Important Tips - Read this First

Off-Campus Living Office
541 Willard Straight Hall
offcampusliving@cornell.edu
offcampusliving.cornell.edu
Who is the Off-Campus Living Office?

- Our mission is to provide housing assistance, education and referral services to students, staff, faculty and others associated with Cornell, choosing to live Off-Campus. We are committed to providing information and services that result in informed housing decisions.

- We are located in Willard Straight Hall
  - 607-255-2310
  - offcampusliving.cornell.edu
  - offcampusliving@cornell.edu

- All worksheets, checklist and reference materials referenced in this video can be found on the Off-Campus Living website.
Steps to finding your first apartment...

- Let's begin with finding the right neighborhood.
  - When looking for an apartment it is important to understand what you want/need.
  - What items are important to you? Do you want to be near:
    - A bus/walking distance to college
    - Public schools/daycare (if you have children)
    - Community (Place of worship/Restaurants/Night Life/Food/Shopping)
  - Use the following to assist you:
    - The Evaluate Your Time Limitations worksheet
    - The Housing Search Checklist
    - The Cornell/Ithaca Map
    - The Ithaca Neighborhood Descriptions video presentation
    - The Transportation video presentation
Steps to finding your first apartment... continued

- Once you have chosen the right neighborhood complete
  - The Evaluate Your Standards for Comfort worksheet
  - The Create Your Budget worksheet
  - Review the “Why Budget” video presentation

- Then when you know your budget begin your search using the Off-Campus Living Housing Search Tool

- Use the following checklists to assist you in your decision making.
  - The Security Checklist
  - The Apartment Selection Checklist
Now you found your apartment what do you need to know...

What is an American lease?

- A lease agreement is simply a contract between a landlord and a tenant that states what the tenant will pay monthly for rent and for how long to occupy a property.

- For more information on what is a lease and lease expectations review:
  - The “what is a lease agreement” video presentation
  - The New York State Attorney General’s Tenants Rights Guide
5 things every tenant needs to do

1. Pay rent on time and in the correct amount.
2. Notify the landlord/property manager/emergency contact immediately of any deficiencies within the apartment immediately.
3. Turn over the property in the same or better condition than received (and have proof by completing the Move-in/Move-out checklist & take pictures).
4. Abide by all the agreed on lease terms and conditions.
5. Vacate the property at the end of the lease.

When in doubt ask! Call or email offcampuslivng@cornell.edu if you have questions
Questions to ask before signing a lease agreement...

- Once you found an apartment you are interested in have your list of questions ready.
  - The questions should give you information you need to decide if you want to rent the apartment.
  - This is an opportunity to learn more about the landlord to see if this is someone you can work with once you sign a lease.
- For examples of questions review our signing the lease webpage on the offcampusliving.cornell.edu website.
What is renters insurance and why do I need it?

- **Is protection against:**
  - loss or damage to your personal property (i.e. in case of fire)
  - accidents on “your” property that injure other people (someone slips in your shower and gets hurt)
  - damage to other people’s property (i.e. Pretend you borrowed your friend’s sewing machine. It is sitting on a table near a window with a lovely view. A tree falls, crashes through the window and crushes the sewing machine. Now what?)

- For more information visit Renters Insurance information page on the offcampusliving.cornell.edu website.
Things to keep in mind

- Your Budget
- The Location between your apartment and the campus
- Transportation services
- Lease requirements (e.g., pet policy)
- Standards of comfort
- Proximity to amenities (e.g., shopping, laundry)
- When in doubt ask! Our office is here to help you...

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