



2022 Fall Housing Guide

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What you need to know when apartment hunting

BY RAY COUTURE
STAFF REPORTER

Off-campus apartment living may seem like a far-off venture for you at this point, new student, as you prepare to start your collegiate career as a Boilermaker in a pent-up dorm room in Griffin North or Hillenbrand Hall or one of the many other dormitories littered throughout campus.

But, sometime in the very near future, you may decide that living in the dorms isn't all that it's cracked up to be: the shrieking at all hours, hearing people sprint past your room at 3 a.m., sharing a communal bathroom and shower with 32 other people — staples of dormitory living — are all things you can avoid when finding your own apartment. This guide will help you with what you'll need to know.

There are more resources available to you than you'll probably need. Purdue's off-campus housing department publishes a comprehensive housing and living guide every year that highlights a bevy of information on what to do and what to know regarding leases, parking and trash enforcement, code violations and inspection protocols.

On top of that, the department's website includes even more information: an FAQ page, apartment condition and comparison checklists, links to local furniture stores and utility services, suggested questions for landlords and a sample roommate agreement. Additionally, you can look for apartments (and roommates) directly through the website's housing and roommate portals. The apartment portal shows the location of each apartment complex, as well as the unit types and price range of the occupancies.

The Exponent also publishes a housing guide — available around the area and under the special sections tab at purdueexponent.org — which includes basic tips and information from local landlords and others.

Ashley Darnell, Purdue's assistant director for off-campus student services, provided helpful information regarding the step-by-step process of renting, as well as some tips.

Search for places that meet your specific criteria/preference (location, size, price range).

- Identify places who treat tenants well and have good reviews online.
- Contact landlords to see the apartment. Some property managers are doing this virtually now.
- Fill out an application to rent the apartment once you've chosen one.
- Review all relevant documentation and sign the lease.

Using Darnell's tips as a guideline, let's break down each step.

Location

It's important that you consider your access to campus when looking for a place.

Living across the river in Lafayette, far away from the hustle and bustle of campus, may sound nice, but if you don't have a car you'll be relying on either your walking shoes or the reliably unreliable public transportation system. When winter hits and it's 24 degrees out with a wind chill that makes it feel like -2, you're not going to want to wait around for a bus that's running 10 minutes behind, and you're definitely not going to want to make the 40-minute trek across the ice-laden pedestrian bridge (you will slip, you will fall, and the bridge pigeons will distress-coo at you) and up the hill to get to campus.

There are apartment complexes in the West Lafayette area that are a comfortable and convenient distance away from campus, and you should consider those if you're worried about getting to class or a school event on time.

Apartment reviews/viewings

Once you've got your general location figured out, the next step is making sure your prospective apartment has good reviews from past tenants. The off-campus housing website has a "landlord survey page" where you can see Purdue student ratings of different places based on a variety of categories like safety, noise, apartment conditions and maintenance.

Keep in mind when you're combing through reviews that not everyone's experience will be the same as yours. If you're interested in a place, you should set up a tour and see it for yourself.

Apartment viewings are the time for you to see the place you might be inhabiting for the next few years. Remember that it's OK to shop around; you don't have to say "yes" to the first apartment you're shown.

The website has an "apartment comparison checklist" you can use to tabulate things like room layouts and sizes, parking situations, conditions of light sources and faucets and what kind of laundry facilities are provided. Living off campus means you don't have access to dorm laundry rooms, so either make sure your apartment includes a washer and dryer or you're going to need to find a laundromat.

Whether you opt for a virtual tour or one in person, make sure the apartment you're viewing is the one you'd be signing a lease to live in. If not, you might not end up with what you expected.

Kelsey Tobin, a graduate student in the department of Forestry and Natural Resources, was new to the Lafayette area when she began her apartment hunt. She toured a "model" version of an apartment she was interested in, only to find out when she moved into the real place that it was nothing like advertised.

"The model that I toured at (her complex) is like, literally, not even recognizable compared to the apartment I live in," Tobin said.

"I saw the model that was, like, a two-bedroom, super nice remodel," Tobin said. "And then on the day I moved in and I walked into my apartment with my mom, my mom started crying. She was like, 'This is nothing like what I thought.'"

Tobin's advice? "Ask more questions about different styles of units."

The lease

The last step in your apartment quest, after you've found a place in a suitable location that meets your budget and matches your style, is signing the lease. The lease is your legally binding contract between you and your landlord.

Darnell recommends that you read through the lease thoroughly before signing and to remember that the decision to sign is yours.

"Students should never feel pressured to sign a lease," Darnell said. "If a landlord is treating them poorly before signing, it may say something about the way they will be treated as tenants."

The website includes a page on leasing information and things to know when signing.

"If a student has questions about a lease, they should ask the landlord before signing the lease, or contact our office for more information," the site says. "Tenants may be held jointly and severally responsible for the terms of the lease. This means that a tenant and any roommate(s) are jointly responsible for any charges, rent, or damage to an apartment."

Make sure to keep a copy of your lease so you can refer to it in any possible disputes with a landlord or roommate.



ILLUSTRATION BY TEIKO JACKSON

Maintenance

After you've signed your lease and moved into the new pad, keep an eye on your lights and appliances and make sure they're continuing to work properly. If a light goes out or your dishwasher goes on the fritz, you'll have to alert your apartment's maintenance team.

It's better to put these requests in sooner rather than later, as maintenance crews can get swamped with work and delay your service. If you wait too long or don't report it, you might lose a fraction (or more) of your security deposit.

"Two of the biggest issues we hear about from students are maintenance issues and security deposit issues," Darnell said.

Dealing with maintenance delays was a considerable issue for Tobin.

My power will just randomly go out for like hours at a time," Tobin said. "Oh, my fridge broke, and it took them a month to replace it."

"Instead of, like, just replacing it right away, they moved it into the living room and plugged it back in and left it for a month until I called like 30 times. I was like, Please give me a new fridge."

This article was originally published last summer.

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Get the facts about the Fair Housing Act

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Fair housing means you may freely choose a place to live without regard to your race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, or because you are disabled or have children in your family. Housing discrimination is illegal!

The Fair Housing Act Prohibits discrimination based on:

- Race or color.
- National origin.
- Religion.
- Sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation).
- Disability.
- Familial status (families with children that include those under the age of 18 living with parents or legal custodians and pregnant women).

What type of housing is covered?

The Fair Housing Act covers most housing. In some circumstances, the act exempts owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single-family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker, and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

What is prohibited?

No one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, familial status or disability:

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Refuse to negotiate for housing
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting)
- Deny access to or membership in a facility or service (such

as multiple listing service) related to the sale or rental of housing.

In addition, it is illegal for anyone to threaten, coerce, intimidate, or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right.

Moreover, it is illegal to advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, familial status or disability. This prohibition against discriminatory advertising applies to single-family and owner-occupied housing that is otherwise exempt from the Fair Housing Act.

If you feel you have been discriminated against, who do you contact?

The Cities of West Lafayette, Lafayette, with Tippecanoe County, in a cooperative effort, support fair housing. The Area Human Relations Commission and Diversity Round Table's goal is to promote the awareness of the fair housing laws and to provide information and referral to residents of Tippecanoe County who suspect discrimination in housing. You can file a complaint by contacting the following entities:

City of West Lafayette Human Relations Commission – development@westlafayette.in.gov (765) 775-5160.

City of Lafayette Human Relations Commission – hrhelpdesk@lafayette.in.gov (765) 423-9215.

Tippecanoe County Human Relations Commission – (765) 423-9215.

When should complaints be filed?

Complaints should be filed as soon as possible and will be considered for up to 90 days following the incident.

Should you attempt to solve the dispute on your own?

The Commissions encourage those who are comfortable doing so, and do not feel threatened, to make efforts to discuss and resolve their complaint directly with the party or parties involved. If these efforts are unsuccessful consider filing a complaint.



Decorating small spaces

BY EXPONENT ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

People who live in apartments, small homes or condos or those who have embraced the “tiny house” movement must rely on clever decorating to maximize their spaces. Here are some ideas when space is at a premium.

Go vertical. Use vertical space, such as lights hung on a wall beside a bed instead of lamps on a nightstand or bookshelves and other shelving to keep items off of the floor.

Bench seating. Benches can provide more seating when entertaining guests and also can be moved to the living room or elsewhere as needed. Place a small bench in a foyer and put some wicker bins beneath for storage.

Use natural light. Rooms that have ample light can seem more spacious. Pull up blinds (or skip them if privacy isn't an

issue) and use the sunshine to help spaces appear more airy.

Multipurpose furniture. Invest in furniture that can be used for multiple purposes, such as side tables that can double as single seats. Benches and seats can double as storage containers, and shelves can sometimes fold down from walls to become tables.

Minimize clutter. In a small space, even a stack of books or paper can give the appearance of clutter. Keep things tidy to create the appearance of wide open spaces.

Choose chunky furniture. Look for parcels of furniture that are comfortable and not huge, but bold and chunky, and that can be moved around easily. Place your largest furniture items around the perimeter of the room against walls if possible.

Display artwork above eye level. This draws the eye upward and creates an illusion of higher ceilings and taller spaces.

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Now Leasing Fall 2023

New academic year, new place to live.

BY PHOENIX DIMAGIBA
STAFF REPORTER

In general, students do not often have the exact same room or roommates every year. Changing one or two variables at a time is fairly manageable.

One of the more drastic transitions many eventually face is the switch from a dorm room with University Residences to an off-campus apartment. I made that switch this year.

That is not to say I had a bad experience with the dorms. On the contrary, I probably had one of the best experiences possible. My double dorm room in Honors North was comfortable, with a high ceiling and air conditioning, something I appreciate even more right now.

My roommate was someone I had never met before move-in, but he was a great guy to live with: clean, engaging and a good communicator. It is with this in mind that I compare my previous and current living situations.

I actually did not have plans to move into an apartment after my first year. The primary reason for my switch from UR to an apartment was an invitation from my friends. Three of them searched for an apartment together touring different places in West Lafayette, and later invited me into that process. Eventually we decided on a four-bedroom, two-bathroom unit near Triple XXX. The commute to campus is very manageable, around five minutes to the Union on foot, depending on the crosswalks. The slope of State Street does make the morning uphill hike harder than the afternoon/evening downhill walk, and the increased distance from the Cordova Recreational Sports Center makes my usual exercise of swimming laps more difficult, but I enjoy the proximity to the Chauncey restaurants compared to my old location in Honors North.

The most immediately obvious difference for me is food.

Transitioning from a meal plan to cooking for myself takes some forethought. Do I save money by not being on a meal plan? Sure. Is there more variety in my diet? Yep. Am I eating healthier? Well, when I try hard enough. As someone who loves to eat, I enjoy having that control. The closer proximity to restaurants in Chauncey helps.

However, apartment cooking is much less convenient. Preparing food takes time, time that is not required when grabbing food from a dining hall. Campus accessibility is also a factor. Eating on campus now requires me to pack a lunch instead of running over to Wiley for a bite.

Another factor to consider is the bathroom. Though some dorms have room or suite specific bathrooms, many have shared community bathrooms. I remember doing my hair in the morning standing next to another guy, walking into the closest bathroom, finding that all of the shower stalls were taken, and heading back to my room in a towel carrying my shower caddy.

None of these situations happen now, even though I share a bathroom with one of my roommates. On the other hand, the cleaning staff has downsized to two people: me and my roommate. I now have the necessary job of wiping the counter, scrubbing the shower, cleaning the toilet and other tasks required to maintain the bathroom of two college men.

Underrated but important is the lack of oversight from UR. I liked my RA and thought he did a great job, but not everyone has had such a positive experience. The ability to stay up late in my own bedroom or chill with my roommates at odd hours of the morning without worrying about waking someone up is pretty nice. I enjoy that agency.

On the other hand, I am much more responsible for things like conflict remediation or physical damage to the apartment. I think my roommates are great and we get along well, but if that



ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID CHAPMAN

was not the case, it would be hard to find someone to resolve a disagreement besides building staff or law enforcement. But if I had a disagreement with my roommate in the dorms, it could be handled through the university before it goes to the police.

Utilities are one more thing to think about. At my apartment, utilities like electricity are a monthly fee separate from the rent, a cost that's included in the total cost of a dorm. This means I am more likely to turn my bedroom lights off when I leave for the day than I was last year. Mercifully, internet is included with my apartment, but choosing an internet service provider is something some people have to deal with.

As with most things, there are pros and cons when making the dorm-to-apartment move, but I'm glad I did it. I'm looking forward to a good year.

This column was originally published last fall.



PARLOR PALM

SPIDER PLANT



Plants that will love you, no matter what

BY EXPONENT ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

Spring's arrival means a revival of life outside, but you don't have to limit the influx of nature's green to outside your window.

There are plenty of house plant options for even the brownest of thumbs with minimal light in their homes. Try making room for a few of these near your windows.

Spider plants. Even if you leave on vacation for the week and forget to water it, your spider plant will be very forgiving. This air cleaner will self-propagate, thriving in indirect light in any room. Added bonus: spider plants are non-toxic to cats and dogs.

Pothos. Another air purifier, this trailing plant is known to remove air toxins within your home that can be caused by gas or furnace. Pothos grows and thrives in nearly all light conditions, making it perfect for any spot in your home. (Note: it's still necessary to have smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home!)

Snake plant. This tough succulent can grow in low light conditions, but ultimately will thrive if placed in medium light. Another forgiving waterer, this plant prefers completely dry soil in between watering.

Hawthoria zebra. Looking for the perfect little friend for your somewhat sunny window? Look no further! The Zebra Plant can go weeks without watering, but make sure your plant's pot has a drainage hole. This plant prefers even, generous watering, but needs to dry out between drinks.

Parlor palm. This plant will bring the small splash of exotic you've been looking for to your space. The Parlor Palm will grow no taller than two feet and is mostly tolerant of shade. Expect to only need to water this plant about every one to two weeks, but expect more if it is placed in more direct sunlight. Added bonus: parlor palm is non-toxic to cats and dogs.

Baby Tears. So long as you keep its soil moderately moist, this plant will thrive in any filtered light. It's a trailing plant, so try hanging your baby tears in a window and watch it grow, adding a gorgeous esthetic to your room. Added bonus: baby tears is non-toxic to cats.

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5 simple exercises right from your couch



BY EXPONENT ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

You don't have to sacrifice your designated streaming time for fitness. Here are five easy ways to get in shape from your couch.

Seated scissors. Move to the edge of your couch seat, keeping your posture straight. Extend your legs straight out in front of you, creating an "L" shape with your body. Begin moving your legs back and forth in a scissor motion. Try

tiny rapid scissors, aiming for 50 sets per minute.

Calf raises. Sit on the edge of your seat with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Lift your heels into the air, while the balls of your feet remain on the floor. Continue the repetitive motion until fatigue begins to set in your legs.

Leg raises. Lay flat on your couch, or the floor, with your legs extended and arms flat at your sides. Begin by lifting your legs just to

a hovering point from the couch, holding for a goal of 30 seconds at a time. Change up the height every 30 seconds, bringing your legs a bit higher each interval, with a goal of two minutes of continuous leg lifts.

Arm circles. Sit up with

good posture with your arms extended directly out at your sides. Move your arms, with either fists or blade formed hands, in small circles in the same direction, with a goal of 30 seconds per direction. When your arms begin to tire, change up the direction.

Leftovers? Eat 'em up!

BY EXPONENT ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT

One of the better things to come from the Covid-19 outbreak is that fact that more people have rediscovered the joys of cooking meals at home, and making use of takeout to eat at home together. Even students have been making more than ramen noodles lately.

Before tossing leftover foods from your own meals or from takeout, consider these ideas to make use of them and save money in the long run.

Save those vegetables.

It's easy to scrape a half-portion of uneaten vegetables into the trash thinking it can't be used. Instead, combine it with other vegetables accumulated throughout the week. Many play well together and can be mixed into casseroles, omelets, soups, and stir-fry recipes.

Create new meals.

Using leftovers does not mean eating the same exact meal a second time. Ingredients can be used in

new ways. For example, use the meat from a roasted chicken for fajitas on another night. Just add a little spice. Leftover tomato sauce and meatballs from a Sunday dinner can be turned into an impromptu chili with the addition of beans and peppers.

Think beyond dinner.

You can have leftovers from lunch and breakfast, too, not just dinner. Chop up leftover cold cuts from lunch to make a stromboli with some refrigerated pizza dough. Save Belgian waffles from breakfast and top with breaded chicken fingers for a hearty chicken and waffles meal later. Leftover roasted potatoes and scraps of ham can be used for a "breakfast mess" – comfort food at its finest. Scramble some eggs, add a bit of diced sautéed onions, your favorite shredded cheese and the leftover potatoes and ham.

Stuck on starches.

Turn extra rice from dinner into arancini (rice balls) for a snack. A leftover sweet potato



or two can be mixed with butternut squash to make a sweet and healthy mashed side dish. Mashed potatoes

can be transformed into potato croquettes or potato pancakes.

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