

Before You Move In:

Tip 1: Do Your Research - Start early!

While there are many websites advertising apartments, many of the apartments don't have to pass any inspection before they are listed. Talk to other students who live in Utica to see what they know about neighborhoods, or apartments available. Some apartments fill up quickly when the school start date is approaching, you might want to look for rentals early.

ONLINE APARTMENT LISTINGS

MVCC does not endorse any of the websites below:

[Craigslist](#)

[Apartment Finder](#)

[Facebook Marketplace](#)

[Trulia](#)

[Apartment Guide](#)

Decide what size of apartment you want and if you want to live with roommates. Be mindful when selecting your roommates/housemates. Choose roommates who will fulfill their share of obligations for the rent. Discuss and establish a mutual agreement about things like, quiet hours, guest policy, grocery share/or not, cleaning responsibilities, etc.

Tip 2: View the Apartment

Because choosing a place to live is one of the most important decisions you will make when you come to Utica, it's a good idea to visit and inspect the apartment (make sure to take a friend, you should NOT visit an apartment alone).

Think about:

- [Location](#) - if you don't have a car, choose an apartment within walking distance of MVCC or is close to a Centro bus line.
- [Neighborhood Safety](#)
- [Neighborhood Amenities](#)
- [Closeness to Public Transportation/Parking](#)

- Apartment Condition
- Security Deposit
- Cost - The average cost for a 1 bedroom apartment in Utica is \$690.
 - However, most students will rent a multi-unit house. In this scenario many students will pay rent ranging from \$200 – \$400 (per month). Utilities such as Cable TV, Internet, Electric, Heat and Hot water typically cost extra and will be split evenly amongst the inhabitants.

Tip 3: Learn about your landlord

It's a good idea to find out as much as you can about the landlord BEFORE YOU SIGN THE LEASE. You can do so by looking them up online or asking for references from their previous tenants. You can also interview the landlord. If a landlord refuses to answer your questions, it might be a good idea to consider other options.

You might want to ask:

- Do you live nearby? Can you quickly respond to emergencies? What is the procedure for requesting repairs?
- How many people can live in the apartment?
- How much is the security deposit? How much of it do you typically refund the tenant at the end of the lease?
- Will the locks be changed before I move in?
- Are utilities (electricity, water, heat) included in the rent?
- What are the average monthly costs for utilities?
- Are the appliances (stove, oven, refrigerator, microwave, dishwasher, washer, dryer) in good condition?
- Will you supply garbage containers and recycling bins? Where are they stored? When is garbage collected?
- Is there a laundry on-site? Is it coin-operated?

Tip 4: Sign your Lease

It is important to have a lease when you move into an apartment. This makes sure you know what you are responsible for and what your landlord is responsible for. It also explains the rules of the apartment, so you know what is expected of you as a tenant.

Leases are generally for one year. It can be convenient if you decide to go home for the summer yet still want someplace to put your belongings. However you might not want to pay for the rent for the whole year if you are not staying for the summer. In this case, you might think about subletting your place while you are away. Not all landlords allow their tenants to sublet their apartments/houses, so take this into account when signing contracts. For more information about what to look for in a lease agreement: <http://blog.studentcaffe.com/college-student-lease-agreement/>

Before moving in with roommates, understand that all tenants are each responsible for all of the rent (not just their part of the rent).

This means that, if your roommate moves out, you will be expected to pay the full rent.

Tip 5: Be careful when paying your rent and security deposit

Do not pay cash and don't pay too much in advance. It's best to pay your rent by personal check, as you will then have a record of having paid. And, while it is typical for a landlord to ask for first and last month's rent plus a security deposit, never pay more than that amount in advance.

Tip 6: Consider Renter's Insurance

Since your landlord's insurance will not cover your personal belongings, you should consider purchasing renters insurance in case of theft, fire, loss or damage to your personal effects.

[Renters Insurance — What You Should Know](#)

After You Move In:

Tip 7: Document the condition of your apartment when moving in

Most rentals require a deposit-usually the equivalent of one month's rent. At the end of your lease you will get this deposit back, less any fees for damages. If there is any damage to your apartment when you move in, take pictures of it and tell your landlord so they do not charge you for that damage when you move out. Most reputable landlords will ask you to fill out an "Apartment Inventory and Condition Report". This is for their protection - and yours!

Tip 8: Document any complaints you make to your landlord

If you have a complaint, call your landlord, but it's a good idea to follow up with an email. If you have to go to Court, written evidence is the best kind, and the Court will accept such letters as evidence that the landlord was informed of the problem.

Tip 9: Get to know your neighbors

Your neighbors can be your most valuable resource! Introduce yourself to neighbors and develop a good relationship with them by keeping the noise down and keeping your property clean.

Tip 10: Contact MVCC if you have a serious problem with your landlord or housing.

If you have a serious problem with your landlord or housing, you should contact Emily.

Do not tolerate situations that jeopardize your health

No hot water, inadequate heating, dangerous wiring, mold, insects, rodents are some examples. Unlivable conditions can be legal grounds to break a lease. If you live in bad conditions for too long, it becomes more difficult for you to argue that the apartment is unlivable, however.

Tip 10: Information on living in Utica

Each week your street will have a day that the city picks up your garbage/recycling - here is a map of pick-up days on page 5 of [this PDF](#). All recycling in Utica needs to be in a bin that is labeled with a sticker given out in the authority's Main Office (1600 Genesee St.). Garbage must be placed in blue bags that can be purchased at most grocery stores and gas stations - a full list of places to buy bags is on [page 4](#).

Parking on the street is not allowed between 2am-6am. Parking tickets can be over \$50 each, so be sure to take your car (or your friend's car) off the street at night. Parking on the sidewalk also will get you a ticket. If you do not pay your ticket within 72 hours, the price of the ticket increases!