Apartment Hunting Considerations

Oftentimes when looking for an off-campus apartment, aesthetics is the focus and security considerations are neglected. **Your safety and security need to be priorities!**

Visit the apartment during the day and evening so that you can get a sense of the neighborhood, traffic, lighting, shopping and public transportation.

**Building Security:** Inspect the access area and entry process
- Determine if there are security personnel on the premises
- Inquire about visitors access
- Make sure the entrance is well-lit
- Ask about video surveillance on the property
- Ensure the address is be clearly visible from the street

**Doors & Locks:** Evaluate the sturdiness of doors
- Doors with dead-bolt locks provide enhanced security
- Locks should be changed when tenants move
- Wide-angle peepholes allow you to see who is at your door

**Windows:** Assess the condition of all windows
- Windows should be able to open, close, and securely lock
- Ground and street level windows should have security screens to deter intruders

**Landscape and Lighting:** Determine if the area around the property is acceptable
- Shrubbery should be properly trimmed to eliminate area where someone could hide
- Observe the surroundings near the property to see if the grounds are maintained
- Exterior lighting should be adequate to illuminate the perimeter of the property

**Fire Safety:** Appraise the fire safety features
- All rooms should have a smoke detector
- Carbon monoxide detectors are recommended
- Fire extinguishers should be available on each floor of your rental unit
- Outlets and electrical covers should be free of any signs of damage or deterioration

**Alarm System:** Analyze your need for a home security system
- If there is an alarm system, ask how to program it
- If there is not an alarm system, discuss whether one can be installed

**Mail/Package Delivery:** Ask about the process for mail/package pick-up
- Mail should be placed in secure boxes.

**Parking:** Find out about your options
- Determine the availability of secure parking in the area.

Once you have located your off-campus apartment, the hunt may be over, but your research continues…

**Additional Considerations**
- Program the Police Emergency number (**9 1 1**) into your phone
- Consider your transportation needs:
  - Transit to campus
  - **Transit services around Philadelphia and the neighboring regional area are available through SEPTA** ([SEPTA Website](https://septa.org))
- Be alert and aware of safety tips and announcements from Campus Safety Services

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