INDEPENDENT HOUSING GUIDE

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*DCEH/The Art Institute, neither inspects nor endorses any unit or home, landlord or property locations contained in this guide. All listed rental rates and transit prices are subject to change. If you have further questions or need additional assistance, please contact the Student Life office.*
A Step-By-Step Guide

To Finding Independent Student Housing

Step 1: Decide what you can afford to pay each month.

Complete a prospective monthly budget.

Step 2: Decide how far from school you would like to live.

Calculate commuting time as well as distance from the school.

Step 3: Decide if you want to live alone or with roommates.

Sharing a house or apartment with a roommate is a great way to keep expenses down. Find a roommate you will be compatible with!

Step 4: Decide what type of housing you are looking for.

Do you want to live somewhere that has a lot of students? Do you need a place that’s furnished? Are you going to have pets? How long do you want to be committed to a lease? How much space do you need? Do you want certain amenities such as a pool, garage, or exercise facility? The answers to all these questions will help you determine if you would be more suited to renting an apartment, a condominium, a townhouse or a home.

Step 5: Do some comparison research.

Once you’ve decided the type of property you are interested in, you can consult the right information sources such as apartment guides or websites, such as craigslist.org. Also, call the local police precinct for crime statistics of specific areas.

Step 6: Narrow your search and begin visiting properties.

Generate a list of your top 5-10 picks and call to schedule an appointment to visit the property. (Remember, many offices are closed or have limited hours on weekends.) If you are going to have a roommate, make sure that person goes along with you.

Once you’re there, ask about flooding, incidences of crime, parking regulations, and the upkeep of the premises. Make sure to ask if there is
a deposit required, and if it is refundable. Examine the outside of the complex; is it in good repair?

Ask if the terms of the lease are negotiable (3, 6, 9, or 12 months)? Is subletting allowed? Understand the “rules” of the house/community regards noise, visitors, smoking, parking, pets, etc. Understand what repairs/damages you are responsible for and which are the responsibility of the manager/owner. If you are looking at apartments, make sure you ask to see the exact apartment you will be getting, and not just the model.

Based on the information you’ve gathered, and your overall impression of the places you’ve visited, you should now be able to select a property.

**Before you sign that lease...**

**Step 7:** Read those leases! Also, realize that you may need a co-signer/guarantor (such as a parent) in order to secure a lease. A lease is a legally binding agreement. Should you break your lease, you may still be responsible for paying the rent even if you are no longer there. The property manager/owner typically is not able to make allowances for roommate conflicts. If a roommate leaves, the person who signed the lease is responsible for the entire rent payment. It is your right to have the property manager/owner go over your lease with you. Ask them to do so.

**Step 8:** Your search is over, now what?

Time to get set-up in your new home! See to setting up your utilities, phone service, cable, and newspaper service, as well as renter’s insurance. Be sure to make your new home as secure as possible.
Galleries at Park Lane

Floorplans and Pricing

App fee: $99
Admin fee: $75
Deposit: free for students

S1
1 Bedroom / 1 Bath
Rent: $1,175/month
Sq. Ft: 614

S1.1
1 Bedroom / 1 Bath
Rent: $1,230/month
Sq. Ft: 692

Contact Information
Telephone Number
(469) 547-1168

Address
8110 Park Ln.
Dallas, Texas 75231

Website
http://www.galleriesatparklane.com

Office Hours
Sunday: CLOSED
Monday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Tuesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Wednesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Thursday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Friday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Saturday: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

App fee: $99
Admin fee: $75
Deposit: free for students
Apartment Features

Unique & distinctive floorplans
Mosaic tile backsplashes
Glass front cabinets
10’ - 16’ soaring ceilings*

Gourmet kitchen islands*
Floor to ceiling windows*
(*only available in select units)

Community Features

Zero Edge Saltwater Pool
Discount at local shops
Fully equipped Crossfit Room

Integrated saltwater jacuzzi
2 State-of-the-art fitness centers
Resident TV Lounge
2 minute walk to campus

Walking Directions
From The Art Institute of Dallas - To Galleries
.08 miles ~ 2 minutes
Cambridge Court Apartments

Contact Information

Telephone Number
(214)-363-7646

Address
5959 East NW Highway
Dallas, TX 75251

Website
http://www.cambridgecourtapartmenthomes.com

Floorplans and Pricing

Efficiency
Rent: $697/month
Sq. Ft: 530
Deposit: $100

1 Bedrooms / 1 Bath
Rent: $697/month
Sq. Ft: 582
Deposit: $100

2 Bedrooms / 2 Baths
Rent: $1,270/month
Sq. Ft: 1086
Deposit: $200

Office Hours

Sunday: CLOSED
Monday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Tuesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Wednesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Thursday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Friday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Saturday: 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM
Community Features

Convenient Elevators
Community Clothes Care Centers
FREE Covered Parking
Controlled Access/Gated
24 Hour Emergency Maintenance
On-Site Maintenance
Package Receiving
Short Term Leases Available

Trash Chutes on All Floors
On the Bus Line
24 Hour Fitness Center Pet Friendly
Freeway Access
2 Sparkling Pools

Additional Information

Application Fee: $50 a person
Administration Fee: $75

Centralized Heating and Air Internet Access

**Similar apartments and prices can be found at www.canyoncreekapartmenthomes.com/**

Bus Directions
From The Art Institute of Dallas - To Cambridge Court
Apartments ~ 11 minutes/16 minute walk
Avondale Parc at Bellmar

Contact Information

Telephone Number
(214) 363-8595

Address
10850 Stone Canyon Road
Dallas, Texas 75230

Website
http://www.avondaleparcaps.com

Floorplans and Pricing

1 Bedroom / 1 Bath
Rent: $775/month
Sq. Ft: 474

2 Bedrooms / 2 Bath
Rent: $1,050/month
Sq. Ft: 903

Application Fee: $50 a person
Administration Fee: $200

Office Hours

Sunday: CLOSED

Monday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Tuesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Wednesday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Thursday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Friday: 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Apartment Features

First Floor
- Granite Countertop
- Full size Washer/Dryer
- Washer/Dryer Hookup
- Stainless steel appliances
- Black appliances
- Upgrade 1 Bedroom

Second Floor
- 6 inch baseboards
- Stackable W/D connections
- Quartz Countertops
- Ceramic backsplash
- White Cabinets

Community Features

- Cyber Cafe with WiFi access
- Beautifully Landscaped Courtyards
- Gated Community
- Resort Style Pool
- State of the Art Indoor & Outdoor Fitness Center

**Similar apartments and prices can be found at www.aberdeendallas.com/**
Bus Directions
From The Art Institute of Dallas – To Avondale ~ 27 minutes

Driving Directions
From Avondale - To The Art Institute of Dallas
1.5 miles ~ 6 minutes
The Pearl at Midtown

Floorplans and Pricing

1 Bedroom / 1 Bath
Rent: $700/month
Sq. Ft: 400
Deposit: $250

1 Bedroom / 1 Bath
Rent: $850/month
Sq. Ft: 734
Deposit: $250

2 Bedrooms / 2 Bath
Rent: $1,175/month
Sq. Ft: 1034
Deposit: $350

Contact Information

Telephone Number
(214) 444-7206

Address
6008 Ridgecrest Road Dallas, TX 75231

Website
http://www.pearlatmidtown.com/

Office Hours

Sunday: 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Monday: 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Tuesday: 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Wednesday: 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Thursday: 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Friday: 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Saturday: 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
**Community Features**

- Online Payments Available
- Inviting Lobbies and Mazzanines
- Clubroom/Game Room
- Premier Fitness Facility
- Resident Package Center
- Conference and Cyber Cafe
- Limited Entry with Controlled Access
- Gated Assigned Covered Parking
- Indoor Pool and Lounge Deck
- Heated Covered Spa
- Laundry Facilities
- Pet Friendly

**Special Features**

**Additional Features**

- Beverage/Latte Lounge
- Vertical Blinds
- Fireplaces*
- Ceramic Tile Flooring
- Spacious Patios/Balconies
- Washer/Dryer Connections*
- Vertical Blinds
- Fireplaces*
- Ceramic Tile Flooring
- Spacious Patios/Balconies
- Washer/Dryer Connections*

- Spacious Closets
- Frost Free Refrigerators
- Built in Microwave
- Paneled Doors
- Smoke Detectors

**Application Fee:** $50
**Administration Fee:** $100

**Bus Directions**

From The Art Institute of Dallas - To Pearl at Midtown ~ 9 minutes
Apartment Lease Guide

Financial Requirements
In order to rent an apartment, you will be asked to complete an application form by your prospective landlord. You may also be required to pay an amount for credit reports and/or application fees. Landlords are mainly concerned with you and/or your guarantor having steady income and good credit. Many landlords require that the prospective tenant have an income equal to 2-4 times the monthly rent in monthly salary (combined income is used for roommates). You and your roommate will need to have all of your income verification paperwork readily available upon application for an apartment.

Funds
When the landlord approves your apartment application, be prepared to pay the first month's rent and the security deposit upon lease signing. Most landlords require that these funds be paid in the form of separate certified checks or money orders. Most Landlords will not accept personal checks or credit cards.

Questions to Ask When Inspecting the Property
• In what condition are the appliances?
• In what condition is the plumbing? Is the water pressure relatively steady? Does the hot water stay hot? (Ask to check these yourself.)
• Do you ever see bugs or rodents?
• Where are the electrical outlets? Are they adequate for computer, sound systems, and appliances?
• How loud/quiet is the building at night and weekends? How about the neighbors?
• How is the security in the building? Are there deadbolt locks and a peephole on the door? Do the windows all close and lock securely?

Signing Your Lease
Leases are important for clarification of the responsibilities of the landlord and tenant. If you don't have a lease, the landlord could ask you to leave or raise your rent on short notice. Factors such as when your rent is due, if pets are allowed, and who is responsible for maintenance need to be clear in the lease. Any changes to the standard lease are usually included in a separate lease rider.

How to Search for an Apartment
“No Fee” search options and apartments for rent are often listed in local newspapers and shopping guides. Other search options may or may not have fees for their services.

Other Search Options:
1. Apartments.com
2. Rent.com
3. Craigslist.org
4. Hotpads.com
5. ASAPapartmentfinders.com
What can I Afford?

Consider the full range of your expenses such as tuition, food, rent, and transportation. It is easy to forget some items that are monthly and routine such as car payments. And entertainment items such as movie and concert tickets, pizzas and snacks can add up to a considerable amount if they are not planned. Without a budget plan and continuous review of both your income and expenses, you run the risk of depleting your financial resources. For many students, this situation becomes one where they believe they have lost control of their life situation. This can result in panic feelings and physical distress. Resources in Student Life, Financial Aid, and Counseling Services through Talk One2One may assist you in facilitating a resolution to the problem. In order to determine what to rent, think very carefully about your budget and how much you can afford. Take into consideration all sources of income, such as job income, money from loans, grants etc. when calculating what you can afford. Generally your rent should not be more than one-quarter to one-third of your total monthly income.

Length of Lease

Leases are for one or two years and generally begin on the 1st or the 15th of the month. There are some landlords that will offer six month leases or sometimes even month to month leases.

Safety & Security

1. Before you select a place to live, call the local police for crime statistics in your area.

2. Get to know your apartment manager, the staff in your community, and your neighbors.

3. Be observant of your neighbors’ traffic patterns so that you know what’s “typical” and will recognize someone who is out of place.

4. Where are the nearest laundry facilities? If on the property, do they get crowded? Are they free or coin-operated?

5. How is the security in the building? Are there deadbolt locks and a peephole on the door? Do the windows all close and lock securely?

6. Always look through the peephole viewer to see who is outside your door. Never open it for someone you don’t know.

7. If someone you don’t know or trust asks you to make an emergency phone call, don’t open the door. You make the call for them.

8. Give no indication in the phone directory that you are a female or living alone.

9. When returning home, make sure that you are not being followed. Be on the lookout for anyone who may be waiting for you to unlock your door so that they can force way in.
What About Furniture?

Start out by buying the things you need immediately, like a bed or kitchen table. Start off by making a list of what furniture you need, and organize that list from top priority to what you could do without for now. Then, work through the list as you purchase items.

You can ask friends and family for furniture if they have any furniture they are no longer using. You can also find cheap furniture in relatively good condition on websites like Craigslist or apps like Offerup. However, before you bring any furniture home with you, make sure it is clean and pest free, and the last thing you want in your new place are a few unexpected roommates like bed bugs!

Once you have your furniture must-haves, you can be patient to accumulate the nice pieces you want. Try including a furniture fund as part of your monthly budget. As you put money aside, you can save up to buy the really nice pieces of furniture that you really want. Good Luck!

Having trouble getting started? You can try visiting here:
https://www.getbellhops.com/blog/how-to-furnish-your-first-apartment-for-1000/

(the link above has broken a list down into all the essential pieces you will need to furnish your apartment and where to find them.)

Ai Dallas furniture was previously provided by:
Charter Furniture Clearance/Outlet
972.385.1911
https://www.furniturebycharter.com/clearance.inc
Finding the Right Roommate

Finding Them and Keeping Them!

Picking the right roommate is very important and should not be done in a hurry.

But how do you know if the person that answers your ad is the right roommate for you?

Believe it or not, the first step in your roommate search is to know yourself! Then you will have a better idea about the types of behaviors you find desirable in a roommate, and you can then express your preferences in your ad!

Roommate Search Engines

www.roommates.com
www.roomiemsatch.com
www.roomsurf.com
www.roomster.com

Remember To Find Roommate!
Two options for setting up Utilities

Option 1: Transfer your existing utilities to your new home.

If you're only heading across town, you should be able to keep all the utility service providers you have now. This is an easy process -- just request the last day of service for your old place and the first day of service for your new home.

Option 2: Establish fresh accounts

You may not be able to transfer your account if you're moving to an area that is not serviced by your current providers. When this is the case, request a last day of service (effectively canceling the account) and set up the utility with a new provider.

Timeline for Setting up Utilities

Always give a utility provider adequate notice when canceling service to avoid overpaying or incurring fees.

(Consider the company early on to find out how much notice you need to give)

The same holds true when you start a service. Determine how far out you'll need to set up utilities so they're operating when you move in.

(When you make this initial point of contact, also ask if a deposit is required to turn on service. This way, you'll be prepared and can budget accordingly.)
“To get a nice big picture of your electricity expenses, you can turn to any number of calculators on the Internet, provided by power companies, government agencies, energy-efficiency organizations and apartment rental Web sites.”

Google:
CPS Energy: Calculate Your Home Energy Costs

If you live in a small apartment and use about 550 kW/h per month, which is about average, and you’re paying about $0.10 per kW/h, again the average, you’ll receive a bill each month for $55.

Timeline Continued…

- Ask your landlord, Management Company or even sales office personnel for an access code or key to navigate a security fence if you’re moving into a gated community.
- Sometimes exterior security gates or doors can be opened by the resident using his or her landline’s key pad. But if you don’t have or don’t want a landline, ask what other ways you can let in visitors. You just may have to go to the gate to welcome in guests. If you’re adamant about not wanting a landline, it may be worth selecting a unit as close to the entrance as possible.

Choosing your Utility Provider:

- Talk to friends or neighbors about the companies providing their utilities and the quality of service they have received.

  Ask questions like:

  1. What prompted you to choose those providers over others?
  2. How happy are you with the service?
  3. What’s the customer service like?
  4. Have you had any problems – and if so, how quickly were they fixed?
  5. What are the rates?
  6. Are there any deals or discounts you know about?

- Research online

  - Visit utility companies’ Web sites to determine what they offer and how these services stack up against competitors.
  - Read customer reviews or opinions on blogs or sites like Yelp.com.

Information provided by:
When to Start Your Housing Search

You may want to acquaint yourself with the Dallas area two months prior to your desired move date. Become familiar with factors such as neighborhoods, pricing, amenities, location of mass transit and commuting time.

If you do your research more than 60 days prior to moving to Dallas, keep in mind you are just getting an idea about what is available. Any specific apartments that you see months in advance, may already be rented when you are looking to sign a lease.

Most leases only require 30 days notice of intent to vacate. As a result, some landlords will begin looking for new tenants a mere 30 days before the current tenant moves out.

A period of 60 days prior to moving is a good time to get in touch with realtors, property management companies, private owners, or tenants looking for roommates.

Sylvia Nelms from ASAP Apartment Finders can help students find affordable housing options as well. Again, The Art Institute of Dallas/DCEH is in no way affiliated with ASAP Apartment Finders, but Sylvia will work to find something that works for you.

Sylvia Nelms
Owner
bnelms@mac.com
214-599-9883
877-356-9883

A free service not affiliated with any apartment company.

Visit:
ASAPapartmentfinders.com

The Art Institute of Dallas/DCEH is in no way affiliated with any of the properties or sources listed.