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# Cleveland Clinic Student Housing Resource Guide

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Cleveland Clinic Off-Campus Student Housing Guide, a comprehensive resource to help you navigate the off-campus housing process and living in the Cleveland community. To best help you, we have included information and supplemental materials that cover the neighborhoods of Cleveland, rental process, lease agreements, finances, roommates and safety information.

The Cleveland Clinic Student Housing Program is dedicated to providing our students with necessary information and tools to successfully reside in off-campus accommodations. We hope this guide will be useful to you during your search.

For more information on off-campus housing, contact us at [studenthousing@ccf.org](mailto:studenthousing@ccf.org) or at 216.444.1876.

# Search for Off-Campus Housing

## Factors to Consider

When looking for off-campus housing, here are a few factors to consider:

### Cost

Before looking for off-campus accommodations, it's important to determine what you can afford. This will help to determine all the other factors below.

*For help with creating a budget, see the [Knowing Your Budget Worksheet \(pg.7\)](#)*

### Location

When looking for housing, location is everything. You should consider whether you would want to walk, bike, drive or take public transportation to and from Cleveland Clinic.

*See the [Neighborhood Map \(pg.4\)](#) and [Transportation \(pg.5\)](#) for more information on location and commuting.*

### Length of Stay

Knowing how long you will need to rent a property is an important factor to consider before searching for housing. Will you be here for a month or a year? If you are planning to stay for less than 12 months, then you need short-term housing.

### Roommates

Consider whether you would like to live alone, with a roommate or with several housemates. Oftentimes, budget doesn't allow for students to live on their own; therefore, it is vital that they find a compatible roommate. Knowing your living preferences and budget are helpful in narrowing down the search.

*See [Finding a Roommate \(pg. 9\)](#) and [Roommate Questionnaire \(pg.10-15\)](#).*

### Pets

If you plan on living with a pet, it is important to search only for accommodations that allow pets. In most cases, if pets are allowed, landlords will charge a pet deposit, which is sometimes refundable. Failure to disclose a household pet can lead to fines, removal of the pet or, in some cases, eviction. Be sure to ask the landlord if the property is pet-friendly before signing a lease.

### Additional Needs

We may not have mentioned all your wants and needs above; therefore, we encourage you to brainstorm what else you want or need in order to secure your optimal accommodations. For example, consider making a list of which amenities are must-haves and which you are willing to forgo. This list will help when you're faced with choices, such as between higher and lower rental payments.

## Neighborhoods of Cleveland

One of the most important factors to consider when searching for housing is location. Location can affect your commuting time, living costs and accessibility to stores and recreational services.

Cleveland is home to a variety of neighborhoods, each with their own advantages and unique characteristics. It is important to educate yourself on each neighborhood and its amenities to ensure you choose the right location for you. [Use this map](#) to familiarize yourself with Cleveland and its neighborhoods.

[Get details on Cleveland neighborhoods.](#)

## Transportation

Students living off-campus have a variety of options for getting back and forth between Cleveland Clinic and home. Depending on mobility, resources and distance to Cleveland Clinic, students can choose from the following options:

### Walking

If you live within close proximity to Cleveland Clinic, walking may be an option. Be sure to take extra precautions when walking because of high traffic in the area. Always be alert and, if possible, walk with a friend.

### Biking

Cleveland offers a number of biking lanes that you can use to travel in and out of the city. If you live close to bike-friendly routes, biking to Cleveland Clinic could be a good means of transportation.

[View Cleveland's biking map.](#)

### RTA Bus

Cleveland's Regional Transit Authority offers a variety of bus routes that can help get you to and from Cleveland Clinic. In particular, RTA offers the HealthLine, which operates 24/7 and is very easy to catch.

### RTA Rapid

The RTA also offers three major rail lines that travel into and throughout Downtown Cleveland. The Red Line extends from the near east side to the west side of the city and also travels to Cleveland Hopkins International Airport. Specific to the east side, the Blue Line and the Green Line both travel through Shaker Square.

[Get details on RTA routes, schedules and pass prices.](#)

# The Cost of Off-Campus Living

## Creating a Budget

An important first step to searching for off-campus housing is to determine a realistic budget. In addition to monthly rent, additional routine costs need to be factored in.

These costs could include:

- Security deposit
- Application fee
- Monthly utilities, e.g., electricity, gas, water, internet, cable
- Renter's insurance
- Laundry costs
- Food/Household costs
- Transportation costs
- Entertainment
- Savings

To assist you with determining your budget, we have created a budget worksheet. This worksheet will allow you to take inventory of your routine income and expenses and give you an idea of what you can afford.

## Know Your Budget

### Printable Worksheet

It's important to remember that there are more costs associated with living off-campus than rent alone. Below we have created a worksheet to help you determine what you can afford. This worksheet offers a brief breakdown of costs to consider when forecasting your living expenses.

### What is your monthly income?

Monthly Income	
Work	\$
Parent Contribution	\$
Financial Aid/Scholarships	\$
Total Income	\$

### What are your monthly expenses?

Fixed Monthly Expenses	
Rent	\$
Utilities	
Gas	\$
Electric	\$
Water & Sewer	\$
Cable & Internet	\$
Total Utilities	\$
Transportation (car, bus pass, Uber, etc.)	\$
Other (school payments, phone bill, etc.)	\$
Savings	\$
Total Fixed Monthly Expenses	\$

Flexible Monthly Expenses	
Groceries	\$
Toiletries	\$
Laundry	\$
Entertainment	\$
Miscellaneous	\$
Total Flexible Monthly Expenses	\$

### What can you afford?

Total Monthly Expenses: \$

(Add totals in Table 2 & Table 3)

Balance: \$

(Subtract Total Monthly Expenses from Total Income)

### Tips for Efficient Budgeting

*After you determine your budget, it is essential to stick to it!*

- Use a budgeting app – Keep track of your spending right at your fingertips.
- Keep all bills and receipts organized – Sort by category and file them each month to keep track of what you have paid.
- Review where you are in your budget weekly – This will help ensure you are on target.
- Make a schedule...and stick to it
  - Set days for when you pay or buy certain items. This way you are expecting it, e.g., buy your groceries on a set day twice a month.



# The Rental Process

## Questions for Landlords

Oftentimes, rental ads are brief and may not provide enough information about the property you are interested in. To ensure you are getting all the information you need about the property, it is important to make sure you are asking the right questions.

Below is a list of example questions to ask a landlord over the phone or at an open house. These questions should be tailored to your specific concerns. Be sure to read the rental advertisement thoroughly, however, before calling a landlord and asking questions.

### Example Questions

- How much is the rent? When is it due?
- Is there a penalty if rent is late?
- How much is the security deposit? Does it all need to be paid upfront?
- How long is the lease?
- When does the lease end/begin?
- Are utilities included? If so, which utilities? If not, how much do the utilities for this property usually run? In the case that the house is shared, you should ask how utilities are split.
- Should all roommates sign the lease?
- What appliances are included?
- Does the property have parking? If so, how many parking spaces?
- Are parking permits needed? If so, what is the cost?
- Is the unit furnished?
- Where is the rental located? What is the address?
- Is there a bus stop nearby? If so, how far?
- Are the tenants responsible for the upkeep of the landscaping?
- Can pictures be hung on the walls?
- Under what circumstances may the landlord enter the property? How much advance notice must be given prior to entry?
- How are maintenance concerns handled? What are the procedures for reporting problems?

## Finding a Roommate

When renting a property with roommates, there are generally two ways to go about it. You could either look for an already occupied property that has an available room for rent or you could find someone you want to live with and search for a housing accommodation together.

Regardless of which method you choose, it's important to ensure you and your future roommate are compatible. To help you determine what to look for in a compatible roommate, we have created a thorough roommate questionnaire. We also recommend you use our controlled and secure Facebook page to communicate with other students who are also looking for a roommate.

# Roommate Questionnaire

## Printable Worksheet

Please answer the following questions honestly to ensure best possible results. We have created this form to help you find a roommate that has similar interests and living styles as you.

Once you have completed the form, please visit our Facebook page to speak with other students in need of a roommate. For assistance, please email this completed form to [studenthousing@ccf.org](mailto:studenthousing@ccf.org).

## Personal Information

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Gender:</b>	<b>Age:</b>
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Program/Concentration:</b>	<b>Location e.g., Main Campus, Hillcrest, etc.:</b>	
<b>Date of Arrival:</b>	<b>Date of Departure:</b>	

What kind of relationship are you looking for in a roommate?

- I am looking for a roommate to do everything with.
- I am looking for a roommate who can I can peacefully coexist with.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Which statement best reflects your preferences?

- I would prefer to live with a morning person because I am a morning person.
- I can live with a night person even though I am a morning person.
- I would prefer to live with a night person because I am a night person.
- I can live with a morning person even though I am a night person.

I would describe myself as: \_\_\_\_\_

- Shy
- Fairly Shy
- Fairly Outgoing
- Outgoing
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How would others describe you? Please list up to 4 characteristics:

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When dealing with conflicts:

- I am able to express my feelings and concerns in a calm manner.
- I hint at what bothers me in a joking manner.
- I am not comfortable addressing a conflict.
- I address issues in a blunt manner.

When a conflict arises, how do you prefer to communicate the issue?

- With a note
- Texting
- Speaking directly
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you use your personal space?

- For studying
- For relaxing
- For hanging out with guests
- I do not plan on using my personal space frequently

How often do you plan on having guests over?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Frequently

What are your musical preferences?

- |                                   |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Country     | <input type="radio"/> Rock        | <input type="radio"/> Jazz      |
| <input type="radio"/> Alternative | <input type="radio"/> Rap/Hip-Hop | <input type="radio"/> R&B       |
| <input type="radio"/> Classical   |                                   | <input type="radio"/> Other: __ |

Please list you physical or medical conditions (Ex. Allergies):

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Describe your alcohol use:

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Frequently

Do you smoke?

- Yes
- No

## Living Habits

Which statement accurately describes your ideal study environment?

- I need to study in a very quiet environment.
- My ideal study environment has some background noise.
- High noise levels do not disturb me while studying.

I prefer to live in:

- a very clean space
- a mostly clean space
- a messy space
- I don't care what condition the apartment/room is in

How do you feeling about borrowing/ sharing items:

- I am fine with sharing items, but my roommate has to ask before using something that is mine.
- I am fine with sharing items and my roommate can just use it without asking.
- I do not like sharing items and would prefer if my roommate used her/his own items only.

## Roommate Information

I prefer to live with:

- The same sex
- The opposite sex
- I do not have a preference

I would like a roommate who is:

- Shy
- Fairly Shy
- Fairly Outgoing
- Outgoing
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you mind if your roommate smokes?

- Yes
- No

Do you mind if your roommate drinks?

- Yes
- No, but I don't want it to be an everyday thing
- No, and anytime is okay

Please list three quality you consider to be important in a roommate:

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How often do you prefer your roommate to have guests over?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Frequently

Please check 4-6 concerns you have about your future roommate:

- Obnoxious behavior
- Loud music/TV
- Being loud when I'm studying/sleeping
- Eating my food
- Not picking up after themselves
- Being unfriendly
- Lack of respect for me and my privacy
- Not being open-minded
- Bad personal hygiene
- Using my things without asking
- Having guests over too much
- Messy

Please list any other characteristics you consider to be of high concern:

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## How to Inspect a Property

We highly encourage you to take the time to inspect a property thoroughly before signing a lease. We have created an inspection checklist to assist you in this process. If you identify any issues during inspection, discuss them immediately with the property manager. If the property manager agrees to address the issues, be sure to get the agreement in writing and included in your lease.



# Rental Property Inspection Checklist

## Printable Worksheet

Use this checklist to help inspect a rental property before signing a lease.

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### Security & Personal Safety

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- Do all locks on the doors function properly?
- Do all the entry doors shut tightly? Do they include a heavy duty lock such as a deadbolt or chain?
- Do the windows all lock properly?
- Does the property have curtains or shades on all the windows?
- Is there outdoor lighting?
- Are there security cameras? This is particularly important for apartment complexes.
- How safe is the property's surrounding neighborhood?
- Are there smoke detectors? Does each smoke detector work?
- Are there CO2 detectors? Does each detector work?
- Is there a fire extinguisher?
- Is there an emergency exit?

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### Electrical & Heating

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- Do all light fixtures work?
- Do all electrical sockets work? Are they placed in a safe location?
- Does the property have enough electrical sockets?
- Does the heating/cooling equipment work?
- Do the windows have proper ventilation? Do they all have storm windows?

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### Property Necessities

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- Does the property have appliances, e.g., stove, oven, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher? Do all the appliances work?
- Does the kitchen sink work? Is there a good water pressure?
- Does the bathroom sink work? The shower? Does the toilet flush?
- Is there parking? How close is the nearest bus stop? Is there storage for a bike?
- Does the property offer storage, e.g., a basement, attic, closets? Are these areas clean?
- Is there any pre-existing damage (e.g., holes in the walls, rips in the carpet, damage to the windows) to the property?
- Who has keys to the property? Just the landlord?
- Is there a maintenance team? Is there an emergency maintenance team?

## Signing a Lease

Before signing a lease, it is very common for a property manager to ask everyone on the lease to fill out an application. This application usually costs anywhere from \$25 to \$75 per person. The property manager may also check your credit report.

Once an application for the property has been filled out and approved, a property manager will draw up a lease or housing contract with specific terms and conditions. It's important that you review this document carefully to ensure you understand and agree with all terms before signing. Once the document is signed, be sure you keep a copy of it on hand.

Before taking occupancy of the property, it is normal for the property manager to ask for a security deposit and the first month's rent. The security deposit amount can vary, depending on the property, and is refundable. Within 30 days after your lease ends, your property manager should refund your security deposit as long as you meet the following criteria:

- You're up to date on rent payments
- The property is returned to the property manager in the same condition as it was received

To ensure you receive your security deposit refund, it is important to take pictures and videos of the property prior to moving in. These pictures should document the condition of the property, including the floors and ceilings.

## Moving In/Moving Out

### Tips for Moving In

After you have found a place to live and signed a lease, it is time to start planning for your move in. Below we have listed a few steps to help you prepare.

#### Set a move-in date

The first step to prepare for moving in is setting a move-in date. Normally, this date falls within the first few days of your lease. Note: You cannot move in any of your belongings until your lease begins.

#### Communicate with your roommate(s)

After a move-in date has been set, it's important to communicate with your roommate(s) to coordinate times.

#### Communicate with your landlord

Let your landlord know the day and approximate time you intend to move into your new residence.

#### Set up a time to pick up keys

Before moving into your new place, you'll need to pick up keys from the landlord. Arrangements should be made for the earliest pick-up time to ensure your move-in day runs smoothly.

#### Arrange for utility set up

It is the tenant's responsibility to set up their utilities before moving in. Be sure to contact the utility companies to ensure you have gas, electric, water/sewer and cable/internet for when you move in. If you are not sure which utility company to contact, reach out to your landlord.

#### Arrange for moving transportation or services

Moving transportation and services should be made immediately after you determine your move-in date. This guarantees that transportation and services are available for the day you need them.

#### Pack accordingly

It's important that you do not wait to pack until the last minute. We strongly encourage you to start packing a little at a time soon after signing a lease.

#### Bring the right supplies

On move-in day, some essentials to have on hand include tape, scissors, a box cutter, trash bags, cleaning supplies and a tool box.

### Update your mailing address

If you are going to be staying at your new residence long term, it's important to update your mailing address. This can be done by calling your local post office.

## Tips for Moving Out

Moving out can be a very stressful. To assist you during this hectic time, we have listed a few tips to ensure a smooth process.

### Notify your landlord

Before moving out, it is important to notify your landlord that you will be vacating the premises. Normally, a lease requires a tenant to inform the landlord within 30 days; however, in some cases a 60-day notice or more may be required. Check your lease ahead of time to be sure, and know that your notice must be in writing (not verbal).

### Give your landlord a forwarding address

If you paid a security deposit, it is important to give your landlord a forwarding address. This way they know where to send your security deposit refund.

### Clean your residence

Before moving out, you should thoroughly clean your residence. It should be left in the same condition it was when you moved in. If your property is not clean, your landlord can deduct money from your security deposit to cover damages and items that are not properly cleaned.

### Take photos

Always take photos of your residence after you have cleaned and moved all the furniture out to document the condition it is in. Be sure to record the date the photos were taken.

### Drop off keys

After you have cleaned and moved all your belongings out of the residence, promptly return the keys to the landlord. This will need to be done by the end of the lease term.