Tips for Finding a Rental Unit

Two important things to think about when you are looking for a rental unit are:
- The cost of the monthly rent
- All deposits (holding and security).

In addition to making sure that you know how much you are able to afford to spend, be sure to also consider the following:
- The kind of rental unit you want (for example, an apartment complex, duplex, or house)
- Whether you want a month-to-month rental agreement or a lease
- Access to schools, stores, medical facilities, public transportation, and other conveniences
- The quality of the neighborhood

You can obtain information on places to rent from many sources. Local newspapers usually carry classified advertisements on available rental units. Check the bulletin boards in public buildings, at local grocery markets, and local retail stores. Bakersfield College offers local housing information within the greater Bakersfield area. Please visit our website at https://www.bakersfieldcollege.edu/campus/student-housing or contact our office at 395-4355, located on the Bakersfield College Campus, Room CC-4.

Tips for Inspecting a Rental Unit

Carefully inspect the rental unit before you decide to rent. Make sure it’s been taken care of properly. When you inspect the rental unit, look for the following problems:
- Cracks in the floor or walls
- Signs of leaking or water damage
- Signs of rust in water from taps
- Lack of hot water
- Defective heating or air conditioning
- Improper ventilation and lighting
- Damaged flooring
- Damage to furnishings if it’s a furnished rental unit

Take photos of any damage, if possible and have the conversation with the landlord and or manager if damages will be fixed before a possible move-in? Also, remember to ask if utilities are included in the monthly rent. If some utilities are included in the monthly rent, make sure that those utilities are identified. Then you will know what remaining utilities the renter is liable for. (i.e., gas, electric, water, trash collection, and cable). Be prepared to be liable for some or if not all of these payments. If the rental unit is a house or duplex with a yard, you will need to know the renter’s responsibility for the upkeep of the yard. If the upkeep of the yard is the renter’s, ask if the landlord will supply necessary tools, like a hose and lawnmover.

During your initial walk through of the rental unit, you will have the chance to see how your potential landlord/manager reacts to any questions and concerns you may have about the unit. While you may not be able to reach on an agreement on every point (if any), how the two you get along will assist both the renter and the landlord decide on whether moving forward with the renting process is a good option for both.
Roommates
First-time students often come to college with the expectation of finding the perfect apartment or house and the perfect roommate. They envision finding a best friend, someone of like mind who will do everything with them.

However, this is not always the case. Many students may find themselves in conflict with their new roommates over the delegation of common duties, paying the rent, and respecting each other’s personal space in general. Such conflicts can quickly make your new home away from home a grueling experience.

Topics to Discuss:
- Identify the rent due date
- Discuss how the utilities that are not covered in the monthly rent will be divided.
- Discuss any and all lifestyle issues or concerns.
- What your respective schedules are. When you go to sleep and wake up.
- Discuss expectations of keeping your residence clean, who does what chores, how food is purchased and eaten, how loudly music should be, overnight guests, and pets. These are very important topics to discuss with a potential roommate before each of you move in.
- Set up house rules that both of you agree on. Sometimes, it may be a good idea to put house rules in writing.

Resolving Landlord Problems
California Law gives both tenants and landlords many rights as well as responsibilities. The Department of Consumer Affairs stresses that the best way for tenants and landlords to prevent problems in through clear communication. Tenants and landlords should discuss expectations and responsibilities before signing the rental agreement.

If a problem does occur, it’s best to first try to resolve it by discussing it with your landlord. Your landlord may be willing to correct the problem, or work out a solution. But if you can’t work out an agreement with him or her, California Law offers you many methods of solving your problem.

California Department of Consumer Affairs
California Department of Fair Employment and Housing
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Bakersfield College does not endorse any of the information found on these websites; they are being provided as a resource tool only.
**Off Campus Housing Listing**

This list of Off-Campus housing complexes and property managements is provided as a resource by Bakersfield College, Office of Student Life. If you have any questions about rates, availability please contact the individual complexes and the websites listed below.

**Suggested Websites**

- Rent Jungle.com
- Bakersfield Apartment Guide.com
- Bakersfield Studio Apartments.com
- Cheap Apartments for Rent/Apartments.com/Bakersfield
- Bakersfield Apartments rent.com
- Apartment finder.com
- Zillow.com

*When on the websites above enter zip codes, 93305, 93306 for listings surrounding Bakersfield College.*

**Property Managements**

- Golden Valley Apartments, 855-572-9398
- Whispering Meadows, 661-243-8756
- Camellia Terrace Apartment Homes, Bakersfield, CA 93307, 661-360-96240
- Villa Sienna Apartments, 6900 Valleyview Drive, Bakersfield, CA 661-871-1717 or villasienna@gsfpi.com

**Bakersfield Californian Newspaper- Classified Section**

You will find individual listings for apartments, houses and house share.

**Housing Services Reference Guide**

Listed below are agencies you may need to contact when renting.

**Utility Companies:**

- Pacific Gas & Electric (PGE)
- The Electric Company (depending on what side of town you live you may have to pay Gas to PGE and Electricity to The Electric Company.
- California Water Service (if you are paying for water. Most apartments pay for both water and garbage)
- Kern County Waste Management for trash pick-up
- Television & Home Phone Service- AT&T, Verizon, BrightHouse, Direct TV

For schools in your area log onto: [noodle.com/schools/Bakersfield](noodle.com/schools/Bakersfield)

When you enter your zip code it will give you the schools in your area (both elementary, middle and high school).