

ALBANY HOUSE HUNTING TIPS **FOR GRAD STUDENTS**

HOW CAN I FIND APARTMENTS THAT ARE FOR RENT?

There are four main sources of apartment leads: the Albany Times-Union (www.timesunion.com) the off-campus housing office, the Renters Guide (www.rentersguidealbany.com), or signs in windows. Anecdotal evidence shows that TU listings tend not to be close to campus, university listings tend to be more in neighborhoods that are less well kept, renters guide listings tend to be pricey but some are nice and affordable, and walking around works pretty well. If this last technique is used, it is advisable to carry a cell phone with you (i.e. to call right away and say, "I am waiting outside. When can you be here?") Walking around also has the advantage of giving you a feel for various neighborhoods.

ON CAMPUS HOUSING

Graduate student housing is available on the Uptown campus in Empire Commons and Freedom Quad, and Downtown on Alumni Quad. You can contact the Department of Residential Life at 518-442-5875 or via reslife@uamail.albany.edu. Want some info first? Try <http://www.albany.edu/housing>.

HOW CAN I FIND A ROOMMATE?

One good way is to post to the NEWROCK listserv. This way you can connect with other incoming students. If you are looking to live with a returning student, check the MPA and MPP listservs. The UAlbany online housing board also has some listings of people looking for roommates.

WHERE ARE THE BUSY STREETS?

Whether you want to live close to them or far away, Lark Street, Madison, Washington, Western, and Central are the big, commercial streets near the campus. Lark is smaller (but louder) and with more foot traffic than the others. Madison and Washington have more housing on them than Western and Central

WHAT NEIGHBORHOODS SHOULD I LOOK IN?

For a relatively small city, Albany has a wide variety of neighborhoods, so there are plenty of opportunities to find a place that is the right size and price and that is in a neighborhood you like. If you don't have a car—or don't want to commute—there is plenty of housing within a 10 minute walk from the campus. Most students who live nearby live between Swan and Allen and between Washington and Madison. This keeps you close to the campus, Washington Park, downtown, and major highways. Grad students tend to live East of Lake where the apartments tend to be better kept. Undergrads tend to live West of Quail, and the apartments tend to be in less well-kept condition. Prices reflect this difference.

WHAT PRICES SHOULD I EXPECT TO PAY?

Prices are always subject to market conditions, but here are some general guidelines:
(Assume that utilities are not included).

Studio	\$300-450
1 BR	\$400-600
2 BR	\$550-800
3 BR	\$800-1200

ELECTRIC OR GAS HEAT?

This is a big issue in Albany. Many apartments are equipped with electric heat. This can be very expensive in the winter (upwards of \$100 per month), so don't make housing decisions without finding out whether it is gas or electric heat. Often, if heated by gas, apartments come with utilities included. Aim for an apartment with heat included.

WHERE CAN I STAY WHILE I AM LOOKING FOR HOUSING?

You may want to post a short term sublet request on mpa@listserv.albany.edu, mpp@listserv.albany.edu, or padoc@listserv.albany.edu. Since many students may be away during the summer and would be willing to let a new student stay at their place while searching. Otherwise try area bed and breakfasts (they tend to be less expensive than the hotels). They are:

Mansion Hill Inn
115 Philip St
Albany, NY
518-465-2038

Pinewoods House
161 Pinewoods Ave
Troy, NY
518-271-6881

Pine Haven Bed & Breakfast
531 Western Ave
Albany, NY
518-482-1574

State House
399 State St
Albany, NY
518-427-6063

State Street Mansion B & B
281 State St
Albany, NY
518-462-6780

DO I NEED A CAR?

There is no absolute need for a car if you live close to the campus, but it is a nice thing to have if you want to enjoy the great benefits of being in Albany—the surrounding country. The bus system (CDTA) will get you just about anywhere—albeit slowly—and many of the routes cut through the downtown campus neighborhood. Public busses and university shuttles run frequently between all the University at Albany Campuses. There are free for students. Busses and Amtrak do provide alternatives, however.

WHAT ABOUT PARKING?

Most apartments don't have designated parking spots, but generally parking on the street near your home is pretty easy—and free. Depending on the time of day and the neighborhood, though, you will sometimes have trouble and end up driving around for a few minutes or parking a few minutes from your destination or both. In some neighborhoods around the campus (Lark Street in particular) parking can be downright difficult, especially on weekend nights.

WHY ISN'T ANYONE CALLING ME BACK?

There are a lot of absentee landlords in Albany. Sometimes they take a few days (or even weeks) to check their messages. This will try your patience. Sorry.

SHOULD I TELL LANDLORDS I AM A STUDENT?

Yes. If you are leaving a message, mention that you are a grad student. Grad students have a reputation as being clean, quiet tenants.

WHAT ABOUT PETS?

Many landlords allow pets. Check with them when you call. Washington park is a nice place to live near if you have dog.

HOW LONG SHOULD IT TAKE ME TO FIND AN APARTMENT?

This depends on how choosy you want to be. Expect anywhere between two to five days if you are in a big hurry. Expect a few weeks if you have time to find the place of your dreams.