

# International Student Guide to RENTING AN APARTMENT IN MARIETTA, OHIO

## How do I find an apartment?

1. Consider what you are looking for (cost, location, size, etc.). Consider the financial benefit of sharing an apartment or house with one or several roommates.
2. Search available rental properties
  - Go to [www.mariettatimes.com](http://www.mariettatimes.com). Click on Classifieds and scroll down to the Apartment Rentals link.
  - Search local phone book Yellow Pages under, “*Apartments*” to find apartment buildings, individual landlords and real estate agents.
  - Ask the MC international student advisor, your mentor family, professors, and/or other students if they know of an apartment or room for rent.
3. If interested in an advertised apartment, call the landlord and explain what you are looking for.
4. Set up an appointment to view the property.
5. Many landlords will ask you to complete an application
6. Go over all questions and concerns
7. Sign the lease, making your agreement to rent official.

*\* Apartments vary greatly in quality and cost. Do not be surprised if you discover a friend is paying less or more than you for a similar apartment. There are many variables that determine the price of a rental property, including: age and upkeep of the building, furnishings or utilities included and quality/age of appliances, windows and doors, etc.*

## **Landlords recommended by international students**

Ms. Jan Bertram (Bertram Development)	(740) 373-2223	bertramdevelop@yahoo.com
Mr. David Graham (Proverbs 16)	(740) 350-2413	davebarbucp@hotmail.com
Mr. Matthew Glancy	(304) 422-0621	mbglancy5b@msn.com
Ms. Cheryl Koelsch	(740) 350-1528	--
Mrs. Wendy Myers	(740) 568-0056	wkmyers@charter.net
Ms. Robin (Silverheels, Inc.)	(740) 374-8150	--
Mr. Jeremy Stutler	(740) 585-2702	stutlja@cpchem.com
Mr. Adrian Vandyk (Vandyk Rentals)	(740) 374-5508	vandyk@charter.net

## **What to ask the landlord when discussing properties and before signing the lease**

- What are the bathroom, cooking, and laundry facilities?
- Who pays for utilities (electricity, water, gas, trash removal)?
- Are the heat and hot-water powered by gas or electric?
- Is the thermostat accessible so I can adjust the temperature as I wish?
- Does this apartment offer central air cooling, a window unit, or no air conditioning?
- How old are the windows/doors?
- Are screens, mini-blinds or other window treatment included?
- Who pays for garbage removal? Where do I need to take the garbage?
- What other services are provided, for example, snow removal, cutting the grass?
- Are there any restrictions to internet or cable access in this apartment?

*\* Factors such as floor coverings (for example: carpet or hard wood) and door and window quality affect the cost of heating/cooling the apartment.*

**Before signing the lease, go over the above questions again and also ask:**

- Who is responsible for pest control if there are any problems?
- Who is responsible for major and minor repairs and maintenance?
- Does the lease include a break clause that allows you to break the lease (usually with 30 days notice)
- What is the consequence for breaking the lease? How much would I have to pay? Would it come out of my security deposit or would there be other fees?
- Are their circumstances such as a school transfer or a home emergency that are exceptions to the fee normally imposed for breaking the lease early.
- Is there a sublet clause that allows me to rent the apartment to others during the summer if I decide to leave but still want to keep the apartment?
- If I leave the U.S. for the summer, can I hold the apartment at a reduced rate?
- Are there restrictions on pets, children, number of occupants, entertaining, parking?
- If I want to invite a friend to live with me at a later date, will that be possible?
- What are the conditions that must be met in order to get the security deposit back?
- Do you charge all tenants a cleaning fee when they leave? If so, how much should we expect if the apartment is in good condition?
- When would the security deposit be returned after completion of the lease term?

*\* You may request answers to any of these questions to be written and included in the lease or on a supplemental form, signed by both you and the landlord.*

**Before you make your final decision and sign the lease**

- Call the Utilities for a history of what past renters at that location have paid.
- Figure in optional costs such as telephone, cable television, internet to get a sense of the total cost of the apartment.
- If you are unsure of your English, Ask a mentor family member, friend, adviser to read over the lease with you.

**Before you move in**

Call the Utilities to have your electricity, water, and gas turned on. Tell the operator you are interested in setting up new residential service.

1. **Water:** Marietta Water and Sewage 373-3515 (304 Putnam Street)
  2. **Electricity:** American Electric Power 1-800-277-2177 (toll free)
  3. **Gas:** Dominion 1-800-362-7557 (toll free)
- For **cable television and internet service:**
    - For both cable television and internet, most people in Marietta use Suddenlink Communications: [www.suddenlink.com](http://www.suddenlink.com) 1-800-972-5757
    - Look in the Yellow Pages under “Cable Television and Satellite Companies” and “Internet- On-Line Service Providers”
  - For **telephone service:**
    - SBC Global: 1-800-660-1000 (toll free) They have a reduced rate of \$8-9 per month for students with no income
    - AT&T: 1-800-222-0300 (toll free)
    - Look in the Yellow Pages under “Telephone Companies”

*\* Consider buying local phone service and using phone cards for long-distance and international calls. Mobile phones in the US require a Social Security Number which new international students will not have.*

## **Buying furniture/appliances**

There are several options for finding furniture for your apartment.

- Local auctions--
- Yard sales (people selling used goods)—search the newspaper or walk around town
- The Salvation Army—used furniture and home accessories (be cautious about buying furniture with fabric such as beds and couches as they may be dirty)
- Students—ask older students if they have any extra furniture or know anyone who does
- Yellow Pages—Search the local phone book under “*Furniture-Used*” and “*Furniture-Retail*”
- Big Lots, Wal-Mart or K-Mart-- these and other local stores sell reasonably priced furniture.

\* *Most apartments (furnished or unfurnished) include a refrigerator and an oven/stovetop.*

\* *The amount and type of furniture included in a “furnished” apartment varies. However, a typical arrangement might include a stove, refrigerator, microwave, bed, dresser, a couch and a kitchen table and chairs. It might also include a study desk, an entertainment center, and lamps.*

## **Tips from international students**

The following is a helpful list of reminders to keep your landlord happy and to protect you.

- Make certain you have a copy of your lease (with all signatures)
- If you make arrangements with your landlord, get a copy from him/her in writing (email is fine). This may help you to avoid misunderstanding and to protect you.
- Take your trash outside at least once a week
- Clean your stove and all cooking areas daily
- Remember that you must return the apartment exactly the same as when you moved in. If it is dirty or damaged, you will lose your deposit (and maybe pay more)

## **Important Terms**

### **Utilities (Basic Services)**

Apartments use different combinations of electricity and gas for heating and appliances.

- Electricity and natural gas are usually available only through a single company (utility) in a given area.
- Good quality water is provided by the local government.

### **Lease (Contract)**

A lease is a written rental agreement between you (the tenant) and the landlord. It is a binding legal contract and is usually required for the first year.

- Unless directly stated, the lease prohibits the raising of the rent while it is in effect.
- Without a lease, you or the landlord can choose to end the agreement anytime (with sufficient notice)
- The lease should detail included appliances (stove, refrigerator, laundry machine) and services.

### **Security Deposit**

All landlords require tenants to pay a security deposit (or “damage deposit”) at the lease signing. This protects the landlord if you fail to pay the rent or damage the property.

- The deposit is usually equivalent to 1 month’s rent.
- Money will be kept for cleaning, removal of items left behind and/or minor damages if the apartment is returned in bad condition.
- The remainder of the deposit will be returned (typically in 1-2 weeks) if you have abided by the lease terms.