

Do carry this page with you when looking for your rental home

Action Guide for Renting a House

◎ Tip 1 – Search the rental homes

- Rental Homes’ Information website of the Division of Student Affairs
- “Home Renting Handbook” – Off-campus Home Renting Service Team keeps on collecting information of the rental homes in the campus area for the students in need.
- Recommended by friends or senior fellow classmates.

◎ Tip 2 – Observe the environment around the rental home

Observe the environment around the rental home	Things to pay attention to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ If possible, contact with the previous tenant so as to know the character and habits of the landlord, and the related renting affairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ask this tenant about the renting situation of this place, and questions: ✓ How are the repair needs reported to the landlord? ✓ Is the rent high or low? ✓ Ask this tenant if there is problem with communicating or getting along with the landlord. ✓ What are advantages and disadvantages of the inside and outside of the home?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Be punctual for the appointment with the landlord to see the rental home. 	<p>Arrive at the place earlier than the appointment time in order to observe the environment and residents around the rental home. If not arriving there earlier, you should at least be punctual so as not to leave the landlord a bad impression.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Female students should be accompanied by someone when going to see the rental home. 	<p>Ask a classmate or friend to see the rental home with you. Your company not only can help notice or observe the conditions of the rental home, but also can avoid worry of safety, especially when you are a female student.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Arrive at the place earlier than the appointment time in order to observe the external environment around the home. 	<p>External environment includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is there convenience in transportation? ✓ Are the residents and visitors complicated? ✓ Is this rental home in residential, commercial or industrial district? ✓ Is there a fire escape route, or any related escape or evacuation equipment? ✓ Is the environment around grown with wild grass? How is the percentage of vacant rooms without residents? ✓ Is there convenience in shopping? ✓ Are the neighbors silent? ✓ Is the location too remote? ✓ Is the building an illegal building? ✓ Is the rental home on the roof? <p>If the above questions can be answered yourself through your observation upon arrival earlier, you can avoid feeling regret after signing of tenancy agreement. In addition, the more details you observe, the more things you will know, and the more room you’ll have to bargain the rent with the landlord!</p>

◎ Tip 3 – Inspect the structure of building

Inspect the structure of building	Things to pay attention to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Carefully observe the interior hardware equipments of the rental home (you are suggested to take photographs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is there any crack on the floor, walls, beams or columns? ✓ Is there any watermark of the old typhoon flood left on the wall? ✓ Is there seepage or mold spots shown on the ceiling and walls, especially on those near the toilet or balcony? ✓ Observe more carefully the repainted walls to see if the repainting was made for covering of water stains. ✓ Is the lock of the room solid and reliable? Is it required to install latch bolts internally so as to prevent burglars from entering the room or anyone else with keys from intruding into the room while your are sleeping? ✓ Do the windows have gaps? Would ants build nests there? Would water come in on rain days?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Would the windows or the door be stuck due to any structural change of the house, and would the opening or closing of them be made difficult? ✓ Are the interior decoration and partition made of fireproof materials, and are they solid and reliable? ✓ Are there any burn-blackened marks on the places around the main power switch? Are there too many or messy network cables that may cause excessively high electrical load, blackout or electrical fire? ✓ Turn on the water tap to check if water comes out or if there is leakage. ✓ Is the water quality turbid and full of impurities? Is the water sourced from tap or underground water? ✓ Press the push button of water closet to check if the flushing is normal and if the drain pipe is smooth. ✓ Check if the sockets supply electricity normally. <p>Paying more attention to details would protect your rights and benefits. Should there be damage found, you can ask the landlord to complete reparation of the damage before signing of tenancy agreement. In this way, you can avoid the tragic consequences of discovering troubles after moving into the rental home.</p>
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◎ Tip 4 – Related furniture and fixtures

Inspect the related furniture and fixtures	Things to pay attention to
◆ Inspect if the furniture and fixtures provided by the landlord are complete and still useable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Confirm with the landlord what furniture and fixtures are provided. ✓ Confirm with the landlord how electricity is charged for the electrical appliances, no matter provided by the landlord or brought by you, and if there is a raise of the charges. (This item should be added to the contents of the tenancy agreement when being signed.) ✓ “A little bit powerfully” shake the furniture and fixtures provided by the landlord. Sit on them and try using them so as to check if they are still useable. It prevents creation of a cognitive gap between both parties in future. ✓ Are the lights bright enough? Confirm with the landlord who shall be responsible for replacement of fluorescent tubes or light bulbs when they do not work some day. (This item should be added to the contents of the tenancy agreement when being signed.) ✓ Turn on the electrical appliances and operate them for a while so as to check if they work normally. ✓ Is it allowed to use the kitchen stoves to cook food? Or, is it only allowed to carry out simple heating and water boiling?

◎ Tip 5 – Firefighting measures and access control security

Firefighting measures and access control security	Things to pay attention to
◆ Fire exit and escape for life protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is the partition and interior decoration made of fireproof materials or combustibles? ✓ Is the hallway inside the rental home too narrow and affecting the exit? ✓ Has the landlord provided fire extinguisher? Is each room installed with a fire alarm? ✓ Are the escape and evacuation routes or the safety ladder and stairway kept clear? Is the escape route installed with emergency light? Is the safety door locked, and can it be opened? Is the fire escape corridor kept clear and free of obstacles? ✓ Does the iron grating attached to the window have a key for opening? Or, is it rusted, can't be opened, and affecting fire escape?
◆ Safety of power and gas use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is the wiring inside the rental home too old? Is the electrical load too high or low? ✓ Is there a burn-blackened mark on the place near a socket or the main power switch? If positive, it may be caused by electrical fire or improper power use. ✓ Are the sockets plugged in with many power strips? Would the electrical load be too high?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are the wires of the main power switch messy? Is the copper core exposed from the wire? ✓ What kind of gas does the landlord provide, “bottled gas” or “natural gas”? Is the connecting place of hose for gas supply from the bottled gas or natural gas too old, rusted, damaged, or with leaking sign? ✓ Is the water heater installed indoors or outdoors? Is that space with good ventilation?
◆ Anti-theft measures and access control security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is the main door lock solid and reliable? Try to understand if the locks inside the room can be renewed yourself. ✓ Is it allowed to install latch bolts additionally inside the room? ✓ Is the main door an independent entrance? Do you have to share the use of public stairways and the main door with other residents? ✓ Is the main door closed or open on ordinary days? Would it affect the access security? ✓ Is there iron grating attached to the window? Is the function of the iron grating good? Is it rusted, damaged, or without anti-theft function? ✓ If the rental home is additionally built on the roof, you should particularly check if burglars can easily break the room and intrude. ✓ If the rental home is an apartment inside a building, would the vacant apartments around affect the security? ✓ Are the careers and identities of the residents and visitors around the rental home very complicated?

◎ Tip 6 – Negotiate reasonable rent

Negotiate reasonable rent	Things to pay attention to
<p>◆ Negotiation skill: If you are really quite satisfied with the rental room and all the conditions except the rent, you can try to “negotiate” with the landlord. Here are several negotiation skills for your reference. Try to use them!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ “Moderately” pick out defects of the internal structure of the rental home: Check if the walls and ceiling have any marks of leakage, peeling paint or mold? Are there cracks on the surface of the floor? Can the doors and windows be open and closed normally? Are lighting and ventilation good? If there is any unfavorable condition found, you can ask the landlord to complete repairing them before you move in, or ask for reduction of rent to compensate your loss caused by the imperfect interior of the rental home. ✓ Ask for addition of furniture or prepare furniture yourself: If the landlord does not provide any furniture, you may discuss with the landlord about purchase of necessary furniture for you. In this way, you can save a sum of money for furniture. Or, you may express that you will move in with your furniture, and ask the landlord to reduce the rent. Then the landlord is not required to buy furniture additionally! ✓ Touch the heart of the landlord by revealing your identity of a poor student from a family with economic hardship: If your family is not rich, you may try to touch the heart of the landlord, and ask the landlord to reduce the rent. You can remind the landlord that it is simpler to rent the room to a student like you as you are not a trouble-maker, and your conduct has always been good ... etc. ✓ Make a promise to comply with the rules of the landlord and take good care of the equipments inside the rental home: Tell the landlord that you are a good tenant, and will comply with all the rules, try hard to clean up the rental home and help take care of the space, thus saving a lot of troubles for the landlord. Lastly, you may ask for cheaper rent from the landlord.
<p>◆ After you feel satisfied with the rental home, and have reached a consensus with the landlord over the rent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Pay a holding deposit to the landlord, state clearly up to when your renting right shall be kept, and set a date for signing the tenancy agreement. ✓ If the tenancy agreement is signed by then, part of the rent shall be offset by the holding deposit paid. ✓ If you change your mind and do not sign the tenancy agreement, the landlord may forfeit the holding deposit to compensate the lost chance of renting out the room to

	others during his/her waiting time.
◆ When you and the landlord fail to reach a consensus over the rent, and you are not completely satisfied with the rental home	✓ Avoid paying any holding deposit even if the landlord or other people around encourage you to do that. Regrets are always caused after such payment is made. If this case happens, and you are not going to rent the room, you won't be able to take back the holding deposit!
◆ Try to achieve your rights and interests	✓ When seeing the rental home, please be reminded to bring along with your "guts"! If you find that there is some place unacceptable, or something should be installed additionally, you may speak them out. Don't feel "sorry" or be "too polite" to mention them; otherwise, you will regret in the later days!

◎ Last Tip - Sign the tenancy agreement

◆ Confirm the identity of the landlord (double check his/her ID Card)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ While signing the agreement, you must confirm that the landlord is the owner of the house. If the landlord is not the owner of the house, you should try to understand if the landlord has asked his/her relative or friend to rent the house on his/her behalf. For example, you may ask the landlord to show a letter of authorization or a power of attorney from the original owner of the house. ◆ If the rental home is rented from a sublessor, please check if the landlord rejects any sublease. If the landlord has an agreement with the sublessor that sublease is not allowed and the landlord may terminate his/her tenancy agreement with the sublessor, then your rights and interests shall be damaged.
◆ "Proviso" of tenancy agreement	◆ If any of the above items are not included in the articles of the tenancy agreement, both parties should agree to write them down on the related articles of the agreement. Please remember that "any additional marks or words on the agreement should be affixed with the personal seals of both parties; otherwise they are ineffective"!