MOVING OFF CAMPUS IN 5 EASY STEPS

1. BUDGETING
   NOV. — DEC.
   Develop a budget & identify how much you can afford to spend on rent, utilities, & transportation/parking every month. Need budgeting help? Contact the Student Business Office.

2. ROOMMATES
   JAN. — FEB.
   Choose a roommate who has a similar lifestyle, sleep schedule, & cleanliness standards; someone you can rely on to pay the rent! Check out the Off Campus Living Roommates page for more info.

3. THE SEARCH
   MAR. — APR.
   Start your search in the neighborhoods near Western: York, Happy Valley, Sehome, or Puget. When you tour a rental, make sure it is clean, safe, & in good repair. Check out our Finding A Place page for more tips.

4. THE LEASE
   APR. — MAY
   Before you sign a lease or put down a deposit, read the lease in full & perform a walkthrough of the rental. Check out our Leases page for more info!

5. MOVING IN!
   AUG. — SEPT.
   When you move in, complete a damage checklist with your landlord & make sure both of you sign it. Next step: be a great neighbor! Check out our website for adulting tips!
**FINDING A PLACE**

**START EARLY**
Certain times of the year are better for looking for a place to live. For instance, it's much easier to find a place in the spring or fall, because other people are also getting ready to move out. It's best to start out around 9-6 months ahead of when you want to move.

**PRE-LEASING**
Almost every residential lease in Bellingham expires at some point between late May and September. With the ebb and flow of college students, many renters want to lock in their new apartment before the summer kicks off so rental agencies in Bellingham begin pre-leasing in March for houses/apartments available in Fall.

1. **FIND HOUSING LISTINGS**

   **WORD OF MOUTH**
The best and easiest way to find a place is through friends. Ask around and see if you know anyone moving out of their place.

   **SOCIAL MEDIA**
Spread the word on social media and check out the Western Washington University (WWU) Housing, Sublets & Roommates Facebook group.

   **PROPERTY MANAGEMENT COMPANIES**
Googling ‘Bellingham property management companies’ will not only give you a list of companies that manage multiple properties but will also show their reviews.

   **ONLINE LISTINGS**
There are a TON of online sites designed to help you find housing. Here are just a few: RentHoop, Zillow, PadMapper, Trulia, Apartment Guide, ABODO, HotPads, Zumper

   **HIT THE STREETS**
Take a walk around neighborhoods that you would like to live in. Often times landlords will just put a for rent sign in the yard.

  *Protect yourself from scams on Craigslist! Never give anyone any money before you see the unit and sign a lease and don’t forget to get a receipt for any money you do give.

**DO A CHECK ON THE LANDLORD**
Not all landlords and property management companies are created equal. Make sure to look your landlord’s ratings up on Google, Yelp, www.apartmentratings.com or ask your friends if they have heard anything about the company!

**DECIDE WHERE YOU WANT TO LIVE**
The Off Campus Living website has a map with information about transportation and amenities for each neighborhood, the same map is also in the VU by the post office. Make sure you know what your commute will be like before you commit to a place!

2. **SCHEDULE A SHOWING**
Once you have found a place that you would like to go see, either call or email the contact person to set up a showing. You will either be scheduled for an individual showing or a group showing with other people. Make sure to show up on time and if you can't make it, don't forget to let them know!

While it’s easy to feel excited and rushed when you’re touring a rental, the most important thing is to TAKE YOUR TIME! The initial tour is often the only time that you’ll be able to look at a rental before you sign the lease so make sure that you’re asking yourself questions like:

- Are the unit, the common areas and the outside of the building clean, tidy and in good repair?
- Is there laundry onsite?
- Are utilities included?
- What is the damage/cleaning deposit?
- How will you commute to school and/or work and get to the grocery store from there?
- Does the neighborhood seem safe?

3. **FILL OUT AN APPLICATION**
Rental applications are either available online at the property management website, in person at the office or handed out at the showing. When you fill in your application you will also need to be ready to pay an application fee, provide your social security number, give landlord or personal references, show your driver’s license or other government ID and likely you will need to have your parents or another responsible adult fill out a co-signer application. You are not required to pay any rent or deposits until your application is approved and you sign a lease.

4. **SIGN A LEASE & PAY YOUR DEPOSIT**
For more information about leases and deposits check out the ‘signing a lease page’ on the Off Campus Living website: wwu.edu/offcampusliving/signing-your-lease/
If you decide to attend a party in a Bellingham neighborhood, there are a few things you can do to make your night enjoyable while respecting neighbors.

**DO**
- Cooperate with police officers
- Leave when asked
- Call an Uber or catch a ride with a sober friend if you are drinking
- Be aware of what IS and IS NOT the property you are visiting
- Drink if you are under 21
- Drink and drive
- Destroy or mistreat a neighbor’s property
- Refuse to leave if the police break up the party

**DON’T**

**21+**

**WHEN TO CALL 911**

**GOOD SAMARITAN LAW**
Washington’s 911 Overdose Good Samaritan laws state if you think someone’s overdosing or has alcohol poisoning and you seek medical help for the victim, neither of you will be charged for possessing or using drugs or for minor in possession.

**SIGNS OF OVERDOSE**
- Any trouble breathing or having convulsions
- Vomiting excessively or vomiting blood
- Unable to stand/walk without help
- Unconscious or unresponsive
- Cold, clammy skin, and/or bluish lips

**SAFETY TIPS**

**MODERATE**
- The risks are lower if you don’t drink, but if you do, limit the amount of alcohol you drink.
- Decide before the party about how much you plan to drink and count your drinks at the party.
- ALWAYS know what you are drinking and HOW MUCH you’ve consumed.

**STICK TOGETHER**
- Go with a friend so you can look out for each other!
- Make sure you and your friends know the signs of an alcohol overdose.
- Leave the party with the friends you came with.

**AVOID**
- Don’t accept drink from others and pour your own drinks.
- Avoid drinking games, funnels, and other activities that get you too drunk too fast.
- Don’t go to a party if you don’t know the host.

**SIMPLE TACTICS FOR LEAVING GRACEFULLY**
- If you feel like the party is getting too big or out-of-control, or you are uncomfortable for any reason, it might be a good idea to leave. Even if you feel un-cool for leaving, it is better than experiencing a busted party.
- Trust your intuition about the situation; if it feels risky, it probably is!
- Talk to your friends before the party. Make a plan to stick together and have a signal for when you want to leave.
- If you decide to leave alone, always tell someone you are leaving and where you are going.
- You can always make up an excuse to leave if you need to!

**DON’T DRINK & DRIVE**
- Call an Uber, arrange a ride with a sober friend, take the bus, or stay over if you need to.

**GOOD SAMARITAN LAW**
- Download app from App Store or Google Play
- Western Shuttle
  www.wwu.edu/transportation
- WTA Transit
  www.ridewta.com
- Bellingham Taxi
  360.220.4990
- Blue Cab
  360.734.3787
You’ve set up your new place & are ready to invite people over. Whatever the size of your gathering, there are a few things you can do to make it enjoyable for you & those around you.

**TALK TO YOUR NEIGHBORS**

**WHAT**
Tell your neighbors that you plan to have gatherings at your house.

**WHO**
Tell them who to contact if they have issues with your party. It is better they call you first, not the police.

**WHEN**
Give your neighbors a heads up before the scheduled party!

**GREAT TIPS FOR HOSTING**

**YOU & YOUR GUESTS**

- **Don’t let anyone under 21 possess or consume alcohol.**

- Keep an eye out for emerging fights between guests. If you can intervene and stop a fight before it starts, try to do so - but be careful, it might be safer to call the police.

- Discourage rapid drinking or drinking games.

- Food, coffee, cold showers, aspirin, etc. WON’T SOBER YOU UP - only time will do that.

- Make sure to cut off anyone who is visibly intoxicated - and don’t leave them alone! Even if they aren’t driving, they can be injured or harm others.

**SAFETY TIPS**

**YOUR STUFF**

- Hide or protect valuables and lock the rooms you don’t want people to enter.

- Keep the party in a central location of the house.

- Keep track of who comes to the party. If people don’t know them, don’t let them in!

- Pay attention to people who leave early, or people who come with backpacks.

- Keep an inventory of your stuff and check it after the party.

**PLAN AHEAD**

- Make a plan for when guests or the party get out of hand. Before the party, ask someone reliable to help you keep things in line. You can always call 911 if the party gets out of control if you are concerned about a person’s safety.

**BE CONSIDERATE**

- Don’t block driveways or sidewalks and don’t leave garbage around your or your neighbor’s property.

**SNACKS**

- Offer water, soda, or other non-alcoholic options. Provide snacks and other food. But remember, food only changes the pace that alcohol enters your system - it has no effects on how fast alcohol leaves your system.

**NO FEES**

- Don’t charge fees to party guests, this will help prevent possible legal issues!

**NO MINORS**

- Don’t serve alcohol to minors. Posting signs on the door that say “21+ Only” won’t prevent you from getting a citation if the police stop by.

**COOPERATE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS & THE POLICE**

- If your neighbors call or stop by to tell you the party’s too loud, listen to them and cooperate. Otherwise, they may end up calling the police.

  Cooperate with the police if they show up. Have a calm, sober person speak with them. If they ask you to break up the party, do it. Remember that you can call the cops if the party gets out of hand.
RENTER’S RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

LANDLORD OBLIGATIONS

The landlord must provide and maintain the rental property, and must obey the rules of the rental agreement. The landlord (or his or her representative) must be accessible to the tenant and must:

- keep the premises up to code
- maintain the roof, walls, and structural components
- keep common areas reasonably clean and safe
- provide a reasonable program for control of pests
- provide necessary facilities to supply heat, electricity, and hot and cold water
- provide reasonably adequate locks
- maintain appliances furnished with the rental unit
- comply with any duties imposed by local laws

The landlord may not knowingly rent property that is condemned. If a landlord fails to perform his or her duties, three types of remedies may be available to the tenant:

1. The right to terminate the rental agreement and move out after giving written notice to the landlord.

2. The right to initiate litigation or arbitration proceedings.

3. The right to make limited repairs and deduct their cost from the rent.

In general, before exercising any of the Landlord-Tenant Act’s remedies, the tenant: (1) must be current in rent payments, and (2) must give the landlord written notice of the defective condition.

TENANT OBLIGATIONS

The tenant must:
- pay rent
- keep the premises clean and sanitary
- not damage or permit damage to the unit
- dispose of garbage
- properly use fixtures and appliances
- restore the property to its initial condition, except for normal wear and tear at the end of the term
- comply with the rental agreement

If the tenant fails to perform his or her duties, the landlord may seek to evict the tenant. If a tenant fails to maintain the premises, the landlord may:
- evict the tenant
- make repairs and bill the tenant
- sue the tenant for damages or to force compliance with the rental agreement

RIGHT OF ENTRY

In general, with tenant consent, a landlord has a right of entry to inspect the premises; make repairs; supply necessary or agreed services; or show the property to potential tenants, purchasers, or contractors. Entry is limited to reasonable times, and two days’ notice of intent to enter is required. A landlord may enter the premises without the tenant’s consent if an emergency or abandonment occurs, or if the landlord obtains a court order.
Housing Rights Protection

Various federal, state, and local laws and ordinances protect housing rights. The Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968 makes it illegal for a landlord to discriminate because of a person’s race, sex, national origin, or religion. Washington has a Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 59.18), which defines the minimum duties of landlords and tenants of residential dwellings. In the City of Bellingham it is illegal to discriminate based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, marital status, age, familial status, disability, or sex.

Rent Increase

If there is a lease for a specified period of time, the rules of the tenancy, including the rent, may not be changed during that period. In the case of a periodic tenancy (such as month-to-month rental agreement), the rules, including the rent, may be changed upon 60 days’ written notice. Rent increases cannot be in retaliation for the tenant’s assertion of his or her lawful rights. The landlord may charge a late payment fee if the rental agreement expressly provides for the charging of a late fee.

Rental Agreement

When a landlord and tenant agree to the terms for the rental of property, whether orally or in writing, a tenancy is created. The agreement between the landlord and tenant governing the tenancy is called a lease or a rental agreement. It establishes a tenant’s right to use property for a specified length of time in exchange for payment of rent. The property owner is called the “landlord” or “lessor.” The person who is entitled to occupy property is called the “tenant” or “lessee.” As with any contract, the rental agreement should be in writing to avoid misunderstandings and should contain all the terms agreed to by the parties. Before you enter into a rental agreement, you should read it carefully and discuss all of the terms and make sure any questions you have are answered. Any changes to the lease should be marked on the document and initialed by both parties.

Rental Precaution

Before renting property, a tenant should inspect the dwelling to be sure it meets his or her needs and is in acceptable condition. Upon moving in, make a list of all existing defects or damages, with both the landlord and tenant signing and keeping a copy of this list. Any commitments made by the landlord (such as a promise to make certain repairs) should be written into the lease, and all blank spaces should be filled in or crossed out.
ORDINANCES & REPAIRS

LITTER & NOISE ORDINANCES

DON’T FORGET TO KEEP YOUR PROPERTY NEAT & TIDY

BELLINGHAM MUNICIPAL CODE 10.60.130 STATES:
“The owner or person in control of any private property shall at all times maintain the premises free of litter.”

Litter can be defined as old furniture or other discarded items left out on the lawn or in the alley, overflowing garbage or recycling containers or any other refuse that is accumulating on the property.

BELLINGHAM MUNICIPAL CODE NOISE 10.24.120 STATES:
It is unlawful to disturb the peace and repose of the public. Please make sure that any parties or other activities should not be loud enough to disturb neighbors. The City of Bellingham’s noise ordinance is a round the clock ordinance, which means that all hours are “quiet hours”. If neighbors call the police, the police may issue a noise disturbance citation with a maximum fine of $500.00 and/or 90 days in jail.
DOES YOUR RENTAL NEED REPAIR?
The smart & legal way to handle repairs for your college rental

YOUR REPAIR IS...?

a. Life threatening due to loss of electricity, heat, hot/cold water. Landlord must start within 24 hours.
b. Loss of an essential appliance such as refrigerator, stove, or plumbing. Landlord must start within 72 hours.
c. Any other issue. Landlord must start within 10 days.

WRITE A LETTER
Explain the repairs needed, and send it by certified mail.

DID YOUR LANDLORD START REPAIRS?

YES
Was the repair finished in a reasonable amount of time?

a. Yes
CONGRATS!
YOUR RENTAL IS REPAIRED!

b. No

NO
Time to consider your options...

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

1. MOVE OUT
Send your landlord a written notice that you’re moving out. They’re required to pay back your security deposit & any rent you’ve already paid for that month.

2. GO TO COURT
Will your landlord cooperate to reach a solution?

a. Yes
You can go through arbitration.*

b. No
Hire a lawyer & force the landlord to make the repairs.
(RCW 59.18.090.)

3. MAKE REPAIRS
If you’re caught up on rent & utilities you can make repairs yourself by contracting someone & following these steps:
(RCW 59.18.100)

- Subtract cost of the contracted repair from next month’s rent (repair must be equal or less than one month’s rent.)
- You can’t spend over two months’ rent over a 12-month period.

QUESTIONS?
Contact the AS Legal Info Center!
VU 517 | 360.650.6111 | as.legalinfo@wwu.edu

*Arbitration is the settling of a dispute between two parties by a knowledgeable third party.
HOW TO GET RID OF YOUR STUFF

DISPOSAL SITES

SANITARY SERVICES
Address: 1001 Roeder Ave., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.734.3490
Hours: 8-5pm Monday - Friday, Closed for lunch 12-1pm
Takes: Garbage, furniture, appliances, etc.
An SSC driver gives a price quote before final approval.

REPUBLIC SERVICES/RECOMP
Address: 1524 Slater Rd., Ferndale, WA
Phone: 360.384.1057
Hours: 8-5pm, 7 days a week
Takes: $98/ton
$8/truckload

APPLIANCE DISPOSAL

NORTHWEST RECYCLING CENTER
Address: 1419 C St., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.733.0100
Hours: 8-4:30pm Monday - Friday
Takes: Free recycling of cardboard, plastic, glass, wood, metal, shopping carts, and most appliances.
Fridges/freezers = $20.

REUSE WORKS
Address: 802 Marine Dr., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.527.2646
Hours: 10-6pm, Monday - Friday
Takes: Washers, dryers, and stove ranges.
Free drop off! Per appliance = $15.
Fridges/freezers = $25

HOME GOODS DONATION

RESTORE BELLINGHAM
Address: 1419 C St., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.647.5921
Takes: Homebuilding goods and materials.

GOODWILL
Address: 115 Sunset Dr., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.752.2080
Takes: Clothing, furniture, and electronics.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY THRIFT STORE
Address: 1850 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.778.2036
Takes: Furniture and household goods.

ARC OF WHATCOM COUNTY
Address: 2602 McLeod Rd., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.715.0170
Takes: Reusable goods and free pickups.

SALVATION ARMY
Address: 1850 Cornwall Ave., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.778.2036
Takes: Furniture and household goods.

BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
Address: 210 Central Ave., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.778.7323
Takes: Books, movies, magazines, and CD's.

ELECTRONIC DISPOSAL

Along with Goodwill and the Salvation Army...

BEST BUY
Address: 4281 Meridian St., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.715.0008
Takes: Appliances, electronics, vacuums, wires, and ink.

SAFE & EASY RECYCLING
Address: 3883 Hannegan Rd., Bellingham, WA
Phone: 360.715.3279
Takes: Electronics, computers, and monitors.
**SORT YOUR RECYCLING**

**CANS, BOTTLES, & GLASS**
Remove tin can labels. All other color/numbers/labels ok

**ALUMINUM**

**TIN**

**GLASS**

**PLASTIC**

**NON-HAZARDOUS AEROSOL**

**FOIL**

**PAPER**
Please put in paper bag if possible

**COMPUTER PAPER**

**ENVELOPES**

**NOTEBOOK PAPER**

**MAGAZINES**

**CEREAL BOXES**

**PAPER BAGS**

**NEWSPAPER**
If windy, put top layer of newspaper in paper bag

**CLEAN NEWSPRINT/ADS**

**PAPER JUICE/MILK CARTONS**

**FOOD PLUS**
Food scraps, yard debris, compostable papers and bio-plastics

**FOOD SCRAP**

**YARD DEBRIS**

**PIZZA BOXES**

**PAPER JUICE/MILK CARTONS**

**TAKEOUT CARTONS**

**NO**
NO Styrofoam, foam rubber, window/plater glass, dishware, windshields, light bulbs, mirrors, fluorescent tubes, pottery, oil/air filters, plastic bags

**NO**
NO plastics, foil, carbon paper or multi-layered products

**NO**
NO plastic bags, Styrofoam, plastic packing or wax-coated boxes (ie. fruit boxes)

**NO**
NO plastic, tetra paks, pet/human waste, diapers, roadkill, or garbage

**HELPFUL HINTS**
- Rinse and flatten all cans and plastic bottles
- Set full bins out the night before collection
- Place extra recyclables in boxes no larger than bin
- Recyclables in plastic bags will NOT be collected
- Avoid putting bins out on really windy days

**360.380.4640**
Contact Disposal of Toxics to dispose of hazardous waste