

WHAT YOU NEED TO SIGN A LEASE

COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT



I-20 (STUDENT VISA FORM)



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



FOR MORE INFORMATION



northeastern.edu/offcampus



1.617.373.8480



offcampus@neu.edu



/NEUoffcampus



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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, plus 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

Upfront fees: expenses that are charged before you move into an apartment

Utilities: electricity, heat, gas, trash disposal

BR/BA: number of bedrooms and bathrooms, e.g. 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

1.617.373.8480

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 will be 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. Are you looking for an apartment close to the T? Find bus and subway routes at 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. 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. If you need help, send your lease to Off Campus Student Services. Our Lease Genius experts will review it!
- Your lease defines exactly 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 cannot bring or 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 to find property listings from local realtors, or students looking for roommates. View helpful videos at 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
- 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 one month's rent)
 - a realtor fee (no more than one 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.
- 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
- Need to store or ship your things? See our list of storage and moving companies: northeastern.edu/offcampus/moving-storage
- Use mbta.com to determine your commute to campus, an important factor when choosing an apartment.