

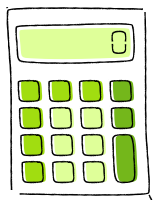
Getting Started

First-Time Renter's Guide



OffCampusHousing.UMB.edu

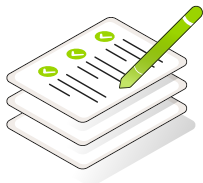
1



Create a Budget

Before you fall in love with a place, know what you can afford. Factor in rent, utilities, parking, and other expenses. The off-campus housing site helps you compare listings, filter by price, and see what's realistic before you apply.

2



Do your Homework & Compare Options

Explore details such as amenities, lease options, and neighborhoods before deciding. Search by distance to campus, compare verified listings, and filter by features like furnished units, pet-friendly options, and included utilities to find your best fit.

3



Tour and Ask Questions

Research your options, see them for yourself, and ask questions before committing. If you can't tour in person, use 3D virtual tours to explore safely. Ask about fees, lease terms, and anything that matters— then check out the questions on the back to get started.

4



Read the Lease Before You Sign

A lease is a binding contract, so read every section carefully—especially policies about early termination, subleasing, and renewals. The off-campus resource section includes helpful articles and checklists to explain lease terms and what to look for before signing.

5



Watch Out for Scams

Be cautious when sharing personal information or sending payments. Only share details once you've confirmed the listing is legitimate. If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is—trust your instincts and double-check before sending any money.

UMass Boston's Official Site



1. Create your account

Use your university email to sign up and get verified.



2. Find your people

Build your roommate profile to connect with other students who are also searching for housing.



3. Explore and learn

Check out search tools and renter resources to help you make smart decisions throughout your search.



Scan the QR code to start exploring!





Questions to Ask Before You Sign a Lease

Signing a lease is a big decision—make sure you have all the facts first. Use this guide as a checklist of important questions to ask properties as you evaluate your options!

Before Applying

Start here—know the process before you hand over money or information.

- How much is the application fee?
- What does the application process involve?
- What screening criteria do I need to meet?
- What happens if I need a co-signer?
- When would I be able to move in?

Lease Details

Understand what you're signing and what happens after.

- How long is the lease term?
- Can I renew for another year?
- Is month-to-month leasing an option at the end?
- Will rent increase if I renew? If so, by how much?
- Is subletting allowed?
- Do you require renters insurance?
- Are any utilities included in rent?
- What's the early lease termination policy?
- How much notice is required to move out?

Roommates

Even if you don't have one now, ask ahead of time.

- What's the process if I decide to add a roommate?
- How long can a guest stay before they need to be on the lease?
- Will a new lease be required if I add a roommate?

Fees & Deposits

Rent isn't the only cost—clarify the extras.

- **Will I be responsible to pay a broker fee?**
- How much is the security deposit?
- What are the move-in fees?
- Are there late payment fees?
- What fees apply if I break the lease?
- What are the pet fees?
- Is there a parking fee?
- Are there any other required or optional fees?

Rent & Payments

Don't just ask "how much"—dig deeper.

- When is rent due each month?
- Is there a grace period before late fees?
- Can I pay rent online?
- How do I submit maintenance requests?
- Do you offer 24-hour emergency maintenance?
- How long does it usually take to complete repairs?
- What happens if I accidentally damage something?
- How much notice do you give before entering the apartment?

Utilities

Utilities can really change the monthly cost.

- Which utilities are included in rent?
- What set-up costs should I expect?
- What's the average monthly cost for utilities not included?

Parking

If you'll have a car, ask these upfront.

- Is parking included in rent, or is there a separate fee?
- Will I have an assigned spot?
- Where can guests park?
- Where is the parking located?

Amenities

Perks are great—know the details.

- Is there a pool or clubhouse? What are the rules for using them?
- Where are the laundry facilities if there's no washer/dryer in the unit, and what's the cost?
- Who provides Wi-Fi and cable service?
- Is storage available? What's the fee?

Maintenance

Know what happens when something breaks.

- How do I submit maintenance requests?
- Do you offer 24-hour emergency maintenance?
- How long does it usually take to complete repairs?
- What happens if I accidentally damage something?
- How much notice do you give before entering the apartment?

Safety

Peace of mind is just as important as the rent price.

- Are parking areas well lit?
- Are there cameras in common areas?
- Is the community gated or otherwise secured?
- Do you have on-site security staff?
- Are apartments equipped with smart locks, alarms, or keyless entry?
- How often are smoke detectors tested?
- Is there a sprinkler system?

Pets

Plan ahead—even if you don't have a pet now.

- Are pets allowed?
- How many pets can I have?
- What's the process if I adopt a pet later?
- Do you have a dog park or pet washing station?
- Are there weight or breed restrictions?



Apartments.com

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