



Housing Terminology and Abbreviations

Amenity

This refers to items provided by the rental company, usually at no cost (examples: pool, fitness center, shuttle).

Deposit

This is an amount of money paid when signing the lease on your new rental property. The deposit protects the rental company from the possibility of future damages or default on the lease. The deposit should not exceed 1.5x the monthly rent. You may need to provide a valid U.S. address so your deposit can be returned to you through a family member or friend, as long as you leave your property in the same or better condition as when you moved in.

Electricity

U.S. electrical current is 110 volt/60 hertz. Most foreign appliances use a 220 volt/50 hertz current. Appliances requiring a 220 volt/ 50 hertz current will not work properly in the U.S. without an appropriate adapter. If your rental property does not pay for or set up electricity, you will need to notify Tucson Electric Power (www.tep.com) to start service. Some properties require service in your name before you can get your keys. Ask the rental company what their policy is when you sign the lease.

Furnished Apartment

These are apartments that contain furniture rather than requiring you to supply it all. Things that are typically not included in a furnished apartment are: dishes, cups, silverware, pots, pans, linens, towels, pillows, blankets, vacuum, iron, ironing board.

Guarantor (also called a co-signer)

A person that agrees (in writing) to pay your lease and associated expenses if you are unable to pay. A guarantor may be required when applying for a lease if you are unable to demonstrate a history of good credit or an income capable of paying the rent.

Lease

Your lease is a legally binding contract between you and the rental property. This contract will spell out the legal requirements and limitations for both you and the rental company. When reviewing your lease, know when rent is due to avoid any late payments. You should also know the property's rules for subletting (see definition below). If you have any questions before you sign a lease, bring a copy of your lease to ASUA Legal Services (legal.asua.arizona.edu).

You cannot just leave your rental property and lease when you no longer need housing. In most situations, breaking your lease early is not allowed. If you are considering breaking your lease, notify the property as soon as possible and visit ASUA Legal Services (legal.asua.arizona.edu).

Right-of-Entry

The rental property staff is legally able to enter your rental property at reasonable times to inspect and perform repairs. They will typically notify you ahead of time if they will be entering your property, but in many cases, they don't have to.

School Status

To sign a lease, you may be required to show proof of being a UA student so the rental property can confirm your status. As an international student, most apartments will want specific documents. Here is a list of documents you may be asked to present to sign a lease:

- ▶ Passport
- ▶ Visa
- ▶ I-20 or DS-2019
- ▶ Social Security Number (if you have one)
- ▶ Proof of good credit history – this generally takes the form of a credit check. If you are unable to provide this, you may need to have a guarantor co-sign your lease and utility contracts.

Sublet

If your rental company allows you to have other individuals rent your apartment for a short period of time (example: over the summer break), make sure you know what the company needs for this arrangement. In many situations, you and the subletter need to sign a new lease. If you fail to comply with this requirement, the rental company may take legal action against you, and leaving without notification may result in huge monetary penalties.

Social Security Number (SSN)

This is a nine-digit number issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration often requested when signing a lease for the purpose of credit checks. Only students with employment are eligible to apply for an SSN. Read Taxes: Social Security Number (global.arizona.edu/international-students/taxes) for more information.

Utilities

Some rental properties will include certain utilities in the rent such as gas and trash, while other properties require you to set up service and billing with the utility company yourself. Read the Off-Campus Housing Guidebook, page 25 (bluetoad.com/publication/?i=352459) for a list of utility companies. Check with the property when you sign the lease to determine if you have to start service ahead of time, in order to get your keys.

Abbreviations

- ▶ A/C – Air Conditioning (often used to include heat as well)
 - ▶ Apt – Apartment
 - ▶ BR – Bedroom. You will usually see this preceded by the number of bedrooms, e.g. 3BR which is an apartment with 3 bedrooms.
 - ▶ BA – Bathroom. You will usually see this preceded by the number of bedrooms, e.g. 2BA which is an apartment with 2 bathrooms.
 - ▶ F/U – Furnished/Unfurnished. Some apartments provide all furniture; others require you to provide your own.
 - ▶ S/B – Apartment Shuttle or Public Bus. Options for getting to campus from your apartment.
 - ▶ SSN – Social Security Number
 - ▶ W/D – Clothes washer and dryer (sometimes in the apartment, not in a separate laundry room)
 - ▶ W/G/E – Water, Gas, Electric. Some of these utilities may be paid as part of your rent. Some you may have to pay yourself (ask the apartment to be clear).
 - ▶ TEP – Tucson Electric Power (company that provides electric service)
 - ▶ SW Gas – Southwest Gas (company that provides gas service – if the apartment doesn't include this in your rent)
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