

Off-Campus Housing

Navigating your way through the Kingston Rental Market



Do you have a question?

There is a lot of information to cover, so I will answer as many questions as possible at the end of the presentation. You can also schedule a one-on-one virtual or in person appointment on my website or email me at ocla@queensu.ca

Open to Feedback



Did you find that this presentation didn't answer all of your questions?

Notice that there is some information missing?

Suggestions for ways to improve the presentation?

Please let me know what information is critical to you and your peers.

Off-Campus Living Advisor



Who am I?

- Adam King
- Property Manager, Business Development and Leasing Manager for a local property management firm
- Owned and Operated business
- Direct experience with Residential Tenancies Act, Kingston Rental Market, Landlord Tenant Board, Tribunal, and Conflict Resolution Strategies

**I am here to help you with all aspects of
Off-Campus Living**



Off-Campus Living Advisor



What does the Off-Campus Living Advisor do?

- Offers guidance in navigating all aspects of Off-Campus Life
- Does not offer legal advice, but can assist with any issues you may be having and help with understanding the RTA
- Can suggest tips to living independently or with others, housing, your rental search, understanding the RTA and your lease agreement, conflict resolution amongst housemates, events and things to do around Kingston

Take a moment

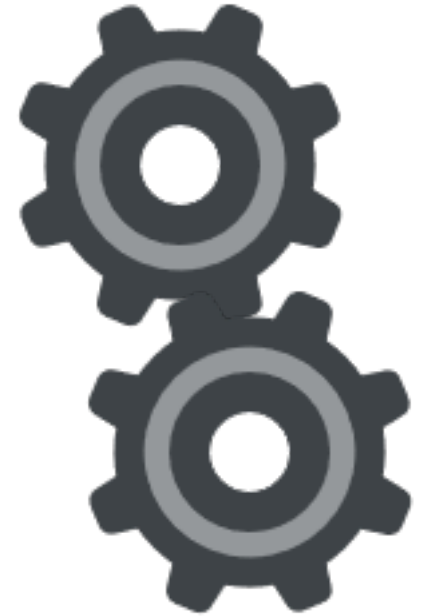


If you are comfortable sharing, what have you heard about Kingston housing, housing searches, landlords, etc.?

The Rental Process



1. Decide what you are looking for and who you will be living with
2. Prepare for search
3. Begin search
4. View properties
5. Submit application
6. Review and sign lease upon approval
7. Prepare for move in
8. Key pick up



Picking your Housemates



- Your best friends might not be the best people for you to live with 😨
- Find housemates with similar schedules, work ethic, priorities and goals ✅
- Keep open lanes of communication, inform your housemates of your expectations, priorities, and compromises
- Establish House Rules, Goals, and Agreements between you and your housemates 🤝
- Utilize resources and documents on the OCLA page 🖱️
- Joint and Several Liability?

Picking your Housemates

Common problems between housemates

- Managing Chores (bathroom cleanliness, dishes, laundry)
- Partners or Friends staying over too often
- Garbage and Recycling
- Excessive noise or parties
- Managing utilities



All problems can be resolved with *open and calm* communication. Making sure you have selected the right housemates also goes a long way to avoid problems

Picking Your Housemates



Solutions


- The first and most simple way to avoid conflict: select the right housemates
- Establish Rules and expectations early
- Create a chore schedule, you can also add some kind of game/point system or incentive for consistent completion of chores
- If a partner is staying over too much, talk to each other. Come to a compromise and/or schedule where the couple rotates houses

Open and Calm Communication is your most effective tool

Picking Your Housemates



Not sure where to look for housemates?

- Queen's Off-Campus Housing Group (Facebook) or other similar social media groups
- Queen's University Clubs/Intramurals 
www.myams.org/home/clubs/clubs-directory/
- Kijiji
- Ask around within your programs

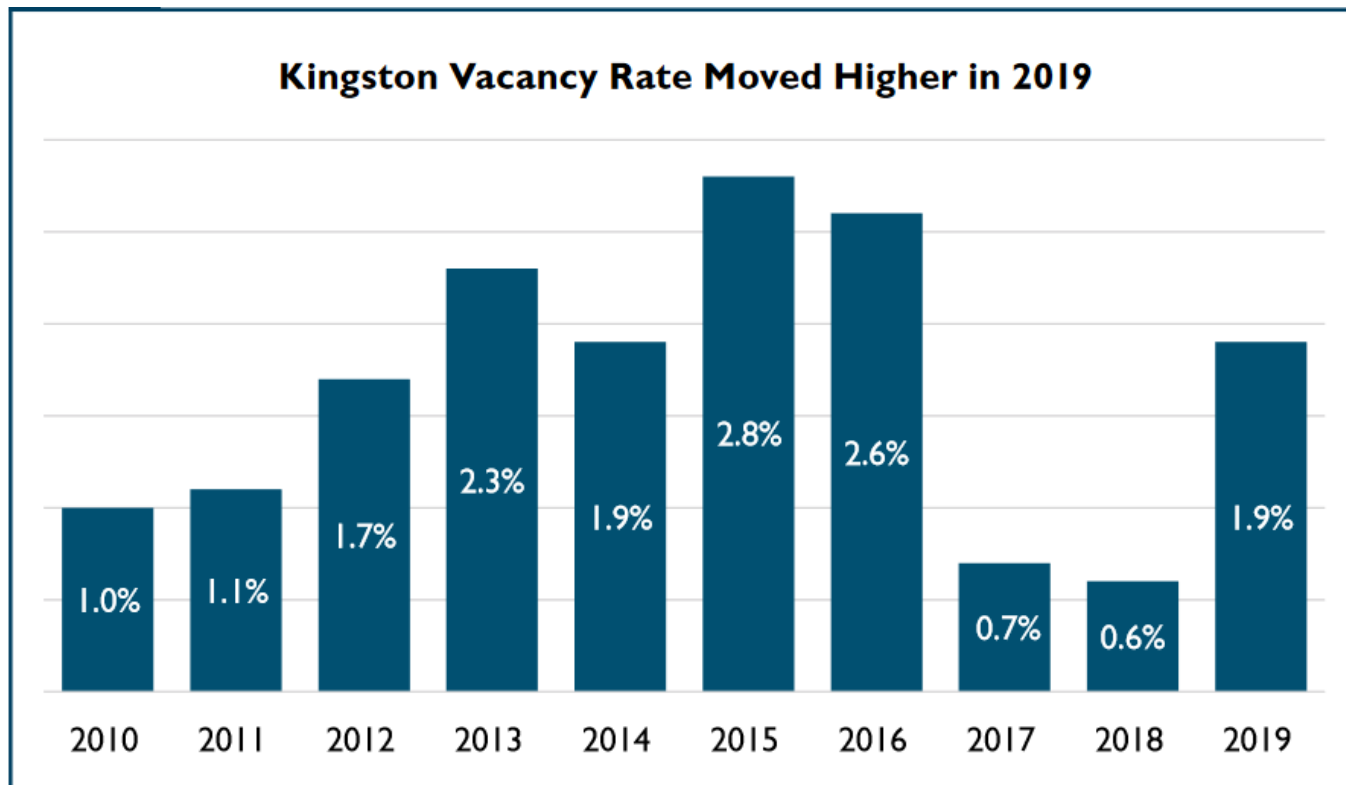


**Looking For
Housemates!**

What you will need to start your housing search

Understanding Kingston's Rental Market

- 2020 – 3.2%
- 2021 – 1.4%



Source: CMHC, Rental Market Survey 2010-2019

What you will need to start your housing search



- **Pick the right housemates to live with!**
- Establish and know your spending **budget** (Rents can range from \$550 - \$1000 per room – plus utilities or inclusive)
- **Know your group's requirements**; distance from campus, budget, room requirements, house specifications (inclusive, number of rooms/bathrooms), parking, etc
- Talk to your parents or guardians (If applicable) about the possibility of needing a **co-signer/guarantor** and insurance
- Have **documents ready**; Proof of enrollment, questions for the landlord, know the application process, know your rights

100

Pro tip: Less people living in the house = Less Problems



What you will need to start your housing search



- Prepare for your showing:
 - Know the landlords application process and have documents ready
 - Prepare questions to ask the Landlord
 - Know what to look for during a showing
 - Know your housemate's schedules, be flexible for showings
 - Do your research into the landlord, property, and area

Do not rush into anything.

Once a lease is signed, you are legally obligated. Do your due diligence before signing.

What you will need to start your housing search

Costs to consider for your budget

- Rent
- Utilities
- Internet
- Living Expenses (Groceries, Laundry, Transit)
- Cell phone bill and Subscriptions (Netflix, Prime, Crave, Food boxes, etc.)
- Initial costs (Furniture, housewares, etc.)
- Tenant Insurance



What determines a rental cost?

- Location
- Utilities
- Number of rooms/bathrooms
- Finishes of the property
- Amenities included (Laundry, parking, dishwasher, etc.)



What you will need to start your housing search



Questions to ask the Landlord

- How long were the previous tenant's living here? Why are they leaving?
- What is the average utility cost? (If applicable)
- What can you tell me about the tenants upstairs/downstairs/connected? (If applicable)
- What was the last major repair you had to perform?
- Who is our main point of contact?
- What is your response time for repairs?
- Are you available for emergency requests in the night? (Example: pipe burst or major leak)
- Who is responsible for Lawn care/snow removal?
- What is the yearly maintenance that is performed on the property?
- Will the property be cleaned prior to move in? Will there be any repairs?
- Is there parking included? (If applicable)
- What is the application process?

Don't be afraid to tell your housemates if you don't like the property, landlord, or are getting a bad vibe



What you will need to start your housing search

What to look for during a showing

- Is the house in poor condition? (Missing cabinet knobs or doors, holes in the wall, overall dirty, water stains in the ceiling, broken windows, missing screens on windows)
- Do you see any signs or evidence of pests? (Rat/mouse traps under the sink or in basement, bugs)
- If you are able to, talk to the current tenants to ask them about problems with the house, or ask them about the landlord. You can also request to contact the tenants through the landlord



Alternatives to in person showings

Virtual Showings



- Pay close attention, looking at the walls, floors, cabinets, bathroom, etc.
- Participate in the showing while using a larger display (computer, tablet, or TV) for greater detail
- Don't be afraid to ask to slow down, look somewhere they did not show, or see something again
- Ask a lot of questions about the property
- Ask to connect with the previous or current tenants for additional information
- Ask for recent or current photos of the unit for reference

Take your time, pay close attention, ask a lot of questions

Alternatives to in person showings



Video Showings

- If the landlord sends you a video walk through, ask how old the video is
- Pay close attention, and view on a larger display screen
- Ask to speak or connect to current tenants
- Ask for recent or current pictures for reference
- Ask a lot of questions

When and Where to start your search

When

- October and November is not the end all, be all.
- Tenants within the LCP must notify Landlords by end of November. Tenants not within the LCP only need to give sixty days notice prior to the end of their term
- Most properties will come available December, January, February, and March
- Most leases go from May to May, but you may also find Sept to Sept, or Sept to April

Do not feel pressured or rushed to sign right away, there are a lot of quality houses on the market.



When and Where to start your search



Where

- There are a wide variety of websites and resources offering rentals, I would recommend sticking to the well known websites to avoid scams
 - Kijiji (Be cautious of Scams)
 - Rentals.ca
 - Queen's Off-Campus Housing Facebook page
 - Kingston Student Housing Co-op
 - Property Management Websites (Limestone, Frontenac, Heron, Varsity) **Read reviews to know about PM's quality of service**
 - Queen's Community Housing
 - Other Queen's Student Facebook Pages
 - Word of Mouth, talk to your peers or mentors about houses they might know about

Need some advice or help? Send me an email – ocla@queensu.ca



Submitting Applications



Congratulations! You found a house that checks all boxes:

- ✓ • Compatible housemates
- ✓ • Set expectations and guidelines with housemates regarding chores, solutions to conflict, and what you need in a property
- ✓ • A house that matches all requirements: within budget, right number of rooms, an agreeable distance to the University, good layout, little to no compromises needed between housemates, fair and even room sizes, etc.
- ✓ • You researched the Landlord and property address on Google and previous tenants said nothing but great things

It's time to apply!



Test your knowledge



True or False

You must move out when your lease agreement expires.



Submitting Applications



Landlords and Property Managers will generally ask for:

- Application through website/PDF/paper
- Verification of Enrollment (Proof of enrollment, Student ID, Confirmation letter, etc)
- Guarantor form signed
- Some will ask for a credit score/report – often accessible through your online banking app
- Deposit – You are *NOT* required to submit a deposit when applying. Wait until approval and reading the lease before money is exchanged. Never send money without seeing the unit or getting the full go ahead from *ALL* housemates

**Not all Property Managers and/or Landlords have the same requirements.
Ask in your showing what they will require. Know your rights!**

Lease Agreements



The Landlord has approved your application and asks for your deposit:

- Ask to see the lease agreement before sending any money
- In Ontario, the Landlord ***MUST*** use the Ontario Standard Lease agreement.
- Landlords have the right to attach an additional terms and conditions clause on the Standard lease; read through it and make sure there is nothing strange and/or illegal
- In Ontario, Landlords ***CANNOT*** legally ask for First and Last month's rent. They can only ask for one month's rent, often applied to the last month

Did you know that the Off-Campus Living Advisor can assist in navigating your lease agreement and/or your application process?

Read and understand your lease agreement. It is a legally binding contract!

If a condition is added but not legal, it cannot be enforced.

Quick Notes:

- Landlords cannot ask for first and last, only one month's rent
- Landlords cannot ask for a cleaning or security/damage deposit
- Unless they are a member of the Landlord Contract Program, they cannot have you sign a N11 (Agreement to terminate at end of term) upon lease signing
- Landlords cannot ask for a key deposit that is more expensive than the cost to replace the keys. The key deposit must be refundable
- Landlords cannot drop in unannounced or perform unreasonable, and overly frequent inspections of the house. They can inspect the property within reason with 24 hour notice
- Once you have given notice to vacate at end of term, the landlord does NOT need to give you 24 hour notice for showings

Lease Agreements



- All lease agreements roll into month to month after fixed term (unless under LCP)
- Tenants are required to give sixty day notice prior to end of term if they intend to vacate
- If in month to month, sixty day notice is still required
- Landlords cannot force you to renew your lease, or sign again (unless under LCP)



Test Your Knowledge



Please answer True or False

In Ontario, Landlords can ask for a security deposit



Lease Agreements



Exemptions from the RTA




- Renting with a direct family member of the landlord/owner
- Living with, or sharing a kitchen with a direct member of the family
- Renting and living with the Landlord (Room and Board)

You will not have protections under the RTA

Moving In






Your lease is signed, deposit paid, the place is yours! On move in date, make sure you:

- Schedule move in date with your housemates (book a truck early)
- Take pictures of the entire unit before moving in, and fill out a Walk Through Inspection Form (Inside and Out) 
- Know before moving in, who is getting what room
- Have your utilities set up (If Applicable) 
- Get Tenant Insurance/ Liability Insurance – you may be covered through your parent. This will protect your belongings inside the house 

Being a Good Neighbour






- Be considerate of those around you
- Keep your yard and property clean 
- Understand Kingston's By-Laws and abide by them 
- Keep the noise down (By-Law)
- If you are responsible for lawn and snow, do your part to keep the sidewalk safe, and the yard looking nice
- Respect the property you are living in and your neighbours, and you will get more enjoyment out of it
- The simple things: Say good morning, good afternoon, or hello to your neighbour. Bring their empty recycling bins or news paper up their driveway. Offer to lend them a hand now and then 

**Help protect the environment, and keep the City of Kingston
Beautiful – DO NOT LITTER**



Being a Good Roommate

- Do your chores 
- Eat your own food and use your own stuff (or ask)
- Don't leave passive aggressive notes
- Replace the toilet paper roll
- When it comes to chores; divide and conquer 
- Discuss each others' schedules and routines
- Pay your fair share
- It's the little things - be considerate
- Relax a little – Don't sweat the small stuff 

There are a number of different notices that can be sent to you from your landlord, get to know them

- N1 – Notice of Rent Increase
- N4 – Notice of Late Rent Payment
- N5 – Notice to End your Tenancy For Interfering with Others, Damage or Overcrowding
- N7 - Notice to End your Tenancy For Causing Serious Problems in the Rental Unit
- N8 – Notice to End Tenancy at End of Term
- N9 – Notice from Tenant to Landlord of Intent to Vacate
- N11 – Agreement to End Tenancy

These notices do not mean you are being evicted, but can lead to it

Test Your Knowledge



Please answer Yes or No

You are a tenant, rent is paid on time and in full monthly, but you have broken one of the many Terms and Conditions your landlord has added to your lease.

The landlord has found out and is threatening to evict you as soon as next week by changing the locks.

Can the landlord do this?

Under the RTA, evicting tenants is a lengthy process that requires certain steps and protocols be followed

- Cannot evict you overnight
- Cannot evict you because of pets (rare exemption)
- Cannot evict based on illegal, unenforceable conditions in your lease agreement (pets, guests, additional occupants)
- Cannot change the locks without giving you a key
- Cannot shut off utilities as a means of rent collection

Landlords that illegally evict tenants can face fines from \$25,000 - \$100,000

Keep up to date with OCLA



Off-Campus Living Advisor
ocla@queensu.ca

- Check out the Resource Document
- Facebook - [@Queen's Off-Campus Living](#) 
- Instagram - [@queensocla](#) 
- Youtube - [@Off-Campus Living Advisor](#) 
- Website – queensu.ca/ocla

We are here to help you

Swipe It Forward Queen's Program



- Peer-to-peer support program where students on meal plans can donate a meal to another student in need
- Designed to provide short-term, urgent support to students in need
- Accessible by referral from program partners

<https://dining.queensu.ca/swipeitforward/>



Swipe It Forward Queen's

Planning to be away from campus? Donate a meal to a peer in need!

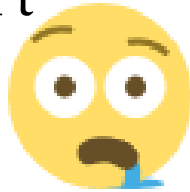


Off-Campus Meal Plan



There are many benefits to purchasing an off-campus meal plan

- The plan is loaded onto your student/staff card, so you don't need to remember cash, debit or credit
- Less time spent worrying about meal prep and track your spending on food and beverages
- Auto-enrollment into the GOOD TO GO reusable container initiative
- It is accepted at all dining halls and retail food locations on campus
- Save the tax on dining hall meals and TAMs



For Pricing, and more information; please visit
<https://dining.queensu.ca/offcampus-meal-plans/>



Questions?

Feel free to contact me at any time – ocla@queensu.ca