

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 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
- Research area crime through the Philadelphia Police department ([Philadelphia Police Crime Statistics](#))
- Consider your transportation needs:
 - Transit to campus
 - Transit services around Philadelphia and the neighboring regional area are available through SEPTA ([SEPTA Website](#))
- Be alert and aware of safety tips and announcements from Campus Safety Services

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