How much can you afford to pay for an apartment when you take all of your costs into consideration? Make sure you budget costs like rent, utilities, food, personal items, spending, clothes, emergency fund, savings, cell phone, cable, internet, transportation, and up-front costs, such as first month rent and security deposit.

What matters most to you in terms of location? Do you want to be close to campus? Is there public transportation nearby? Do you feel safe walking to and from your apartment after dark? Do you know where the nearby hospitals and police stations are? Walk around the neighborhood during the day and at night to make sure you are comfortable.

Are you familiar with the landlord or building management? Ask around! Check with other tenants of the building to see if they’ve run into any management issues. Conduct research online for the landlord to check reviews. Make sure to have the building management number in a readily accessible spot.

Who do you want to live with? How many people? Take this into consideration when determining the size of your apartment. Make house rules to determine chores, study time vs. fun time, policy on parties, and friends and guests overnight stays. Check out our Tips for Finding a Roommate brochure for more detailed information!

You will need to setup your utilities and items like internet and cable. Record with video or take pictures of the condition of your apartment at the time of move in and check out.

Leases must be in writing! Lists all parties involved, time of tenancy, monthly rent, penalties for late payment, security deposits and other deposits, utilities, rights and responsibilities, terminating the lease information. *Deposits should be returned within 60 days.

1. Commuting
2. Budget
3. Location & Safety
4. Management
5. Roommates
6. Lease
7. Moving In
8. Helpful Reminders

How will you get to and from school? Will you walk, bike, drive, or take public transit? Is there a place for you to park or lock up your bike?
Before You Sign a Lease

6 things every lease should have:

1. Parties to the lease
2. Length of lease
3. Monthly rent & penalties for late payment
4. Security deposit & other deposit fees
5. Utilities
6. Terminating lease information

How to Find Off Campus Housing:

- Word of Mouth/Walking the Neighborhood
- Newspapers
- UIC Off Campus Housing Database: www.housing.uic.edu/offcampus
- Apartment Finding Services
- Craigslist

What to do when you have a rental problem?

Discuss the problem with your landlord or building management. Make sure to always make a record of all requests and/or complaints.

Still having issues? Check out Metropolitan Tenants Organization Renter’s Rights Hotline at 773-292-4988 or online at www.tenants-rights.org