

Determine your needs

Accessibility and safety

- Consider who else has access to the building/apartment/room.
- Learn about the security measures that are in place.
- Learn about [housing rental scams](#) and how you can avoid them.
- Research the area to find out if it is a safe neighbourhood.

Leases

- Always request a copy of all receipts and signed contracts for yourself.
- Ask for clarification if you feel confused or uncertain.
- As of April 30, 2018, landlords in Ontario are required to use a Standard Form of Lease. The Government of Ontario offers a [guide for newcomers](#) that is available in multiple languages.
- Consider how long the lease agreement is. For example, if you don't like the location, shorter leases make it easier to move out and find other accommodations.
- Determine the move-in date and if there is a lease end date or move-out date.
- Learn whether the accommodations are fully-furnished, partially-furnished, or unfurnished. Students may want somewhere fully-furnished if they do not have furniture.
- Read and understand every term and condition before signing the lease.
- Review resources such as the [lease checklist](#) and information on [visiting rental properties](#).

Rental Amenities

- Ask about the average cost of utilities if they are not included in the rent.
- Be prepared to pay a deposit of last month's rent upfront as this is common with rentals.
- Check how far the rental unit is from the school and other amenities.
- Consider if you would like roommates or prefer living alone.
- Learn about tenant access to communal areas (kitchen, bathroom, living room).
- Make sure that the cost of rent and other living expenses are within your budget.
- Think about costs that are in addition to the rent such as utilities and laundry.

