

Housing Information Fall 2025

Welcome to Gainesville! Finding somewhere to live is your responsibility, but the ELI has some information and advice to help you.

Here is some common housing vocabulary:

1. **Lease:** Your contract to pay rent for your apartment. YOU CAN NEVER CANCEL IT. Most leases in the US are for 12 months!
2. **Sublease:** Someone moves out before the end of their lease, and you take over their lease. These can be cheaper and have more flexible dates.
3. **Individual lease:** You pay for your bedroom and bathroom and share the rest of the apartment with roommates.
4. **Joint lease:** You pay for the entire apartment. Your roommates pay you for their portion of the rent.
5. **Guarantor:** The person who is responsible for your debt. As an international student, you are the guarantor.
6. **Tenant:** Someone who signs a lease and rents an apartment (you!).
7. **Rent:** Money you pay on the first day of the month to live in your apartment. You cannot pay in cash.
8. **Utilities:** Water, electricity, cable, internet
9. **Utility allowance:** The amount of utilities your apartment complex pays per month. If you use more than your allowance, you pay the extra.
10. **Security deposit:** Extra money you must pay to secure your apartment.
11. **Fee:** Extra money you must pay for processing.
12. **Late fee:** Extra money you must pay if your rent is late.
13. **Amenities:** Features that provide comfort or convenience (gym, pool, computer lab, etc.).
14. **Roommate:** Someone you live with who is not your family.
15. **Complex:** The entire group of buildings for one apartment community.

Frequently asked questions:

Are homestays an option? In Gainesville these are rare, and the ELI is unaware of any homestay opportunities.

Can I move into my apartment the same day I sign my lease? Usually no. The apartment complex needs a few days to prepare your apartment. You should plan to stay in a hotel until the date your lease begins.

Can I walk to class? For most apartments you will need to take a bus, but the bus is free with your student ID card.

What will my apartment include? At many complexes furniture and utilities are included. However, you still need to buy sheets, towels, pillows, internet routers, and kitchen supplies.

When will my lease end? It depends. Make sure you know the exact date your lease ends before you sign it.

What rules do I have to follow in my apartment?

1. Do not smoke inside your apartment.
2. Use a shower curtain in your bathroom (a shower curtain keeps the water inside the bathtub).
3. Do not get a pet without asking permission from the apartment complex office.
4. Do not make any changes to the electrical or plumbing systems.
5. Do not have long-term guests (friends or family who stay more than a few nights).
6. Take care of your apartment. Clean it regularly.
7. Do not do anything illegal in your apartment.
8. If your roommate breaks any of these rules, tell your apartment complex office as soon as possible.

Fall term ends
December 5!

What apartments do you recommend? The ELI does not recommend specific apartments for students. Each apartment is different, and it is important that you take time to find the apartment that is the right fit for you. If you want to know about apartments where ELI students commonly live, email Christine to set up a Zoom meeting or phone call.

How do I search for an apartment? Watch this video (<https://youtu.be/LFkcV8wetCo>) to see how to use the search on UF's Off Campus Life (OCL) website. You can also use the links and advice below to search.

The university's **Office for Off Campus Life (OCL)** helps new students search for appropriate housing.

1. Go to the OCL [search website](#)
2. Register as a "Guest"
3. Search for "short term" apartments if you will not stay in the US for a full year
4. Look at photos and descriptions, read reviews, and take a virtual tour of the apartments you like
5. Contact the apartments by phone or email to see if they are available for your dates of study.

IMPORTANT: You should wait until you are physically inside the US before making any legal or financial commitments or signing a lease!

If you want specialized help, you can **request a one-on-one meeting with OCL staff** so they can better assist you

1. Go to the [OCL appointment request form](#)
2. Enter your contact information
3. In the box "Please describe your question/concern", you should type:
I am a new ELI student. I need help finding a place to live in Gainesville for the *spring/summer/fall* semester.
4. Someone will email you to schedule a meeting

Apartment search options:

- housing.offcampus.ufl.edu
- apartments.com
- [Craigslist apartments and subleases](#)

Sublease search options:

- [UF International Center Sublease Listing](#)
- [UF Housing & Roommate Search](#) (Facebook page)
- [UF Off Campus Housing, Subleases, Roommates, Apartments](#) (Facebook page)

Short-term rental options:

- [Airbnb](#)
- [Southern Comfort Properties](#)
- [Gainesville Hotels](#)