

# OFF-CAMPUS LIVING GUIDE

LIFE SKILL No. 5

## DEPENDABILITY



**IUPUI**

HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE  
Division of Student Affairs

A nighttime photograph of a city street intersection. In the foreground, a tall, illuminated street signpost holds two circular signs: one with a pedestrian icon and the word 'LEFT', and another with a bicycle icon and the word 'RIGHT'. In the background, traffic lights are visible, some showing green and some yellow. The city skyline is lit up against a dark blue twilight sky. The overall scene is blurred, with a focus on the signpost in the foreground.

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Dear IUPUI Student and Families,

Welcome to IUPUI! We are thrilled to have you join the IUPUI community.

We realize students have different needs and desires for their college experience. Therefore, many of our students will live off campus. We hope this guide helps you to better navigate off-campus living and find the experience that works best for you.

There are many off-campus property options both close to IUPUI and farther away. For those interested in staying close to campus, visit [offcampushousing.iupui.edu](http://offcampushousing.iupui.edu) for a Google map of properties within two miles of campus. Regardless of where you choose to live, you will also find in this guide information to assist in finding and budgeting for off-campus housing, damage and safety checklists, a sample roommate agreement, landlord-tenant information, and a sample sublease agreement.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Housing and Residence Life at [commuter@iupui.edu](mailto:commuter@iupui.edu) or 317-274-7200.

Housing and Residence Life  
414 Porto Alegre St., Suite 150  
Indianapolis, IN 46202  
[commuter@iupui.edu](mailto:commuter@iupui.edu)  
317-274-7200

# TIPS FOR FINDING OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING

## 1. BUDGET

One of the first and most important items to figure out before you begin your search for off-campus housing is determining what your budget is. This will help you narrow your search, especially in terms of location, amenities, and parking. Think about rent as well as other costs such as monthly utility fees.

- How much can and do you want to pay each month for rent?
- How much can you afford to pay in utilities each month? (cable/internet, electric, water/sewer, gas, parking)
- What is more important -- rent price or certain amenities?
- What other monthly expenses do you need to consider?

## 2. LOCATION

Now that you have determined what your monthly budget is, you can decide in which part(s) of Indianapolis to search. While the downtown market is close to campus, it tends to be more expensive. Some downtown apartments may be more reasonable, but these tend to be rented out quickly. If downtown isn't realistically in your price range, there are other areas of the city that will have more affordable options.

- What area(s) of town will you narrow your search to? Rank them.
- If you can't find something in your most desired location within your price range, are you willing to increase the budget, or will you go to your next location option?
- Is it better to live farther away from campus and pay less each month, or is it better to live closer to campus and spend more?
- If you live farther away, what are your transportation options and related expenses?

## 3. SAFETY AND SECURITY

Think about the safety and security features that are important to you. Check the property's surrounding area. A great resource is [indy.safetown.org](http://indy.safetown.org). If you are able to do so, drive by the property at night and in a few blocks in all directions to see if you feel comfortable with the surroundings. No one can tell you what a

“safe” area is or if one location is safer than another. Crime happens everywhere and does not have a zip code. Do your best to prepare for the environment you would like to live in.

- Do you want an on-site security guard? If so, is it just on the weekends or 24/7?
- Would you prefer to have security cameras?
- Do you want locked building entry 24/7? Would you prefer a key fob or a standard key to open your building/apartment?
- Is having a fence surrounding the property important?
- Do you want emergency lights in the parking areas that connect to the police?



## 4. AMENITIES

Properties offer a wide range of amenities from the most high-end features to older and lower end. More modern amenities typically cost more. What is important to you- a washer/dryer, dishwasher, gym, or green space?

- What appliances are available at the property? Do you care if they are stainless steel and brand new, or can they be older?
- Does the property have a washer/dryer in the unit, are there hook-ups, or are they available down the hall? Will you have to leave your building to access laundry facilities?
- Do you need access to a gym? If so, what are the hours of the gym, and what kind of equipment is provided?
- What types of animals are allowed? Is there a weight limit or breed restriction? Is there green space/dog park available? Is there a pet fee?

## 5. TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an important aspect of living off campus that is often overlooked. You may need to have access to a car, live within walking/biking distance, or use public transportation such as the IndyGo bus system.

- If you have access to a car, where will you park it at home and on campus? What happens if your car breaks down?
- If walking or riding your bike, do you feel comfortable traveling to campus if you are by yourself? What if you have to walk or ride at night?
- Where is the nearest IndyGo bus stop to your living option? Is there a route that goes to campus? What times does it run? How much will this cost you daily/weekly/monthly?

## 6. ROOMMATES

Many students want to have a roommate but don't have someone in mind. The university does not offer a roommate matching service; however, there is a classifieds section on One.IU you can access once you have an IU login and password. To access this section, search "classifieds" at One.IU, then select "Roommates & Sublets" in the navigation on the left. You will find a list of people looking for a roommate or sublet option, or who have other housing-related requests.

When picking a roommate, be sure to find out about their living preferences and habits. Some questions to ask someone you are considering rooming with include:

- How much and when do they like to sleep?
- How clean are they?
- What are their study habits?
- Do they like to have friends over?
- Do they listen to loud music?

After you have found a roommate, it is beneficial to complete a roommate agreement as a contract between each party. This helps establish guidelines on topics such as rent payment, pets, and kitchen use and clean-up. A sample roommate agreement (Appendix D) is included in this guide.

## 7. FEES

Acquiring an apartment comes with many upfront costs in addition to the monthly rent. There are typically application fees, security deposits, administrative fees, and upfront pro-rated rent expenses. Some properties waive application fees for students with a university-issued ID card. Typical general fee amounts are listed below. Be sure to account for these additional fees when planning your budget.

- Application fee - \$15 and up
- Security deposit - \$100 and up
- Administrative fee - \$50 and up

## 8. LEASE TERMS

Most properties require a 12-month lease, but some do offer shorter-term leases. Even if you are leaving campus during the summer months, you will still be required to pay for your apartment if you are on a 12-month lease. Some properties may allow subleasing, but each company has different rules. Be sure to contact the leasing office for leasing policies.

- How long is the lease term?
- Will you be living in the apartment during the full lease term? If not, are you able to sublease your unit to someone else? Does the apartment company help you find a sublease?
- What happens if you need to get out of your lease before it ends? Can you cancel your lease before the term ends, and will there be fees associated with early lease termination?

Are you required to find a sublease in order to get out of your lease?

After considering these questions, use the other resources in this guide to help navigate off-campus living. These resources include a budget sheet, damage checklist, sample sublease and roommate agreements, landlord-tenant information sheet, and general tips for commuter students.





# LANDLORD-TENANT INFORMATION

Landlord-tenant law can be confusing. Keep this information in mind when renting off-campus housing.

## LANDLORD-TENANT OBLIGATIONS

As a tenant, you have general obligations to:

- Comply with all health and housing codes, and city and community ordinances,
- Keep the premises reasonably clean,
- Use electricity, plumbing, and sanitary systems, heating and air conditioning, and elevators (if any) in a reasonable manner,
- Refrain from damaging or removing items from the premises, and
- Comply with reasonable rules and regulations provided in the rental agreement.

At the end of a lease period, the tenant is obligated to deliver the premises in clean and proper conditions as it was provided by the landlord except reasonable wear and tear. If the tenant fails to comply with his/her obligations, the landlord may seek remedies in court after giving reasonable notice to correct the deficiency. The landlord may also be awarded actual damages, attorney's fees, court costs, etc.

The landlord also has obligations to:

- Deliver the premises in a safe, clean, and habitable condition,
- Comply with all health and housing codes,
- Maintain common areas in proper condition, and
- Provide safe and working electricity, plumbing, sanitary systems, heating and air conditioning, elevators (if any), and appliances.

If the landlord has not met his/her obligations and the tenant has provided notice to the landlord and allowed reasonable time for the landlord to remedy the situation and he/she has failed to do so, the tenant may bring a lawsuit to seek actual and consequential damages, attorney's fees, court costs, etc.

The landlord may not interfere with the tenant's access to the rental property by changing the locks, removing doors and/or appliances, or shutting off the utilities unless the tenant has abandoned the property.

## EVICCTIONS

In order to be effectively evicted from your rental property, there must be a court order from the local small claims court. You must receive proper notice of an eviction hearing. The first hearing will determine who has rightful possession of the rental property – you or the landlord. The second hearing will be to determine damages owed.

If the tenant is delinquent on rent obligations but wants to stay in the rental property, it is often advantageous to explore settling with the landlord to pay all delinquent rent and any late fees to dismiss the eviction action.

If the eviction action were to go to trial, the parties have the right to a jury trial.

Even if the tenant has moved out of the premises and the tenant still owes rent or has caused damage to the property, the tenant is still obligated to appear at any and all hearings summoned by the court. Non-appearance will result in the default judgment against the tenant and the tenant may later be liable for damages, rent, attorney's fees, court costs, etc. that may appear and hurt their credit report. Moreover, moving out before the end of their lease still obligates tenants for the remaining months of the lease; however, landlords are obligated to mitigate the damages by attempting to re-rent the property.

If the tenant believes that the condition of the rental property could be disputed, it is advisable to take pictures and video as evidence if the landlord decides to dispute damage to the property in court.

## SECURITY DEPOSITS

In order for tenants to have rights on their security deposit, tenants must provide the landlord with their new mailing address after vacating the rental property. Once the landlord has been provided with a new mailing address, the landlord must send either a full refund of security deposit or an itemized list of alleged damages within 45 days of the tenant's vacating the property. If the landlord fails to provide this notice within the 45-day period, the former tenant has a claim for full refund as well as attorney's fees and costs, and the landlord has waived any subsequent claim for damages.

# APPENDIX A: OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING BUDGET AND INFORMATION SHEET

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date Available: \_\_\_\_\_  
Landlord Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Landlord Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Landlord Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Length of Lease  
Number of Bedrooms  
Rooming House License  
(if more than 3 bedrooms)? Yes/No  
Manager on site? Yes/No  
Square Footage

### MONETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Rent \$  
Application Fee \$  
Security Deposit \$  
Pets Allowed? Yes/No      Deposit: \$  
Utility Deposit \$  
Is a cosigner required?  
When is rent due?  
Fee for late rent? Yes/No \$

### LOCATION AND PARKING

Is parking available?  
How many blocks to campus?  
What is the closest bus line?  
How many off-street parking spots are available?  
Can I sublease?  
Has the building had any code violations?

UTILITIES AND SERVICES	LANDLORD PROVIDES	TENANT PROVIDES	COST
Heat/Gas			
Electricity			
Water/Sewer			
Cost of Laundry			
Snow Removal			
Lawn/Tree Care			
Cable/Internet			
Bike Storage			
Additional Storage			
Parking Costs			
Recycling			

# APPENDIX B: OFF-CAMPUS HOUSING SAFETY CHECKLIST

- \_\_\_ Will you feel safe here, day and night?
- \_\_\_ Does exterior lighting such as street lights, porch lights, or garage/alley lighting exist?
- \_\_\_ Are the entryways, sidewalks, and parking areas well-lit? Are they visible from the street?
- \_\_\_ Is parking available close to the door?
- \_\_\_ Is there room to park closer to the door at night and on weekends?
- \_\_\_ Is the garage/parking secure?
- \_\_\_ Are the basement and storage areas locked?
- \_\_\_ Do smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors work?
- \_\_\_ Are there locks on the windows?
- \_\_\_ Are there peepholes at the front door(s)?
- \_\_\_ Is there a locked lobby?
- \_\_\_ Are there deadbolts on all doors?
- \_\_\_ Are fire extinguishers available?
- \_\_\_ Are there ceiling sprinklers?
- \_\_\_ Does the laundry facility lock? (if applicable)
- \_\_\_ Does the property provide a security patrol or safety escort?

# APPENDIX C: DAMAGE CHECKLIST

## DAMAGE CHECKLIST (TENANT'S COPY)

If your landlord has their own checklist we suggest you use it.

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

Tenants \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Tenants: Fill out this form carefully. It will help protect your security deposit. Carefully note the exact condition of each item; be descriptive. Append as many sheets as necessary to fully inventory the apartment. Take photos, take your time ... it's your money.

- Make a copy of the checklist for yourself and your landlord/manager.
- Return a copy to your landlord within a week of moving in or when your lease states that it is due.
- Keep a copy as you will want to compare it with what you are charged for when you move out.
- Submit a written request to your landlord for you to be present during a final walk-through, at least 7 days before moving out.
- Discuss any deductions and ask for a copy of the final walk-through report. You should receive an itemized deduction sheet and your remaining security deposit.

### OUTSIDE AND ENTRANCE

Sidewalk \_\_\_\_\_  
Yard \_\_\_\_\_  
Porch and Railings \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailbox \_\_\_\_\_  
Doorbell \_\_\_\_\_  
Door \_\_\_\_\_  
Door Glass \_\_\_\_\_  
Door Lock \_\_\_\_\_  
Keys \_\_\_\_\_  
Door Screen \_\_\_\_\_  
Light \_\_\_\_\_  
Trashcan \_\_\_\_\_

### HALLWAYS AND STAIRWAYS

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

## LIVING ROOM

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Doors \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Carpet \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_

## KITCHEN

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Refrigerator \_\_\_\_\_  
Stove \_\_\_\_\_  
Burners \_\_\_\_\_  
Exhaust Fan \_\_\_\_\_  
Cabinets \_\_\_\_\_  
Counters \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_  
Sink \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_

## BEDROOM

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Doors \_\_\_\_\_  
Carpet \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Mirror \_\_\_\_\_  
Bed \_\_\_\_\_  
Frame \_\_\_\_\_  
Box Spring \_\_\_\_\_  
Mattress \_\_\_\_\_  
Closet \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_

## DINING ROOM

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Doors \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Carpet \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_

## BATHROOM

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Bathtub \_\_\_\_\_  
Shower \_\_\_\_\_  
Sink \_\_\_\_\_  
Toilet \_\_\_\_\_  
Mirror \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Towel Racks \_\_\_\_\_  
Cabinets \_\_\_\_\_  
Door \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_

## BEDROOM

Floor \_\_\_\_\_  
Walls \_\_\_\_\_  
Ceiling \_\_\_\_\_  
Doors \_\_\_\_\_  
Carpet \_\_\_\_\_  
Curtains \_\_\_\_\_  
Mirror \_\_\_\_\_  
Bed \_\_\_\_\_  
Frame \_\_\_\_\_  
Box Spring \_\_\_\_\_  
Mattress \_\_\_\_\_  
Closet \_\_\_\_\_  
Windows \_\_\_\_\_  
Screens \_\_\_\_\_  
Outlets \_\_\_\_\_  
Lights \_\_\_\_\_

Witnesses \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Notary \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Landlord \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Tenant \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX D: SAMPLE SUBLEASE AGREEMENT

## SAMPLE SUBLEASE AGREEMENT

### Terms of Sublease:

The subtenant \_\_\_\_\_ agrees to rent the property located at \_\_\_\_\_ from the tenant \_\_\_\_\_.

The subtenant shall rent the property from the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ until the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_. When the subtenant leaves the premises, it shall be clean and in good repair.

The subtenant also agrees to pay a security deposit of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_. This security deposit shall be returned, minus any damages or unpaid rent, within 10 days after termination of sublease and inspection of premises by tenant.

### Rent:

The subtenant shall pay rent of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per month on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of each month to \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

### Rules and Regulations:

The subtenant agrees not to transfer this sublease in whole or part without prior written consent of the tenant. The subtenant also agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of the attached lease, dated the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, between the property owner and the tenant.

Additional Provisions: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Tenant:** \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Subtenant:** \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Landlord:** \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not leave any blank spaces. Attach a copy of the original lease to the sub-lease. Make sure all parties involved have copies of both the original lease and sublease.

A sublease agreement should only be considered after approval from the Property Manager.

# APPENDIX E: SAMPLE ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

## ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

(Each roommate should receive a copy of this agreement)

We have signed a lease/rental agreement for \_\_\_\_\_  
(address) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date). We hope to make certain that responsibilities of  
renting will be shared equally by all roommates. It is for this reason that we are  
signing this agreement.

Roommates

The roommates of the above address are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## TERMS

This agreement shall remain in effect from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.  
Under a month-to-month tenancy, each roommate must give the other  
roommate(s) and landlord thirty days \_\_\_ written and/or \_\_\_ oral notice in  
advance, or as otherwise agreed to, if the roommate will be moving out before  
date shown above. The roommate may leave if a substitute roommate is found  
and is acceptable to the remaining roommate(s) and the landlord, and if sub-  
lease agreement is executed. Each roommate will be primarily responsible for  
finding his/her/their own replacement tenant.

Under a lease agreement, the departing roommate will be responsible for  
upholding the lease agreement until, and possibly after, a replacement or  
subletter is found.

The landlord should be notified of any pending roommate change so that  
proper arrangements can be made.

## DEPOSIT

The roommate(s) have paid a security deposit of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ (list the amount each roommate has paid). Each  
roommate is responsible for charges associated with the damages he/she/  
they or his/her/their guest(s) cause. If the cause cannot be determined, the  
roommates will split equally the cost of damages.

## RENT

Each roommate shall pay the following amount of rent: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Amounts may not be equal. The rent shall  
be paid on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of each month. Rent will be paid in the following  
manner (list all rental rates) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## PETS

If pets are permitted under the lease, each pet owner shall be responsible for

all damages caused by his/her/their pet. This includes damage to furniture, carpeting, flooring, blinds, doors, lawn, and garden.

### HOUSEHOLD SUPPLIES

A single ledger will be kept of all supplies purchased by each roommate. The supplies include such things as paper towels, toilet paper, cleaning fluids, dish detergent, foil, plastic trash bags, scrub brushes, and any other goods needed for the home that will be shared by all roommates.

### KITCHEN USE AND CLEAN-UP

Food expenses shall be shared by all roommates. Preparation of meals shall be determined by an attached schedule, which can be flexible.

OR

Food is to be bought by each roommate. There is to be no borrowing of food without prior approval. A separate space will be provided for each person's groceries. Shared meal preparation and clean-up is optional.

### PERSONAL PROPERTY

All roommates agree to refrain from borrowing another roommate's personal items without prior approval. Exceptions to this should be clearly stated, with the roommates reserving the right to change their minds about the sharing of their items. Property that is borrowed will be use respectfully and returned in the same condition. If damage is done to personal property, the roommate responsible for damage will be held liable.

### CLEANING AND YARDWORK

All roommates agree to share the responsibilities of cleaning and maintenance of the premises. This includes dusting, vacuuming, emptying trash, mopping/waxing floors, cleaning bathrooms, and yardwork.

The roommates have decided to develop a schedule, which is attached. It states when each roommate will complete the cleaning and maintenance jobs.

OR

The roommates will work together at a designated time to complete the above jobs.

### ADDITIONAL TERMS OF AGREEMENTS

In addition to the items mentioned above, the following items have been known to cause conflict between roommates. If you foresee any of these as a problem, write out any needed additional agreements and attach. Space is provided below for adding other issues needing specific agreements.

- Smoking/alcohol/drugs
- Parking
- Overnight guests
- Clean-up after parties/guests
- Use of sound system
- Behavior of guests
- Quiet hours for studying and sleeping
- Compliance with landlord's rules
- Shared areas (bathroom, living room, kitchen)

\_\_\_ Each roommate agrees to do his/her/their own dishes, as needed. A schedule of kitchen clean-up may be attached. It will include cleaning the refrigerator and oven, mopping the floors, and emptying the trash.

**UTILITIES**

The following services have been arranged and paid for as follows:

ITEM	ACCOUNT IN NAME OF	AMOUNT OF DEPOSIT	DEPOSIT PAID BY	HOW BILL WILL BE SHARED	NAME OF ROOMMATE RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT
Gas					
Water					
Electricity					
Trash					
TV/Internet					

Each roommate has been assigned the responsibility for payment of a specific bill. This includes:

\_\_\_ determining the amount owed by each roommate, collecting that amount, and seeing that payment is made before the due date.

OR

\_\_\_ responsibility for collecting and payment of all bills.

Signatures of Roommates

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