

## WHAT YOU NEED TO SIGN A LEASE

COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT



I-20 or DS-2019 (STUDENT VISA FORMS)



PROOF OF GOOD CREDIT AND A GUARANTOR TO CO-SIGN A LEASE



## FOR MORE INFORMATION



[northeastern.edu/offcampus](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus)



1.617.373.8480



[offcampus@neu.edu](mailto:offcampus@neu.edu)



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## APARTMENT VOCABULARY

**Amenities:** items included in the unit (laundry room, refrigerator, dishwasher, etc.)

**Co-signer (Guarantor):** person who can co-sign your lease for credit purposes

**Inspectional Services Department (ISD):** city agency that inspects your unit in case of any problems 1.617.343.5300

**Landlord:** the owner of the apartment

**Lease:** a legal contract between you and your landlord; usually 12 months

**Realtor:** a person who represents the landlord and shows the apartment; charges a realtor fee

**Rental Housing Center:** city agency that provides advice on tenant issues 1.617.343.4200

**Security Deposit:** a fee equal to one month's rent held by the landlord; refunded at the end of the lease if there are no damages

**Studio:** a one room apartment with a combined bedroom & living space, kitchen and bathroom

**Sublet:** renting a room within the apartment to cover the rent when one tenant is away (for example on co-op)

**Tenancy-at-Will:** a month-by-month rental

**Tenant:** person(s) renting the apartment

**Up-front fees:** expenses that are charged before you move into an apartment

**Utilities:** electricity, heat, gas, trash disposal

**BR/BA:** number of bedrooms and bathrooms, (3BR/1BA is 3 bedrooms and 1 bathroom)

**HT/HW:** heat and hot water

**W/D:** washer and dryer



Northeastern University



## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

### Apartment Hunting Guide



### OFF CAMPUS STUDENT SERVICES

226 Curry Student Center

[offcampus@neu.edu](mailto:offcampus@neu.edu)

1.617.373.8480

[northeastern.edu/offcampus](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus)

# 1 MOVING OFF CAMPUS?

## What type of apartment are you looking for?

There are studio, 1 bedroom, and multi-bedroom apartments. Most apartments are unfurnished. There are also guest houses and homestays that cater to international students and are often furnished.

## How long do you want to stay?

Most leases in Boston are for 12 months. You cannot leave the apartment without paying every month's rent, or finding someone to sublet your space.

## Do you want to live with roommates?

Many new students find that living with others makes the transition to Boston and a new culture much easier.

## Where in Boston do you want to live?

To learn more about Boston's neighborhoods, visit [northeastern.edu/offcampus/get-started](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/get-started). Are you looking for an apartment close to transportation? Find bus and subway routes at [mbta.com](http://mbta.com).

# 2 FIND AN APARTMENT

1. Use your Husky email address to create an account on the apartment search database at [northeastern.edu/offcampus/apartment](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/apartment). You can browse available property listings and find roommates.
2. Find an apartment that is right for you! Use the filters to search by neighborhood, number of rooms, monthly rent, and more.
3. When you find an apartment you're interested in, contact the realty company via the telephone number or email address provided on the listing.

4. Be sure to visit apartments in person. It is recommended that you visit several different apartments so you can compare them and know your options.
5. Decide which apartment you want and get a lease from the realtor. Make sure you read and understand the lease before you sign it.

# 3 UNDERSTAND YOUR LEASE

- Do not sign a lease unless you have fully read and understood it. Send your lease to Off Campus Student Services - our Lease Genius experts will review it!
- Your lease defines what you can and cannot do while living in your apartment. Violating the terms can lead to serious consequences.
- Never pay rent in cash! Pay by check or money order and keep receipts of all payments.
- Obtain a copy of your lease after you sign it.
- Working with a realtor requires an extra fee usually equivalent to one month's rent. This is called the realtor or broker fee.

# 4 ASK YOUR LANDLORD

- Who should I contact if there is a problem?
- Where should I send my rent checks?
- Are there special rules or additional charges? (If so, get them in writing!)
- Is there anything I can't have in the apartment?
- If I need to sublet, will that be allowed?

# 5 TIPS TO REMEMBER

- Use our apartment search database at [northeastern.edu/offcampus/apartment](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/apartment) to find property listings from local realtors, or students looking for roommates.
- View helpful videos about costs at [northeastern.edu/offcampus/rental-costs](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/rental-costs)
- Do not sign a lease without seeing the apartment first! Read these tips to avoid scams: [craigslist.org/about/scams](http://craigslist.org/about/scams)
- Get everything in writing! Make sure any amendments or additions to the lease are made before you sign. Get receipts for any money paid to your landlord and realtor.
- Upfront fees: Be prepared to pay
  - ✓ the first month's rent
  - ✓ the last month's rent
  - ✓ a security deposit (no more than 1 month's rent)
  - ✓ a realtor fee (no more than 1 month's rent)
- Apartments may or may not include utilities (electricity, gas, heat) in the rent. If utilities are not included, you must pay for these monthly, separately from your rent.
- Some landlords may ask for a Social Security Number (SSN). SSNs are only required for employment purposes. If a landlord requests your SSN for a credit check, present your I-20 or DS-2019.
- Temporary accommodations: If you need a place to stay while you look for an apartment or before your lease starts, see this list: [northeastern.edu/offcampus/temporary-housing](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/temporary-housing)
- Need to store or ship your things? See our list of storage and moving companies: [northeastern.edu/offcampus/moving-storage](http://northeastern.edu/offcampus/moving-storage)
- Use [mbta.com](http://mbta.com) to determine your commute to campus, an important factor when choosing an apartment.