

# Off-Campus Housing 101

## When should I start looking?

- The market is competitive. Start looking as soon as possible
- Most landlords want to start leases on May 1<sup>st</sup> or September 1<sup>st</sup>.

## How should I start

- Review the Off-Campus Housing website at [housing.carleton.ca/off-campus-housing](http://housing.carleton.ca/off-campus-housing)
  - o Review the Off Campus Housing Resource Sheet at <https://housing.carleton.ca/off-campus-housing/starting-your-search-advice-and-cautions/>
- Review [www.Places4Students.com](http://www.Places4Students.com) for property listings and roommate profiles.

## What can I expect to pay?

- Prices will vary greatly depending on whether you want a room in a home, an apartment, or a house and if you are looking for a furnished or unfurnished space.
- Review the Off-Campus Resources sheet for general Ottawa prices.
- There may also be additional charges for utilities (gas, hydro, heat, etc.), cable, internet and parking. You will also want to budget for your telephone service.

## What am I looking for?

- A price within your means
  - o Consider the cost of utilities, such as internet and hydro
  - o Shared accommodation can decrease your costs significantly
  - o Budget for moving expenses like furniture delivery and amenities that are not included
- Proximity to campus, access to public transit, and access to groceries
  - o Use Google maps to find nearby amenities
  - o Use [otranspo.com](http://otranspo.com) to find bus routes near you
- Somewhere you feel safe
  - o Use Google maps street view to look for streetlights

## Tips for Avoiding Scams

- Visit the property in person if possible, with the landlord present
- Beware of listings where the rent is much lower than similar places
- Perform an online search of the building's address
- Read your lease carefully
- View the actual unit you will be moving into

## Off-Campus Housing Checklist

- Understand if your unit includes:
  - o Appliances (stove, microwave, fridge)
  - o Laundry
- Strong locks on doors
- o Sufficient electrical plugs
- Good cell phone reception

## What Else Should I Know:

- The Residential Tenancies Act (RTA) contains rules that most landlords and tenants must follow. It outlines what your landlord is responsible for.
- A lease is a contract between a landlord and a tenant. You should read a lease carefully before signing it.
- A landlord can collect a rent deposit from a new tenant on or before the start of a new tenancy.

## Additional Housing Resources

- Settlement.org: [www.settlement.org](http://www.settlement.org)
  - o Fast facts on renting, buying, and home safety