8 Quick Leasing Tips

1. Budget Wisely
   • Be honest and determine what you can afford.
   • Be conscious of when payments are due.
   • If you have a roommate, make sure to develop a plan for how bills will be paid.
   • When defining the budget, take the following items into consideration:
     - Application Fees
     - Holding Fees
     - Security Deposit
     - Rent
     - Utilities
     - Internet
     - Cable
     - Food
     - Parking and Transportation
     - Renters Insurance
     - Moving Expenses
     - Unforeseen Expenses

2. Location. Location. Location.
   • Consider how close you want to live to campus.
   • Visit the apartment complex at various times throughout the day and on the weekends to make sure you feel comfortable with the environment.
   • Research the crime statistics for the area.
   • Tour the apartment you are considering renting to check the condition of the apartment as well as to check for fire safety, home safety, and working appliances/plumbing.
   • Don’t be afraid to talk to other tenants about their experience.
   • Talk to your friends and find out what they know about the apartment complex and property manager.
3. Read the Details

• Lease Term
  o When does the lease begin and end?
  o If I break a lease, what happens? Is there a fee?

• Subleasing
  o Does the property allow subleasing?
  o What are the policies for tenant changes?

• Co-Signing
  o Do I need a co-signer?
  o Who can I ask to be my co-signer?

• Pets
  o Are pets allowed?
  o What are the costs and policies associated with pets?

• Cost
  o What forms of payment are acceptable for rent?
  o What are the fees for late rent payments, and when are the fees applied?
  o How much is the deposit? What portion of the deposit do I get back when I move out?
  o Is there an application fee?
  o Are there any utilities included in the rent?
  o What are the amenities, and do they cost extra?
  o Are there any limitations to decorations?

4. Know Your Rights

• Under what conditions does management have the right to enter my dwelling?

• Review the City Codes, or if there are questions concerning rental housing, the best approach is to contact the Planning & Codes Administration for the city where the rental unit is located.

• Consider researching the South Carolina Residential Landlord and Tenant Act.
5. Roommates

- Meet any potential roommates before agreeing to live with them.
- Talk about mutual living expectations.
- More Roommate Tips.

6. Renters Insurance

- Is renter’s insurance included?
- Is renter’s insurance required?
- In order to protect your property, renter’s insurance is important to have whether or not the apartment complex requires it.

7. Keep a Copy

- Make sure to obtain a copy of all documents you sign.
- Make sure to keep copies of all documents in a safe place.

8. Document the Move-In

- Before you move anything into the apartment, take pictures of the current condition of the apartment and the items provided with the apartment.
- Alert the property manager of any damages or items of concern.
- Keep these documents and records of communication in a safe place.