out of the apartment.

It's important that if there is something that you can't repair before you move out, make a list and get a professional estimate of the total cost of the repair. Doing

this will prevent your landlord from holding you accountable for unreasonable costs and damages.

## **Document the Apartment Condition**

Save a record of the condition in which you left the apartment.

Do this after you've finished moving out and are about to turn in the keys. If you can, take a picture of the apartment and record the date (one of the best ways to do this is to hold up a dated newspaper) to show the condition that you've left it in. And, when you return the key, make sure you also present a brief written letter to your landlord, including the date, and which keys are enclosed. Be sure to indicate the address to which the security deposit should be returned.

## **Request Your Security Deposit Back**

Provided that you haven't seriously damaged the apartment, you should receive your full security deposit back. More likely than not your landlord will hold on to the security deposit unless you take the appropriate steps in requesting it back. Make sure to send out a written request by certified mail and request a return receipt. Your records of the condition of your apartment will prove useful if your landlord decides to reduce the total amount of the security deposit returned to you.

## **Complete a Change of Address Form at the Post Office**

It's important that you complete a change of address form to receive your bills, magazines, and other important mail at your new address. You can also do this online.

*(Renter's Rights: Quinn Pregliasco, Ellie Ezzell, Aaron Luce, Jeniffer Kim, Jonathan Freimark, Jonathan Baker, and Brian Goodrich.)*

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# Helpful Numbers

## Utilities

### *Electricity*

#### **Pepco**

##### **Walk-In Customer Service Centers**

701 Ninth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
8:30 a.m.–5:15 p.m.

2806 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, S.E.  
Washington, D.C.  
9 a.m.–5 p.m.

**Customer Service:** 202-833-7500  
**General Information:** 202-872-2000  
**Outages:** 877-PEPCO-62 (877-737-2662)  
**Downed Wires and Life-Threatening Emergencies:** 202-872-3432  
**Web site:** [www.pepco.com/home/default.aspx](http://www.pepco.com/home/default.aspx)  
**Online Contact:** [www.pepco.com/contact/online/](http://www.pepco.com/contact/online/)

### *Gas*

#### **Washington Gas Company**

If you smell gas, or if you have an emergency involving natural gas, leave the area immediately and call 911 and Washington Gas at 703-750-1400 or 1-800-752-7520.

#### **Washington Gas**

6801 Industrial Road  
Springfield, VA 22151  
703-750-1000  
[custsrv@washgas.com](mailto:custsrv@washgas.com)

#### **Shenandoah Customers**

350 Hillandale Lane  
Winchester, VA 22602  
540- 869-1111

#### **Frederick Customers**

1800 N. Market Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-662-2151  
[frederickgas@washgas.com](mailto:frederickgas@washgas.com)

### *Water and Sewer*

#### **D.C. Water and Sewer Authority (DCWASA) General Inquiries**

##### **Main Office:**

5000 Overlook Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20032  
**Phone:** 202-787-2000  
**Fax:** 202-787-2333  
**E-mail:** [info@dcwasa.com](mailto:info@dcwasa.com)  
**Phone:** 202-354-3600  
**E-mail:** [custserv@dcwasa.com](mailto:custserv@dcwasa.com)  
**Web site:** <http://www.dcwasa.com/>

### *Garbage Pickup*

#### **Department of Public Works**

2000 14th Street, NW, 6th Floor  
Washington, DC 20009

##### **Office Hours:**

Monday–Friday, except District holidays,  
8:15 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

**E-mail:** [dpw@dc.gov](mailto:dpw@dc.gov)

**Web site:** [dpw.dc.gov](http://dpw.dc.gov)

**Phone:** 202-673-6833

**Fax:** 202-671-0642

**TTY:** 202-673-6833

### *Cable, Internet, Phone Providers*

#### **Comcast Cablevision of the District, LLC**

800-COMCAST (1-800-266-2278)  
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
[www.comcast.com](http://www.comcast.com)

#### **RCN Corporation**

800-746-4726  
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
[www.rcn.com/dc-metro](http://www.rcn.com/dc-metro)

#### **Verizon Washington, DC**

800-483-7988  
Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
[www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com)

## Furniture Stores and Rentals

### **Crate and Barrel**

4820 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-364-6100  
[www.crateandbarrel.com](http://www.crateandbarrel.com)

### **IKEA**

10100 Baltimore Ave.  
College Park, MD 20740  
301-345-6552  
[www.ikea.com/us/en/](http://www.ikea.com/us/en/)

### **Pier 1 Imports**

4455 Connecticut Ave., NW,  
Washington, DC 20008  
202-537-5053  
[www.pier1.com](http://www.pier1.com)

### **World Market**

5335 Wisconsin Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20015  
202-244-8720  
[www.worldmarket.com](http://www.worldmarket.com)

### **Alpersteins (Rental)**

1015 Seventh St., NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-783-0100  
[www.alpersteins.com](http://www.alpersteins.com)

### **Rent-A-Center (Rental)**

6213 Georgia Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20011  
202-722-1070  
[www.rentacenter.com](http://www.rentacenter.com)

## Movers and Storage

### **UPS-AU Storage**

4400 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-885-2030  
[www.austorage.com](http://www.austorage.com)

### **Georgetown Moving & Storage Inc.**

5185 MacArthur Blvd., NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
202-536-3868  
[www.georgetownmoving.com](http://www.georgetownmoving.com)

### **Union of DC Movers**

2400 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20008  
202-280-6556  
[www.unionofdc movers.com](http://www.unionofdc movers.com)

### **Washington, DC Movers**

4005 Wisconsin Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20016  
877-596-1756  
[www.washingtondcmovers.us](http://www.washingtondcmovers.us)

*Contact information is subject to change.*

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# Appendix

## *Glossary*

**Credit Report:** a detailed account of your credit and repayment history reported by one of three major credit bureaus.

**Eviction:** the legal removal of a tenant from property for violating the lease.

**Landlord:** a person or business who owns and leases property to others.

**Lease:** a contract that outlines the responsibilities of a tenant and landlord for a set period of time.

**Month-to-Month Lease:** a lease that is valid for one month and, unless specified by either party, is automatically renewed each month.

**Prorate:** to divide proportionally: If you move in or out of rental property during the middle of a month, the rent will be prorated for the days you actually occupy the property.

**Renter's Insurance:** covers a tenant's stolen property or property damaged by others or natural disasters.

**Security Deposit:** an initial payment given to the landlord to cover any unpaid rent or damage to the property at the end of a lease. Any money not used is refunded to the tenant.

**Tenant:** someone who, with the owner's permission, has temporary and exclusive use of a building or part of a building in exchange for rent.

# Inventory and Condition Report

**Property Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

Property Provider/Manager's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Tenant Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## Property Condition Information

Unless otherwise noted, these premises are clean, undamaged, and are in good working order.

BEDROOM 1	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT	BEDROOM 2	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling			Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Carpet			Carpet		
Windows/Screens			Windows/Screens		
Closets			Closets		
Heaters			Heaters		
Outlets/Receptacles			Outlets/Receptacles		
Smoke Alarm			Smoke Alarm		
Doors/Locks			Doors/Locks		
Drapes/Cords			Drapes/Cords		
Comments:			Comments:		

BEDROOM 3	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT	LIVING ROOM	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling			Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Carpet			Carpet		
Windows/Screens			Windows/Screens		
Closets			Closets		
Heaters			Heaters		
Outlets/Receptacles			Outlets/Receptacles		
Smoke Alarm			Smoke Alarm		
Doors/Locks			Doors/Locks		
Drapes/Cords			Drapes/Cords		
Comments:			Comments:		

KITCHEN	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Floor		
Cabinets		
Drawers		
Windows/Screens		
Blinds/Drapes		
Counters		
Lights		
Range Oven		
Broiler		
Hood Fan		
Burners		
Filter		
Racks		
Refrigerator Racks		
Crisper		
Freezer		
Doors		
Sink: Faucets		
Burners		
Filter		
Racks		
Aerator		
Dishwasher		
Garbage Disposal		
Comments:		

BATHROOM	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Floor		
Medicine Cabinets		
Sink/Faucets		
Tub/Shower		
Door/Tracks		
Caulk/Tile		
Toilet/Bowl/Seat		
Mirror		
Extractor Fan		
Towel Rack		
Doors/Locks		
Heater		
Lights		
Comments:		

DINING ROOM	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Carpet		
Windows/Screens		
Closets		
Heaters		
Outlets/Receptacles		
Smoke Alarm		
Doors/Locks		
Drapes/Cords		
Comments:		

DINING ROOM	MOVE-IN	MOVE-OUT
Walls/Paint/Ceiling		
Carpet		
Windows/Screens		
Closets		
Heaters		
Outlets/Receptacles		
Smoke Alarm		
Doors/Locks		
Drapes/Cords		
Comments:		

## CODES

- NCC** - Needs Complete Cleaning
- REP** - Replace
- NSC** - Needs Spot Cleaning
- NSP** - Needs Spot Painting
- NRP** - Needs Repair
- NPT** - Needs Painting
- SCR** - Scratched





# Roommate Agreement

**This agreement pertains to the following property:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Monthly Rent is**

\_\_\_\_\_

**and is due**

\_\_\_\_\_

**on the \_\_\_\_\_ of each month and the occupants below are each responsible for the amount listed:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rent: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Terms:**

The agreement is in effect from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.

Upon the return of the deposit it will be divided as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Community Expenses:**

EXPENSES	ACCOUNT IN NAME OF	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	DEPOSIT PAID/REFUNDED	DIVISION OF BILLS
Water				
Gas				
Electricity				
Phone/Cable/Internet				
Garbage Removal				
Cleaning Supplies (sponges, mops, Windex, etc.)				
Common Area Needs (toilet paper, table napkins, etc.)				

**Cleaning Policy:**

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**Guest Policy:**

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**Noise Policy:**

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**Other Household Rules:**

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*I agree to abide by this agreement. I understand that if I want to change or revise this agreement, I must renegotiate with my roommate(s).*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Example Letter – Tenant Notice to Vacate

Date

**Name of Property**

Property Manager/Landlord

Street Address

City, State, Zip code

Dear Landlord/Property Manager:

This serves as notice that on (date), (I/we) intend to vacate the rental unit located at (address). The lease requires \_\_\_ days of advance notice prior to departing from the unit and this serves as the required notice.

The unit should be ready for inspection on (date) as previously agreed in the Inventory and Condition Report filled in prior to moving in. Please contact me to arrange a specific time and date (if there is a schedule conflict) for the inspection of the property before this date.

Thank You,

Signature



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY  
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