

OFF CAMPUS HOUSING SURVIVAL GUIDE

www.mcgill.ca/offcampus



McGill

Student Services

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WHO? WHAT? WHERE?

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WELCOME TO MONTREAL



An island resting in the great St. Laurent River, Montreal is a vibrant and exciting place to call home. The old European charm combined with the cosmopolitan air of its downtown core never fails to draw you in. With its many multicultural boroughs, there is an incredible variety of places to live and explore. There are restaurants to satisfy all taste buds, and festivals and events throughout the year. Don't forget the museums, art galleries and theatres which attest to Montreal history as a locale of cultural cache.

Magnificent brownstones and European-style flats share the sidewalk with towering modern high-rises, displaying the uniquely diverse personality of the city. Sharply dressed suits bustle about the fashion capital's downtown amongst students sipping and studying in cafés, and with four major universities on one island, the city is most definitely student-friendly.

After class, however, when the sun goes down, the books are tossed aside and the city comes to life. Montreal's renowned nightlife is an experience you won't want to miss. There are bars, restaurants and clubs to match everyone's mood throughout the downtown area as well as the trendy Plateau and lively Latin Quarter.

Don't worry about staying out too late because Montreal's public transportation system includes bus (including night routes on major streets) and the everconvenient metro. Not to mention, the numerous bike paths for the new Bixi system or your own bicycle, make it easier than ever to find a green way to get around.

Visit the city's natural wonders as well. The beautiful Mont-Royal provides greenspace for everyone to enjoy, with hiking trails and a mountaintop lake in the summer, and ice skating and cross-country skiing in the winter. You can take a walk along the river on Old Montreal's boardwalk or get even closer with a rafting or kayaking adventure on the Lachine Canal.



THE ZONES

A/B (Milton-Parc) – A short walk to McGill; both students and non-students; big turnover for single apartment every year and you can also find 2,3,4,5,6 bedrooms apartments.

C/D (West of campus) – A short walk to McGill; very affluent urban area with old homes and modern high-rises with 1-1/2 to 5-1/2 apartments; rents are very high, but there is a little less competition.

E (Around Concordia University) – About a 15 minutes walk to McGill; many students; mostly older low-rise apartment buildings; rents are not very high and there is a little less competition, some good deals are available.

F (Lower Plateau) – A 20-30 minute walk or 15 minutes by bus to McGill; mostly 2 to 5 bedrooms flats in duplexes/ triplexes; rent is a little high as it is a popular area.

G (UQAM, the Village) – 15 to 20 minutes by public transportation, cheaper rent and more availability.

H (Hampstead) – 40 to 50 minutes by bus/ metro to McGill; affluent Anglophone residential area with above average rents; Mostly family homes in which rooms are rented.

J (Cote des Neiges) – 30-40 minutes by bus/metro to McGill; an ethnically diverse area with many low-rise apartments & rent is cheaper than downtown, lots of availability.

K (Around U Of Montreal) – 30-40 minutes by bus/metro to McGill; an ethnically diverse area with many lowrise apartments & rent is lower than downtown, lots of availability.

L (Plateau, Parc Lafontaine) – 25 minute walk/15 minutes by bus to McGill; mostly Francophone area; cheaper rents & more availability the further east you go.

M (Mile End) – 15 to 20 minutes by bus or metro to McGill; an affluent Francophone residential area with some ethnic groups; mostly duplexes and triplexes, small apartment buildings and houses.

N (NDG, Cote St. Luc) – 30-40 minutes by bus/metro to McGill; a middle-class residential area with duplexes/triplexes, small apartment buildings and homes; reasonable rents.

O (Outremont) – 20 minutes by bus; affluent residential area; higher rents, low availability.

P (Old Montreal) – 15 minutes by metro to McGill; very expensive lofts; condos in renovated historic buildings.

R (Rosemont) – 30-40 minutes by bus to McGill; middle-class residential area with duplexes / triplexes and low rise apartment building; slightly less expensive than Mile End area.

S (St. Henri and Little Burgundy)

– 15 minutes by metro to McGill; An area that is becoming more popular all the time; reasonable rents; mostly duplexes and triplexes and many newer condos.

T (Town of Mt Royal) – 45 to 60 minutes by bus to McGill; ethnically diverse and affluent residential area; average rents; mostly family homes in which rooms are rented.

V (Verdun, Point St Charles, La Salle)

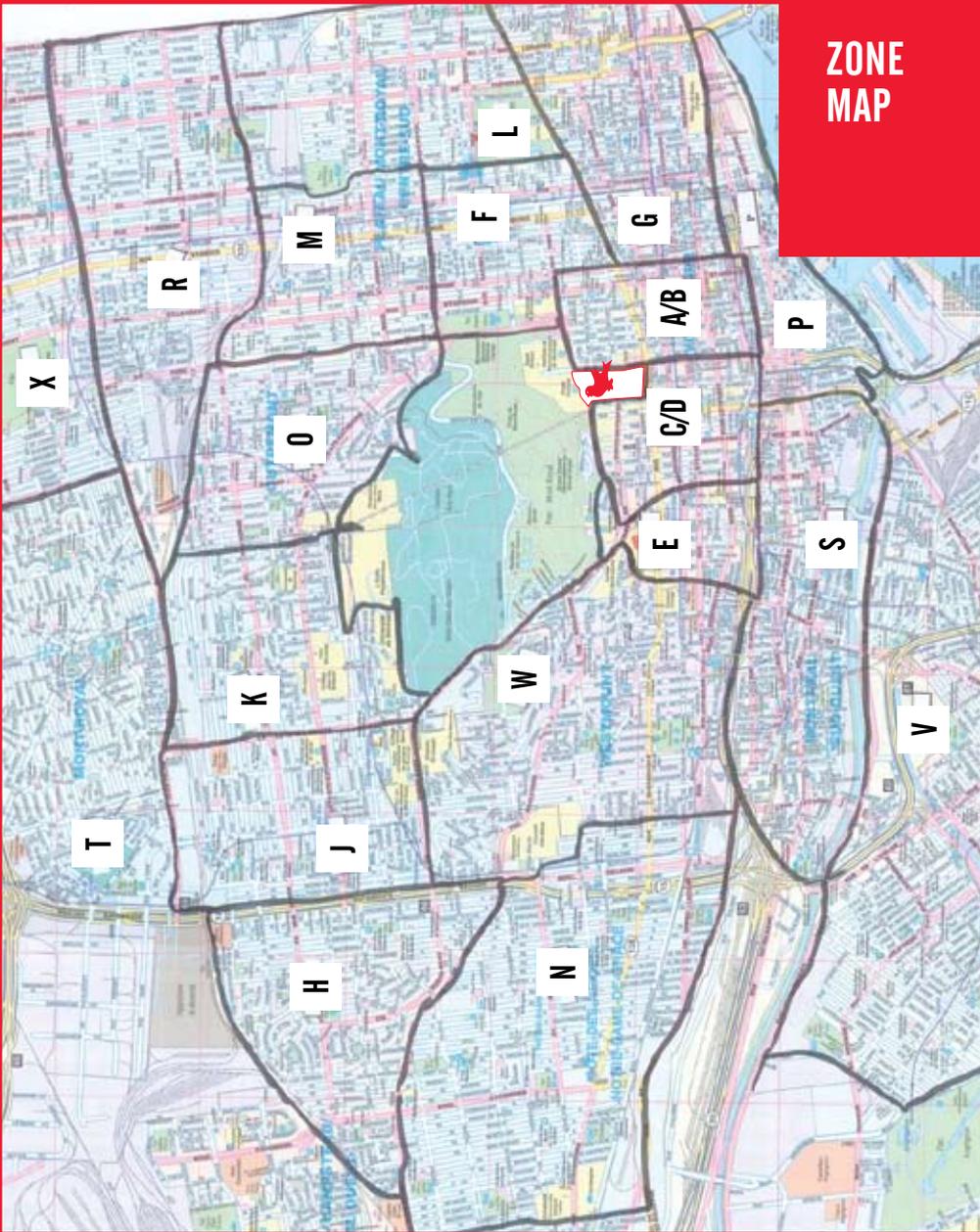
– 25 minutes by metro, working class area is becoming popular with students; low rents; good availability, duplexes and some newer condos.

W (Westmount) – 20 minutes by bus to McGill; affluent Anglophone residential area; rents are high, but good deals on rooms in homes.

X (Parc-Extension) – 30-40 minutes by bus or metro to McGill; ethnically diverse area with many low-rise apartments & lower rents, lots of availability.

Z – Represents those areas not on our map but can easily commute to McGill to both downtown and Mac campus. Pointe Claire, Ville St. Laurent, Brossard, Longueuil, Laval, etc.

ZONE MAP



KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

Apartment for Rent

Renting an apartment in the traditional sense. Terms of rent are agreed to in a lease contracted between you as a tenant and a landlord for a fixed duration

Apartment to Share

People who have already rented an apartment and are looking for roommates. Generally the apartment is furnished and you have access to the whole apartment.

Room for Rent

A furnished room in someone's home. Sometimes meals are included or kitchen privileges are offered. Access to the rest of the house is sometimes limited.

APARTMENT SIZING

In Montreal, apartment sizes are determined by the total number of rooms plus a 1/2 for the bathroom.

Single Apartment
\$550 and up

1½ Bachelor or studio apartment.
One room with a kitchenette and bathroom

2½ One bedroom with combined living room and kitchenette OR full kitchen with combined bedroom and living room with bathroom.

3½ One closed bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom.

\$850 and up

4½ Two bedrooms, living room, kitchen and bathroom.

5½ Three bedrooms, living room, kitchen and bathroom.

\$1000 and up

6½ and up - 4 bedrooms and up.

\$450 and up

Shared

\$400 and up

Room for rent

WHEN TO START YOUR SEARCH

depends on when you want to move in. The big moving day in Montreal is July 1st BUT around McGill you can find May - Sept 1st leases.

Availability Date

Deadline for Non-Renewal

Landlord Starts Advertising

May 1st

January 31st

Feb or March

July 1st

March 31st

April

Aug or Sept 1st

May 31st
(most landlords will find out in April)

April-Sept

THE GREAT APARTMENT SEARCH

A “HOW-TO GUIDE” FOR FINDING AN APARTMENT IN MONTREAL

1 Check the on-line listings

@ www.mcgill.ca/offcampus
under “Search Apartment Listings”

Begin your search by considering what you are looking for (Apartment to Rent/ Roommate Wanted/Room to Rent), the areas where you wish to look, how much you are willing to pay, etc. Try to keep your search as broad as possible in the beginning to ensure your maximum chances for success.

You can also visit our “Useful Housing Links” online for more housing related websites.

2 Book as many appointments as you can in advance.

The key is to use your time as efficiently as possible. Calling in advance to book an appointment ensures that there will be someone available to show you the apartment. In the case of shared accommodations, it enables roommates to get together so you can meet them too. (Keep in mind, though, that many landlords are not available on weekends.)

3 Keep your options open.

When searching, be prepared to consider apartments a little outside your initial search area, or to be flexible on other points. Montreal has a great variety of apartment styles and conditions at reasonable prices from which to choose, if you're willing to look a little further.

4 See as many apartments as you can.

The more apartments you see and compare, the more informed your final decision will be. As much as you may fall in love with one apartment, wait until you have been to all of your appointments before you make a decision.

5 Don't be afraid to ask questions. There is no such thing as a stupid question!

When viewing an apartment, do not hesitate to ask the landlord or previous tenants ANY questions that come to mind. If something isn't obvious, it is worth asking. Even if it is obvious, asking is a good means of verifying that you have the correct information.

6 Trust your instincts

If an apartment feels unsafe, a landlord seems a little sketchy, or the whole situation makes you uneasy, trust your instincts. If it feels uncomfortable now, it is not likely to improve during your stay.

7 Apartment Checklist

Consult the Apartment Checklist provided in this booklet while visiting an apartment. The questions are mostly to ensure an apartment is in good condition, that appliances work, that it is clean, etc. Remember, *in Québec it is nearly impossible to break a lease*, so you want to be sure of the apartment's condition before you sign anything, and the Checklist is a good way to start.

8 Take notes

Once you have seen an apartment, WRITE DOWN your impressions of it: the details of what is or isn't included, what you liked and dislike, etc. This will be useful when you review your research later.

9 Don't be afraid to re-visit an apartment

Once you have visited all of the apartments, review your notes and narrow your search. Think carefully about what you liked or disliked about each. Look at the Apartment Checklist again to remind yourself of what to look for, and book a second appointment to have a closer look.





10 Check the Complaints Binder

Before you fill out an application form or sign a lease, consult our complaint binder to check up on a landlord or specific building. Please keep in mind that while we don't investigate the claims, if you see patterns of complaints for a building or landlord you might want to keep looking. Also, if you are a student who has a complaint as a current tenant or encountered difficulties heading into an agreement, please let us know by filling out a complaint – students helping students helps us all avoid unfortunate circumstances! You can also ask the current tenants about the landlord.

11 Application Forms and Leases

Consult the lease information and Rights & Responsibility pages in the booklet before heading into legal territory.



Please note:

an Application Form is a "Pre-Lease". Once submitted and processed by a landlord, it is a legally binding document. You are obligated to take the apartment if your application is approved.

12 Make plans for your move-in date

For more information on how to make the move-in process go smoothly, please view the last section of this booklet. If you wish to hire movers or put your things in storage, check the Yellow Pages or search online. Be sure to ask if the movers and storage companies are fully insured and if they offer discounts for students. Our office also has a list of moving and storage companies available.

Check out our Apartment Search Video on TV McGill's website:

<http://www.tvmcgill.com/node/51>

Also check out our Apartment FAQ video <http://www.tvmcgill.com/node/50>

A student's guide to renting an apartment



APARTMENT CHECKLIST

IMPORTANT POINTS

While visiting an apartment, sometimes students do not feel comfortable opening the fridge, closets and cupboards especially if the tenant is still living in the apartment.

Remember you are signing a 12 months contract, so check everything in the apartment.

- ▶ Open the fridge and the freezer, is it in good condition? Is it a frost-free freezer? If not, check the "Moving In" section of this booklet, for how to defrost a fridge properly. Turn the stove and oven on to see if all the elements work.
- ▶ Open the closets (even if there are clothes in them), check the ceiling and walls: are there cracks or mold? In the kitchen, open the cupboards and check under the counter to see if there is mold growing. In the bathroom it is very important to check if there is mold around the bathtub or if any tiles are loose. Flush the toilet and turn on the bathtub tap at the same time to make sure the water pressure is good, etc.

The following questions will allow you to **EVALUATE THE VALUE** of the apartment you wish to rent.

- 1 **Walls, Floors, and Ceilings**
Are the walls, floors and ceilings in good condition? Yes ___ No ___
- 2 **Windows and Doors**
 - a. Do the windows open and close well? Yes ___ No ___
 - b. Are the window frames in good condition? Yes ___ No ___
 - c. Are screens provided for the summer? Yes ___ No ___
 - d. Are the doors and doorknobs in good condition? Yes ___ No ___
 - e. Do the doors close and lock properly? Yes ___ No ___
 - f. Open all the cupboards, do they smell musty?
Are there any dead cockroaches or mouse droppings? Yes ___ No ___
- 3 **Running Water and Plumbing**
 - a. Are the sinks, the bath and the shower in good condition? Yes ___ No ___
 - b. Is the water pressure good from each faucet? Yes ___ No ___
 - c. Is there hot water at all times? Yes ___ No ___

- ▶ Sometimes tenants & landlords will cover a hole in the wall with a nice painting, or cover shoddy flooring with a nice carpet, so check these aspects as much as you can.
- ▶ As a future tenant you want to check every detail in the apartment, as once you sign a lease you will not be able to just break the lease because there is a hole in the wall or because it is disgusting under the kitchen counter.

TIP:

If Heat and Hot water are not included in the price, call Hydro Québec, Gaz Métropolitain or the appropriate oil company to find out how much it was last year. You only have to give them the full address including postal code. Ask them about the budget plan. See "Popular Service Providers" for contact information.





4 Heating

Is the apartment well heated in the winter? (Ask current tenants) Yes ___ No ___

5 The Kitchen and Fridge

- a. If there is a stove in the kitchen, does it function properly?
Do the burners work? (check the burners and the oven) Yes ___ No ___
- b. If there is a fridge in the apartment, does it function well? Yes ___ No ___



6 The Balcony

If there is a balcony, is it in good condition? Yes ___ No ___



7 Emergency Exits, Stairways and Entrances

- a. Are the walls, floors and ceilings of the entrance
and stairwells in prime condition? Yes ___ No ___
- b. Are the floors, hallways, and stairs cleaned regularly? Yes ___ No ___
- c. Are the emergency exits cleaned regularly? Yes ___ No ___



8 The Elevator

If there is an elevator in the building, does it function properly? Yes ___ No ___



9 Laundry Room

If there is a laundry room, is it well maintained? Yes ___ No ___



10 The Lawn

- a. Is the lawn surrounding the building well maintained? Yes ___ No ___
- b. Are snow and ice cleared regularly during the winter?
(ask other tenant) Yes ___ No ___



11 The Garbage & Recycling

Ask the janitor or landlord who takes the
garbage and recycling out. Yes ___ No ___



12 Security

- a. Smoke alarm (according to municipal by-laws,
apartments are to be equipped with a functional smoke alarm).
Does the apartment have one? Yes ___ No ___
If not, ask the landlord to put one in and specify it
on your lease in section E.
- b. Do the emergency exits open easily from the inside
in case of an emergency? Yes ___ No ___
- c. Is there a buzzer, intercom or locked front door? Yes ___ No ___
- d. Are there bars on the basement/ground floor? Yes ___ No ___
- e. Are there any exposed wires or other sharp protruding objects? Yes ___ No ___



APARTMENT CHECKLIST CHART

Use this chart to help you with your apartment viewings.

APARTMENT	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR
ADDRESS				
LANDLORD NAME				
PHONE				
WHO SHOWED THE PLACE <small>Landlord/janitor/ real estate agent</small>				
RENT PER MONTH				
TERM OF THE LEASE				
UTILITIES INCLUDED <small>Heat/Hot water/ Electricity</small>				
KITCHEN <small>If there is a stove in the kitchen, does it function properly?</small>				
<small>Do the burners work? (check burners and oven)</small>				
<small>If there is a fridge in the apartment, does it function well?</small>				
WINDOWS AND DOORS <small>Do the windows open and close well?</small>				
<small>Are the windows frames in good condition?</small>				
<small>Are screens provided?</small>				
<small>Do the doors close and lock properly?</small>				
<small>Are the doors and doorknobs in good condition?</small>				
<small>Open all the cupboards, do they smell musty?</small>				





APARTMENT	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR
Are there any dead cockroaches or mouse droppings?				
RUNNING WATER AND PLUMBING Are the sinks, the bath and the shower in good condition?				
Is the water pressure good for each faucet?				
Is there hot water at all times?				
Is there a laundry room?				
Is it well maintained?				
Is there washer and dryer in your apartment, if yes, who is responsible for repairs?				
If there are not laundry facilities in the building, where is the closest laundromat?				
Smoke alarm (By laws, apartments must be equipped with a functional one.) Does the apt have one?				
Is there a buzzer, intercom or locked front door?				
Are there bars on the basement/ ground floor windows?				
Are there any exposed wires or other sharp protruding objects?				
If there is a balcony, and is it in good condition?				
Are the walls, floors and ceilings of the entrance and stairwells in prime condition?				

APARTMENT	ONE	TWO	THREE	FOUR
Are the emergency exits cleaned regularly?				
Storage available in building: Bike racks/ Mailbox				
ADDITIONAL NOTES				

OVERCROWDING

According to the City of Montreal Housing code, you need 8.5 square meters of living space per person inhabiting a dwelling to avoid overcrowding. The landlord does have the right to limit the number of people living in an apartment.

QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING YOUR APARTMENT VISIT.

- 1 How long have you had the building?
- 2 Are there other students in the building?
- 3 Who lives above and below this unit (if any)?
- 4 Who should I contact in case of an emergency or for repairs?
- 5 Are you the owner or manager or janitor of the building?
- 6 Does the door have a deadbolt; if not could you install one?
- 7 Are any major repairs anticipated in the upcoming year?
- 8 Have there been any major repairs or renovations done in the past year?



TIP:

If you have a laptop, ask the insurance company if they cover it in case you get robbed.

GARBAGE AND RECYCLING



Information on the schedules of deposit and collection of household waste, recyclable material, large objects can be found on the City of Montreal's website: www.ville.montreal.qc.ca

For high-rise buildings, your landlord or janitor can also give you information on where the garbage and recycling area in your building is. Make sure to put out trash and recycling materials at the proper time and place otherwise you can get a \$148 fine.

INSURANCE

For tenant's insurance

Your parents may have policies that cover students away at University. If they don't and you want to be covered, you can contact:

- McGill Insurers Essor Insurance Company
514-878-9373 or 1-800-361-1420
- Meloche Monnex Insurance Company
www.melochemonnex.com/mcgill

They have special rates for students and it is a good idea to carry insurance for your belongings. For other companies check in the yellow pages.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

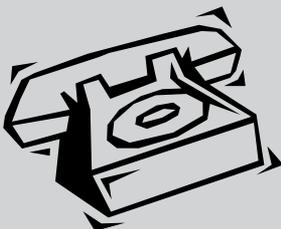
EMERGENCY & IMPORTANT NUMBERS

- ▶ **For Emergencies: Call 911**
- ▶ To contact the police for non life threatening situation or non-urgent matter 514-280-2222
- ▶ **Gas Leak**
If you think there might be a gas leak in your residence, call 514-598-3111 (Gas met Emergency)
- ▶ **Québec Poison Control Centre**
Call them if you are concerned with any type of poisoning 1-888-463-5060
- ▶ **Medical Question: Info Santé**
811 – from a local phone (24/7)
- ▶ **City of Montreal**
311 – from a local phone
- ▶ **Walksafe Network**
514-398-2498
If you're not feeling comfortable walking home alone, we encourage you to call McGill Walksafe. It is a student run foot patrol, working towards a safe and comfortable environment for all who use McGill Campus and surrounding neighborhoods.

M C G I L L
walksafe

Anyone, Anywhere in Montreal
1-877-WALKSAFE

- ▶ **McGill Nightline**
514-398-MAIN
The trained student volunteers at McGill Nightline provide an anonymous and confidential listening, information and referral service. They are not a counseling service, but the volunteers are available to listen non-judgmentally, to talk and to provide information, whether you want the number of a good pizza delivery place, the theme song for "Growing Pains" or just to tell someone about your bad day.



POPULAR SERVICE PROVIDERS

Here is a list of service providers frequently used by students & residents of Montreal.

Please note that these are suggestions only. McGill does not endorse any particular service provider and is in no way responsible for the terms of service.

▶ UTILITIES

Hydro Québec (Electricity)

www.hydroQuebec.com
(514) 385-7252

Gaz Metro (Natural Gas)

www.gazmetro.com
(514) 598-3222 // 1-800-361-4568

Oil Heating – List of Providers

▶ TELEVISION/CABLE

Videotron www.videotron.com
514-380-2967 // 1-866-380-2967

Bell www.bell.ca

Rogers www.rogers.ca
1-888-395-1077

▶ CELLPHONE/LANDLINE

Rogers www.rogers.ca

Fido www.fido.ca

Bell www.bell.ca

Koodoo www.koodoo.ca

Videotron www.videotron.ca

▶ MAJOR BANKS

RBC www.rbc.ca

CIBC www.cibc.ca

HSBC www.hsbc.ca

TD Canada www.tdcanadatrust.com

Scotiabank www.scotiabank.com

BMO www.bmo.ca

Desjardins www.desjardins.ca



SAFETY & SECURITY

Whether this is your first time away from home or has lived on your own for years, here are a few tips to help you create a secure and peaceful living environment.

- 1 Keep ground level windows closed or use a safety lock.
- 2 Keep garbage cans and boxes away from windows so they can't be used as stepladders
- 3 Know your roommates' security habits. You are only as safe as your roommates allow you to be.
- 4 If you lose your keys, work with the landlord to replace your locks. Always insist your landlord repair any broken locks, windows, and doors immediately.
- 5 Don't prop doors for friends or delivery people.

TIP # 1

Your apartment is especially vulnerable to burglary during periods of time when students are known to be away, such as school breaks and Christmas break. When you are planning to leave your residence for a short or extended period of time keep the following in mind:

- Take all valuables with you.
- Ask a trusted neighbor to watch your apartment. Ask them to keep an eye out for any unusual activity. Provide a contact number while you will be gone.

- 6 Never leave keys outside your apartment, such as under a doormat or in a place accessible to a stranger.
- 7 ALWAYS lock your door(s) to your apartment when you are home, accompanied or alone, sleeping or going out, even if it's only for a few minutes.
- 8 Use a peephole to determine who is knocking before you open the door. If you are still unsure as to who is there, question the stranger through the door.
- 9 Choose a neighbor to assist you in case of emergency and give them a copy of your emergency contacts.
- 10 Check out the smoke detectors every month. If there is no smoke detector, ask your landlord to install one.
- 11 Laundry rooms, lounges and common areas should not be used if you're alone.
- 12 Purchase renter's insurance just in case of an accident or burglary.
- 13 Be sure to forge good relationship with landlords and neighbors because they may be your biggest allies.
- 14 Know where your emergency exits are located and plan alternative evacuation routes in case of an emergency.

TIP # 2

Make sure your apartment has the appearance of being lived in and not empty.

- Leave curtains and blinds in a normal position.
- Stop OR get a neighbor to pick up all mail and paper deliveries to avoid the appearance of backed-up mail.
- Use timers to turn appliances like lights, radios or T.V on and off.
- Don't announce your absence on your answering machine.



ROOMMATE TALK



Before you sign the lease, know what you're getting yourself into. Sit down with your potential roommates in order to set some ground rules and

get to know each other's living habits. You may all be friends, but it's important that everyone is on the same page.

Some potentially important issues:

- Level of cleanliness
- Level of noise in the apartment
- Study habits
- Overnight guests
- Pet peeves
- Sleeping habits
- Any important health concerns

Set ground rules for:

- Overnight guests
- Sharing of groceries/furniture/appliances
- Subscribing to different services such as cables/internet/phone line etc.

ROOMMATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Here is a list of suggested questions to initiate dialogue between you and your roommates about living together.

Discussion:

- How I feel about my possessions ... (what things are alright for you to borrow; what things I would prefer that others do not use)
- What my study habits may be like this year...
- How important it is to me for my room to be neat and clean...
- What my definition of "dirty" is...
- What my definition of "clutter" is...
- How often I (if I have ever) wash dishes...
- How I feel about discussing money...
- Finances regarding splitting bills (hydro, internet, phone, rent etc)...
- How I like to cook and grocery shop - only for myself or communally...
- The kind of music I like...
- What I like to watch on TV and what my favourite movies are...
- How I feel about drugs and drinking...
- What time I usually come home after a night out...

- How I feel about having guys/girls in the house for day visits/overnight stays...
- How hard/easy it is for me to go out and make friends...
- What I like to do in my spare time...
- What I am like when I am down or upset about something...
- How hard it is for me to let people know what I'm feeling or what I need...
- Times when I would prefer to be left alone...
- What my mood is most of the time...
- Something that is likely to annoy me...
- What I'm like when I feel stressed/pressured (during exams, with my peers etc)...
- When I like/need to sleep...
- What you need to know about my health...

Conclusions:

- The things that I'm most aware of about you as a result of this conversation is...
- It appears to me that an important similarity/difference between us may be...
- I think we might have to compromise on...
- I think something I came to realize more clearly about myself in this discussion is...
- The way I feel about this conversation is...

ROOMMATE AGREEMENT

A roommate agreement is highly recommended. It is a written agreement between co-habitators of a living space, which all parties collectively agree to be binding. Once signed this agreement enters all participating roommates into a contract with each other (not the landlord).

While most people who know each other may find this process to be overly formal, it can be extremely useful to bring up issues that have not already been discussed that could potentially become a problem, and prevent them. In the event that a friendship between roommates does deteriorate this document would be vital to the resolution of issues regarding payment, maintenance, belongings, etc. A roommate agreement can be as detailed, or as general as participating tenants wish. You can also search online for templates. Make sure everyone signs and dates the agreement and that each roommate gets their own copy.

Examples of things to include in your Roommate Agreement:

- How rent is divided; equally or depending of the size of the room
- The sharing of the appliances, furniture etc; who buys/keeps what?
- Groceries; shop together or separate?
- How bill (hydro, internet/cable tv) will be paid
- Shared responsibilities of cleaning
- Emptying trash, recycling etc.



TIP:

A roommate agreement is a contract amongst **ROOMMATES NOT** with the landlord.

All roommates (ie: tenants) will sign **ONE** lease with the landlord.

JOINT TENANCY

An important piece of legal information about roommates is the issue of "joint tenancy". A joint tenant, unlike an occupant, has a verbal or written lease with the landlord (ie: all roommates have their names on the lease for the dwelling) as well as an agreement between each other regarding terms of the rent and lease, etc. If the lease contains a clause stipulating solidarity, one of the joint tenants can be sued for the full rent. If there is no explicit clause in the lease or a clear agreement between the parties, the joint tenants share responsibilities.

Responsibilities of Joint Tenants

- Pay rent according to the method stipulated in the lease.
- Act in a reasonable way in using the dwelling.

- Not to disturb the normal enjoyment of the other tenants of the apartment or building.

Problems between Joint Tenants

A joint tenant who is disturbed by another joint tenant's behavior or who does not respect the agreement between them (ex. He does not pay his share of the rent), has legal recourses against the defaulting joint tenant.

A Joint Tenant is not just an occupant

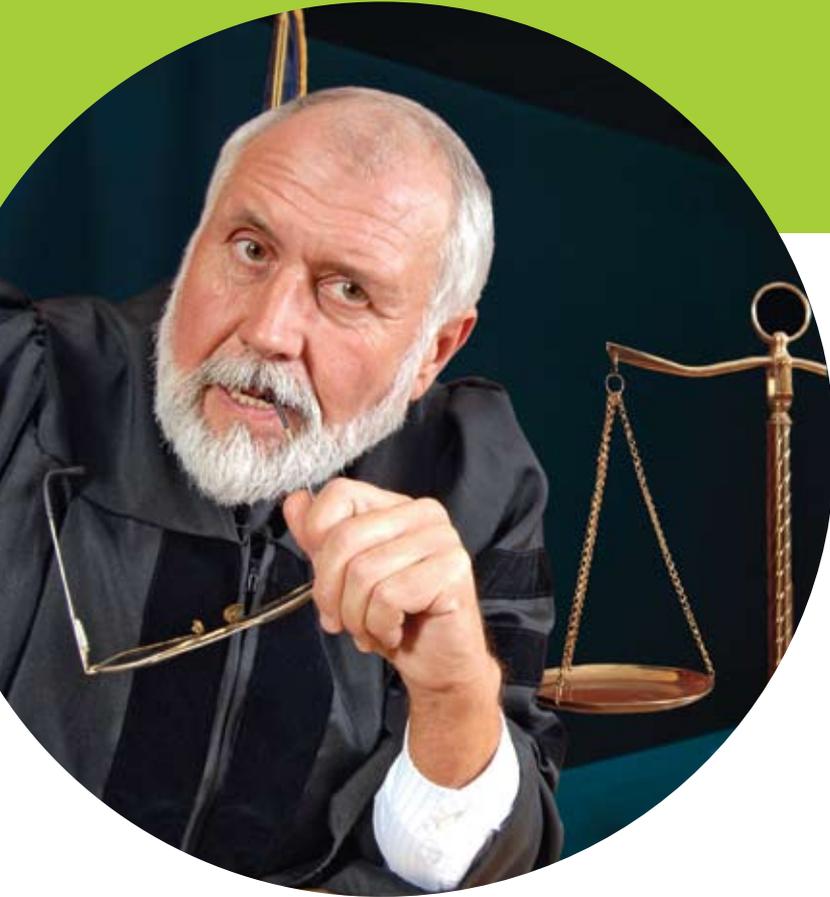
A joint tenant is a tenant with a written or verbal lease who rents the same dwelling with one or more other tenants

For more information go to the **régie du logement's website:**
www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca



WHY? HOW?

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LEGAL STUFF

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Being a well-informed tenant is your best tool during your apartment search. It is important to familiarize yourself with Québec lease laws as they will most likely be different than what you are accustomed to.

One of the first legal documents you may encounter during your apartment search is the **Application Form**.

What is an Application Form?

An application form is a pre-lease. Once you submit it to the landlord and he or she accepts it, you are legally responsible for the apartment.

On the application form, the landlord asked for my bank account number, passport number, and Social Insurance Number. Do I have to give those?

See the "Important Contact Information" section for information on the Commission d'accès de l'information and access to private information.

After I've filled out the application form, how long should it take the landlord to get back to me?

Most of the time, it will take around 2 days for the landlord to run the full credit check.

I've already signed the application form, the landlord hasn't got back to me yet, but now I found another really nice apartment. What should I do?

You need to get in touch with the first landlord to let them know you are withdrawing your application. Make sure the landlord agrees to tear up the application form before you fill out the application form for the new place.

TIPS for filling out an application form:

- Fill only one application form at a time.
- It takes around 2 working days for a landlord to run the full credit check.
- If you have already filled out one and then you find another apt that you like more, you need to get in touch with the first landlord to let him know of your intention to take a different apt. If he agrees, go meet with him and get it in writing that he is releasing you from the application form you submitted.
- When you fill out an application form, the landlord may ask for a deposit that will go towards the first month's rent. **MAKE SURE** that you get a receipt and it says refundable if the credit check does not go through.

THE LEASE

WHAT IS A LEASE?

A lease is a contract between a landlord and a tenant that defines their respective commitments concerning a dwelling.

What are the important parts of the lease I need to check before I sign it?

Make sure that the following information is written on your lease:

- The landlord's name and address
- Your name (if you're signing with a friend, make sure each of your names and signatures appear on the lease.)
- What appliances are included in the rent (if the fridge and stove are included, make sure that's written on the lease.)
- Length of the lease – start and end dates of the lease
- Rent per month, when the payment should be made and the method of payment
- If the landlord agreed to make any repairs or renovations to your apartment, make sure the lease says exactly which repairs are to be made and when they should be completed (either before you move in or sometime during the course of your lease.)
- Which utilities are included in the rent (heat, hot water, and electricity).
- Whether or not you are allowed to have a pet in your apartment.

How long after signing the lease can I change my mind and back out?

From the moment you sign the lease, you are responsible for the lease until the end of its term.

Do I get a copy of my lease right away?

Usually, you get your copy within ten days of signing the lease. If it has been ten days and you still don't have a copy of the lease, make sure to contact your landlord.

VERBAL AGREEMENT

What if I don't have a written lease?

A verbal agreement is just as binding as a written agreement, however a verbal agreement is harder to prove in court so we encourage you to obtain a written lease.

If I want to rent a room in someone's house, do they normally give you a written lease?

No, they don't usually fill out the formal lease, but make sure that you have a written agreement of some sort. For example, a formal letter with all the details that would normally be given in a lease would be appropriate.

BREAKING THE LEASE

Can you break the lease whenever you need to?

- The only reasons you can break a lease are:
- If you are accepted into government-run Low Cost Housing.
 - If you can no longer occupy your apartment due to a physical handicap.
 - If you are admitted permanently into an elderly long term care center.

If you do not fit into those categories, but you have to get out of the lease, you have the choice to either sublet your apartment or to assign the lease (otherwise known as a lease transfer.)



LEASE LENGTH	STEP ONE	STEP TWO	STEP THREE
	Notice of Lease Renewal/Rent Increase	Deadline for making your decision	Application to Rental Board by Landlord to contest refusal
12 months or more	3-6 months before end of lease	You must respond within one month following receipt of the notice, otherwise it will be considered that you have agreed to the continuation of your lease and its modifications	Within one month after receiving the lessee's refusal; otherwise the lease is renewed
12 months or less	1-2 months before end of lease		
Indeterminate	1-2 months before end of lease		
Lease of room	10-20 days before end of lease		

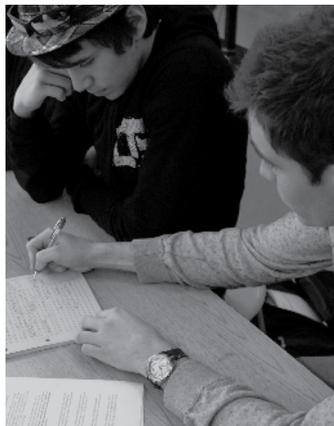
RENEWING

Do I have to give my landlord a notice if I want to renew my lease?

No, your lease is automatically renewed unless, your landlord wants to move in and in this case he has to give you a notice 6 months before the end of your lease. It is called "Repossession of Dwelling".

A tenant who wishes to renew his/her lease does not have to give a renewable notice to the landlord. The lease is renewed automatically.

- ▶ A tenant who wishes to move out must give the landlord a non renewable notice at least 3 months before the end of the lease. If this tenant receives a rent increase notice he must get back to the landlord within a month. Otherwise, the lease will get renewed automatically for another year at the rent the landlord proposed.
- ▶ Landlord can send you a rent increase notice 3 to 6 months before the end of the lease and you must get back to him within 30 days.



RENTING

PAYMENT OF RENT

Do I have to pay all twelve months in advance?

No, you pay month by month. Usually the landlord will ask for the first month's rent up front, when you sign the lease.

How do I have to pay my rent?

Some people pay cash (in which case, make sure to get a receipt for it) and some by check (in which case your bank statement will serve as a receipt). It should specify on your lease which method of payment you will use.

Does the tenant have a reasonable delay to pay his rent?

No, you must pay on the first of the month unless otherwise specified on your lease.

Where should I pay my rent?

It should be specified on your lease.

What happens if I do not pay my rent on time?

If you are late paying your rent and as a result your landlord is late making his/ her own payments, the landlord can sue you for the interest charges on his/her late payments. Also, if you are repeatedly late or more than three weeks late, your landlord can file at the Rental Board to evict you from the apartment. The eviction will be annulled if you pay all your rent owing. Note also that after the landlord has applied once to the Rental Board to have you evicted, if you are ever late with your rent he/she can have you evicted right away if you are only 1 day late.

ACCESS TO DWELLING

Is my landlord allowed to access my apartment whenever he wants?

No, your landlord should give you a verbal or a written notice 24 hours before visiting your apartment. If the landlord is coming to show the apartment to a potential tenant, the landlord can come between 9am and 9pm. If it is to make repairs, the landlord can come between 7am and 7pm. And if it is an urgent repair, the landlord may come with no notice at any time.

RENT INCREASES

When can the landlord raise the rent?

For a 12 month lease the landlord must send the notice 3 to 6 months before the end of the lease, and the increase will only take effect once the current lease term is up. You must get back to him within 30 days of receiving the notice, if you fail to do so your lease will get renewed automatically for another 12 months at the rent he proposed.

Can the landlord raise the rent by any amount the landlord chooses?

No, every year at the end of January, the Rental Board publishes rent increase percentages which correspond to different heating methods. Ex: buildings heated by gas will have a different percentage than those heated by hydro. Furthermore, any renovations that the landlord did and the rate of municipality tax will also factor into the rent increase. Keep in mind, you are not obligated to accept a rent increase. You have 30 days upon receiving the rent increase notice to refuse. For the procedure on how to refuse a rent increase, see below.

What if your landlord is asking for an unreasonable rent increase?

If your landlord is asking for an increase much higher than the average rent increases released by the Rental Board and you think it is not justified then you should try to negotiate with him. If you are not able to come to a reasonable negotiation with your landlord, then send him a registered letter within one month of receiving his notice of rent increase, telling him that you do not accept his rent increase and that you wish to remain on the premises (a template is available on the Régie's website). Make sure you keep a copy of the letter for yourself and the receipts from the registered mail. At this point, the landlord will take it to the Rental Board. They will decide the appropriate rent increase based on the landlord's cost to maintain the building. Whatever increase the Rental Board decides is binding.





REPAIRS

What do you do if a repair needs to be done in your apartment?

First you should try to contact your landlord in person or over the phone to ask him to make the repair. If you cannot reach the landlord or the landlord refuses to make the repair or if the landlord does not do it on time, then you should send him a letter through registered mail. In your letter, you should explain what repairs need to be done and give him a time limit (usually 10 days) in which you expect him to complete the repairs. Explain that if the landlord does not complete the repair you will be forced to take legal action at the Rental Board. Make sure to keep a copy of all correspondence between yourself and the landlord

Can I do the repairs myself and then withhold the costs from my rent?

No, not unless you have the written permission of your landlord beforehand, or if the problem you want to repair poses an immediate health risk that you absolutely cannot wait to fix.

 Always report a repair or difficult situation to your landlord in writing and by registered mail. This way, you will have proof if necessary in the future.

When reporting a repair or difficult situation to your landlord, give him a specific time frame within which he must fix the problem.

HEATING

When does my landlord have to put the heater on?

There is not a specific date on which the landlord must turn on the heating. The landlord just has to maintain a temperature of at least 21 degrees Celsius at all times.

What do I do if my apartment is too cold?

You should send your landlord a registered letter explaining that he needs to maintain the temperature at 21 degrees, and if the landlord fails to do so, then you will file at the Rental Board. If you do file at the Rental Board make sure to have a record of what temperature it has been in your apartment each day.

Eg: Temperature:

Indoor	Outdoor	Date	Time

You should also always keep a copy of all correspondence between yourself and the landlord.

SUBLET AND LEASE TRANSFER

SUBLET

(also referred to as "sublease")

The only legal way to get out of a lease is to sublet or transfer your lease. In certain cases, such as Joint Tenancy, there may be restrictions on the right to sublet or transfer the lease.

Although the term sublease (sublet) is widely used, it only applies when the person who signed the lease intends to vacate the unit for a short period of time and expects to return to it afterwards.

- You, as tenant, have the right to sublet
- Short term absence (ex: summer vacation)
- Subtenant can only stay for the designated period of time
- You (tenant), however, remain responsible for the apartment
- Sub-tenant cannot extend sublease with landlord
- You (tenant), *not landlord*, work out arrangements with sub-tenant

LEASE TRANSFER

(also referred to as "lease assignment")

If the person who signed the lease does not intend to return to the unit (often referred to as "sublet with option to renew") then the lease must be assigned to the new tenant. Once the decision to either sublet or assign the lease has been made, the landlord should be notified in writing. Forms are available on the Régie de Logement site: www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca.

- Leaving apartment permanently
- Releases you (tenant) from all rights and responsibilities of apartment
- You (tenant) give up the right to ever return to the apartment

How to Assign a Lease/Lease Transfer

- Start by letting the landlord know about your intention.
- Place advertisement for your Sublet/Option to renew or Lease Transfer. You can use the Off Campus Housing Useful Links section for a list of other housing related sites.

How to Sublet

- Start by placing an advertisement. You can use the Off Campus Housing Useful Links section for a list of other housing related sites.
- Draft an application form to get the prospective sub-tenant to fill out, that way you can check on them.
- On the application form you can ask the following information:
 - Name
 - Present address
 - Reason for inhabiting Montreal?
- Once you find the right person send your landlord a notice of sublet.
- You will want to have a contract with the sub-tenant, you can buy a standard lease form and fill it out as if you are the landlord and the person is your tenant or draft your own contract.

- Once you find the right person get him to fill out the "Notice to Assign Your Lease".
- Send the notice to the landlord by registered mail or in person (if in person, make sure he signs the form and you both get a copy). *The landlord has 15 days to give you an answer and can only refuse with a valid reason. Legally, a landlord may only refuse to give consent to a lease assignment for a serious reason (e.g. the new tenant will be unable to pay the rent). The reason for refusal must be communicated to the tenant within 15 days of receipt of the notice.*
- The Agreement of the Lease assignment is between you and the new tenant and you must give the new tenant a copy of your lease along with the Agreement of Lease assignment, as well as a copy of the rules and regulations of the building (if applicable).
- Sometimes, landlords will sign a new lease with the new tenant. Remember the remainder of your current lease should be at the rent you are currently paying and the new lease will be at the new rent.



BWARE OF SUBLET SCAMS!!!

WATCH OUT FOR THIS SCAM.

So you've signed a May/June/July 1st lease but you're going home for the summer. You place an advertisement for your apartment/room for sublet and within a day or two you've received an enthusiastic response from a potential overseas renter who wants your place now and is ready to send you money for the first month's rent! All you have to do is give them an address to send the money. All your worries about finding a summer sublet, or never finding one, disappear and you can sleep peacefully.

Soon after, you receive another email from your subletter who tells you that they are sending you an amount much greater than the first month's rent. They need you to send back the difference in order for them to pay for their plane ticket to Montreal or that they sent it "by mistake". You figure you'll do them the favor, so you head over to the bank with your bank draft/moneygram/money order. But the bank tells you, "these are fraudulent."

THE MAIN COMPONENTS:

- very quick and direct response
- often don't even ask to see pictures or ask any questions about move-in dates; seem extremely accommodating
- will offer money right away in forms like **MONEY ORDERS, MONEY-GRAMS, BANK DRAFTS**
 - ▶ banks will hold money orders for 5 days but the subletter will be pressuring you to wire-transfer the balance; **DON'T** give them any money out of your own pocket!
- will claim some sort of story to justify having sent such a large amount of money
 - ▶ "my boss owes me money"
 - ▶ "I need it for my plane ticket"
 - ▶ or a combination of the two: "my boss owes me money and is paying for my travel expenses"

You can report any email scams to McGill's ICS Service Desk through their website at www.mcgill.ca/it.

Search "Student housing fraud" in their Knowledge Database for more information on email scams.



TIP:

If the sub-tenant is coming to work here, request the supervisor's contact info and confirm if this person is actually coming to work with him.



TIP:

If you are taking over a lease remember to ask the tenant for a copy of his lease.



OBLIGATIONS

RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE TENANT

Main RIGHTS of the tenant:

- To maintain in the apartment as long as he wants.
- To refuse an unreasonable rent increase.
- To apply to the Rental Board (if the tenant cannot come to a reasonable agreement with the landlord)

Main OBLIGATIONS of the tenant:

- To give a non-renewal notice on time
- To pay rent on time
- To use the apartment with prudence
- To respect the laws pertaining safety and sanitation
- To allow urgent repairs

OBLIGATIONS OF THE LANDLORD

Main OBLIGATIONS of the landlord when the leased property is delivered to the tenant:

- On the agreed date, the landlord must deliver the leased property in a good state of repair, habitable condition and clean condition.
- Though it states that the property should be delivered in "a good state of repair, habitable condition and clean condition", be aware that this is up for interpretation. Don't expect the apartment to be sparkling clean when you arrive; you will most likely have to do some cleaning when you move in.

- To inform landlord of serious defect
- To allow the landlord to verify the condition of the dwelling, to have it visited by a prospective acquirer, to allow the posting of signs and visits of a prospective tenant and the work to be done
- Not to change the locks of the dwelling
- To act in such a way as not to disturb the normal enjoyment of the other tenants and/or of the landlord

Main OBLIGATIONS at the end of the lease:

- To remove all his movable effects
- To leave the dwelling in good condition.

Main OBLIGATIONS of the landlord during the lease:

- To give a peaceful enjoyment of the leased property
- To maintain the dwelling in good habitable condition
- To make all the necessary repairs, except those that are assumed by the tenant
- To respect the laws pertaining to the safety, sanitation, maintenance and habitability of the dwelling or the building
- To make sure that the number of occupants respect the normal conditions of comfort and sanitation



ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

LA RÉGIE DU LOGEMENT (RENTAL BOARD)

Created in 1980, the Régie du logement (Rental Board) is a specialized board that has jurisdiction in matters relating to residential leases. It informs citizens on their rights and obligations, promotes conciliation between landlords and tenants and renders decisions on the applications that are submitted. The Régie also ensures that housing inventory is maintained and that the rights of tenants are protected.

Their website has many handy leaflets that can be downloaded with information about important housing concerns such as Joint Tenancy, Repossession of a Dwelling, Assigning your Lease or Subletting, Heating Problems, Noise, and Payment of Rent. You can also call or visit them in person.

Régie du logement

Québec 

5199, rue Sherbrooke Est (corner of Viau)
Office 2095, 2161, Montreal, QC H1T 3X1
Hours: Monday - Friday, 8h30-4h30

514-873-2245
Or visit their site at
<http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca>

CREDIT CHECK

A landlord must first obtain consent in order to run a credit check and it can be done with minimal personal information: Full name, current and previous addresses and date of birth. Common credit bureaus in Canada are: Equifax (requires a S.I.N) Trans Union, and Meridian.

COMMISSION D'ACCÈS À L'INFORMATION

Documentation is an inevitable part of the apartment search. Application forms, credit checks and other contracts will be asking you for personal information. It is important to know what information is required and what is not.

The Commission d'accès à l'information du Québec (CAI) provides guidelines to help ensure protection of personal information. It is important to make sure that the information requested is necessary. There are certain conditions, before signing the lease, under which a landlord can ask for certain types of personal information.

Personal information may be requested:

- To establish the **IDENTITY** of the future tenant: last name, given name, and full address
- To verify the future tenant's **CONDUCT**: contact information of a previous or current landlord; proof of conduct can also be provided by a document from the previous landlord confirming good behavior

- To establish the future tenant's **PAYMENT HABITS**: this can be obtained through a previous or current landlord, the future tenant's financial institution, any other document pertaining to payments required over a prolonged period of time, or the relevant excerpts of a credit record

Personal information which **CANNOT** be required:

- Social Insurance Number (SIN):
- Driver's License and Health Insurance Card/Number: While these documents can be used to verify name and address, this does not require that the license or insurance number be collected. You can contact the CAI in Montreal at: Bureau 18.200
500, boul. René-Lévesque Ouest
514 873-4196
1 888 528-7741
Or visit the CAI's website at www.cai.gouv.qc.ca/index-en.html



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NOW THAT YOU HAVE AN APARTMENT

MOVING IN

Tips for packing, moving, and equipping your new place

Packing and moving can be a stressful experience, especially if you are moving into an apartment for the first time. Here are some tips to make it slightly easier.

- Start early-try to get most of your packing done before your moving date. Pack things that you won't need early on, so you're not rushing at the last minute.
- To find boxes, ask at grocery stores and other stores in the area (Metro, Provigo, Dollarama).
- When packing, try to distribute the weight evenly. Avoid putting all heavy objects (like books) into one box, instead, spread them out.
- For wrapping and protecting breakables, use towels and sheets. Newspaper works well, too.
- Large garbage bags are useful for packing clothing, especially if you are in a hurry.

When you get to your new place

It is a good idea to clean up before you unpack (see following pages for cleaning details). Occasionally, previous tenants neglect to clean when they leave, or just have different standards of cleanliness.

When you move out, keep the future tenants in mind and remember to clean your apartment as well. A list of some moving and storage companies is available at our office upon request.

- ▶ Call the phone and utilities companies a few days/weeks before you move in so that the first day in your apt the phone line works and you have lights.
- ▶ Call your landlord a few days before move in date to confirm the time and date you are moving in.
- ▶ Don't forget to notify Canada Post and other services of your address change. Canada Post also offers a paid mail forwarding service for 6 months.

CRIME PREVENTION SERVICE

offered by the City "for free".

URBAN SECURITY PROGRAM

Tandem is a safety promotion program that aims to give people the tools to better protect themselves from crime and feel safe in their neighbourhoods. They help Montrealers secure their possessions, have a safe living environment and a sense of community and solidarity.

One of the services they offer is "**HOME SECURITY EVALUATIONS**"

At your request they will visit your apartment and evaluate how secure it is. They offer you tips and advice that you can apply to reduce the risk of home break-ins. They can also engrave your valuable with a code to identify it in the event of theft.

Other services that they provide are:

Group workshops on safety
Exploratory walks
Animation for children
Conflict resolution assistance

Tandem Ville Marie is all this and more!

For more information call or e-mail them
514-522-2280 or
tandem.vm@qc.aira.com
2022 Rue de la Visitation,
Montréal (Québec)
H2L 3C7



THINGS YOU MIGHT NEED

HERE IS A LIST OF ESSENTIALS TO HELP YOU START SETTING UP YOUR APARTMENT.

Kitchen

- Set of plates, bowls, cups and mugs, cutlery. Easily found at Dollarama
- Tupperware-style storage containers (useful for storing food, or taking lunches to school)
- Cooking utensils: large spoons, spatulas, whisks, measuring cups and spoons, knives
- Can and bottle openers
- Large and medium-sized pots, pans/skillets for cooking and baking.
- Coffee-maker and/or kettle
- Dish-drying rack
- Dishtowels and rags, sponges, dish soap
- Trash can with lid

Bathroom

- Toilet brush and plunger
- New shower curtain
- Drain stoppers
- Hair-catcher for drain (helps prevent blockages)
- Bathroom rug
- In shower: storage rack or basket for shampoo, soap, etc.
- Non-slip mat for bathtub

Miscellaneous

- Broom and mop (with mop bucket)
- Drying rack for laundry
- Extension cords



TIP:

Where can I buy furniture?

McGill Classifieds and others (check the following website for a list: www.mcgill.ca/offcampus/links)

•
Used furniture stores (including Village de Valeur)

•
Yard sales (for smaller items, like end-tables, lamps, etc.)

•
The famous IKEA

Furniture

Everyone has to have the full "student apartment" living experience. Part of the experience, of course, involves choosing furniture. You might find yourself with mismatched, second-hand, or "some assembly required" furniture. It might not be "luxury", but that's all part of the fun. In any case, here are some suggestions for basic pieces.

Your Room

- Bed (of course)
- Dresser (or wardrobe, if there are no closets)
- Bookshelves and/or storage shelves
- Desk and comfortable desk chair (makes long nights of studying easier!)
- Desk lamp

Living Room

- Couch or futon (futons are often cheaper, easier to move, and are good for visiting friends)
- Comfy chair
- Coffee table/end tables
- Floor and/or table lamps, especially if the overhead lights are somewhat dim
- Shelves for books, DVDs, etc.
- TV

Kitchen/Dining room

- Table and chairs

Extras

- Curtains or shades for windows (sometimes aren't included with apartment)
- Rugs
- Posters and/or wall hangings
- Slipcovers for couches and chairs (sheets and bedspreads work well, specially when you need to cover up an ugly but otherwise comfortable couch!)
- Plants
- Coat rack

You can be creative, too, and reuse old items in new ways. For example, milk crates work well for shelves. Large trunks, even, can double as coffee tables and storage spaces. It all adds to your apartment's character.



LIVING ON YOUR OWN

TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR PLACE CLEAN

STOVE

Stoves can get messy very fast! Here are some tips:

- Quickly clean up any spills, boil ovens and mini-explosions
- Avoid leaving loose food particles in the oven, it can catch fire easily.

How to clean a stove

- Allow stove surface to cool completely before cleaning.
- Remove drip pans (if necessary) and soak them in soapy water.
- Apply stove cleaner to surface of stove and oven.
- Wipe in a circular motion until stains and smudges are gone.
- Wipe away excess cleaner with a paper towel.
- Scour drip pans with an abrasive cleaner or scouring pad.
- Allow pans to dry or wipe with paper towel or with a kitchen cloth.
- Replace drip pans to their position beneath burners.
- "EASY OFF" is a good product to use when you clean the inside of your oven.

TOASTER

A toaster is another amazing electrical appliance. As such, do not try to remove a piece of bread with a knife while it is plugged in.

How to clean the toaster

- Unplug the toaster before you clean it.
- Open the bottom of the toaster, pull out the crumb tray, gently brush off the crumbs with a dry paper towel.
- Never use liquid in the toaster and for the outside, wipe with a sponge.

MICROWAVE

Remember the microwave is an amazing appliance - but be warned it is a powerful and dangerous tool!

How to clean a microwave

- Wipe the inside and outside with a warm, damp sponge.
- Clean it once a month.
- Make sure the dishes are microwave safe when you use them. If you cover your food with a paper towel or get the microwave plate cover, your microwave will stay clean all the time.

TIPS for cleaning your fridge:

- Use an all-purpose (e.g. Mr. Clean) cleaner
- If you have messy drawers let them soak with hot soapy water aside while you are cleaning the other part of the fridge.
- How often do I clean my fridge? Every 3 weeks clean your fridge and remember to defrost your freezer regularly.

FRIDGE

Remember if you have to defrost your fridge please do not use a knife or screwdriver to remove the extra accumulation of frost. Simply put a pot of hot water in the freezer or unplug the fridge.

How to clean the fridge

- Remove all the food from your refrigerator.
- Wipe down the inside with warm soapy water.
- Clean all the shelves and trays
- Then replace the food.
- When you clean the freezer put old towels around the fridge to catch melting water.
- As you work, check the expiration dates and discard food past those dates.

BATHROOM

How to clean the toilet

- As this particular room accumulates bacteria very quickly, we suggest you get a good pair of rubber gloves to clean every week.
- Start out by spraying the liquid toilet cleaner in and around the toilet bowl, then wait.
- While waiting, put all the other stuff such as garbage, rug and any other movable items outside the bathroom. Then spray the bathtub with the liquid or powder cleaning solution.
- Once everything is out of the way, brush the toilet bowl. Focus on scrubbing the whole interior of the bowl, not just in the water.
- Flush and rinse the brush in the water.
- Spray the seat, the underside of the seat and the rim with disinfectant.
- Wipe down the base, lid and tank top with disinfectant and allow it to dry before using the toilet.

For the bathtub

- Use a sponge to wipe it, remember to keep the all the water inside the tub or shower to prevent water damage.

For the sink

- Spray disinfectant and wipe it out.

And finally for the floor

- Use disinfectant or all-purpose cleaner and a mop.



GREEN LIVING

DO YOUR PART

Save water:

Take shorter showers, don't let the tap run unnecessarily, get leaky faucets fixed, try to do a full load of laundry. Imagine how much water we can save in a year.

Save energy:

Turn off lights, appliances, computers and stereos when you're not using them. Lower the heat when you are going out.

Cut down on food waste and avoid disposable:

- Take only what you plan/want to eat and if you want more you can go for a second round.
- Cut back on napkins, styrofoam cups, condiment packets, straws, plastic drink tops etc.
- Carry your own mug, fork and tupperware.
- Buy small quantity of fruits and vegetables at a time especially if you are not a big eater or a great cook.
- Freeze extra peppers, spinach and other vegetables if you know you will use them in the same week, freeze left over pizza if you do not feel like eating pizza again the next day.

Recycling:

Use both side of paper, give away old clothes, invest in rechargeable batteries etc. Deposit scrap paper, cereal boxes, newspaper, old notes, cans, bottles, etc in your green or blue recycling bin.

Compost:

Did you know? Because at the landfill air cannot get to the organic waste, each time you send waste to the landfill you are creating methane, a harmful greenhouse gas. However, if you compost the waste at home, the waste can be decomposed aerobically with hardly any methane produced. Also, if you compost, you will often only have enough garbage to put out once a week instead of twice a week. Therefore, composting is both good for the environment and gives less work for you!

HOW CAN YOU COMPOST?

Visit <http://gorilla.mcgill.ca/> and www.greeningmcgill.org/ for more information on getting access to the composter at McGill.

Buy less stuff:

Rent or borrow items that you use frequently. Share household items like hair dryers with your housemates. You can borrow CDs from the Music Library, movies from the Reserve desk in Redpath library for free, and you can read the libraries' newspapers and magazines

Bring your own bag:

You carry and use your school bag or backpack nearly everywhere you go, so why take that disposable bag from the mall, bookstore or grocery store? When they ask "Paper" or "Plastic" just say "neither".



SHOPPING



EATING AT HOME

Supermarkets

- Metro, IGA, Provigo, Loblaws, Maxi & Cie, Super C
- Keep your eyes open for smaller neighbourhood grocery stores (called "epiceries"), where you can often find good deals. Most of the large grocery stores deliver right to your door (don't forget tip!)

Produce

- Atwater and Jean Talon Markets are by far the best in Montreal for fresh produce.

Health Food Stores

- Frenco Vrac 3985 St. Laurent (reasonably priced health food store with many things in bulk)
- Le Frigo Vert 2130 Mackay (a student run health food store at Concordia, lots of bulk things and some organic produce. It's a great place to support)
- Organic Food Coop run by McGill student volunteers allows you to order well-priced good quality organic foods each week, and pick them up in the Shatner building. If you pay a \$10 membership deposit, (refundable if you decide to leave the coop), you will receive an additional 10% off your purchases. For more information see www.ssmc.mcgill.ca/foodcoop.
- St. Laurent is a great street to find bakeries, delis, clothing stores and dollars stores. Watch for the St. Laurent Street Sale (usually Labour Day weekend) - it's an event not to be missed!

Dépanneur

The Québec version of the neighbourhood corner store, dépanneurs usually close late.

Food

Believe it or not, you can get plenty of free or almost-free food in Montreal, and you don't have to go far.

EATING OUT

• The Midnight Kitchen

This student-run volunteer service at McGill serves affordable vegan and vegetarian food for students at lunch time on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Lunch starts at 12pm in the Shatner Building Room 309. Bring Tupperware and a small donation if you can.

• Food for Thought

Part of the Yellow Door, this program offers temporary food assistance for students who are having trouble making ends meet or are sick of Kraft dinner. Free non-perishable food items and vouchers are available every Friday from 1pm to 4pm. They also have a small resource library with recipes, cheap food guides to Montreal, nutrition info and community links. Visit www.yellowdoor.org or call 514-845-2600.

• Rabbit Hole Café

The Rabbit Hole Café at the Yellow Door is food for thought's vegan collective, cooking up vegan lunches every Friday at noon or 1pm. Drop by bring along a suggested donation of \$2, enjoy the company and eat up! They don't provide dishes, so bring tupperware and expect to help with set up and clean up. 3625 Aylmer.

• The Women's Union Chaplaincy Services and the Theological Colleges

on University often hold free lunches and dinners throughout the school year: keep your eyes peeled for posters.

• The People's Potato

This group at Concordia offers a huge vegan lunch every weekday for a suggested donation of \$1-\$2. Bring Tupperware to takeout or leave with leftovers. Hall building 5th floor, 1455 De Maisonneuve W.

- **Around town**

lots of restaurant offers student discount or freebies, and all you need is your student

- **Food services on campus**

McGill Food and Dining Services offer the Commuter Meal Plan and the Saver Meal Plan as well as a Gift cards. These plans are based on a declining balance and can be used at their 21 locations where the Martlet Meal Plan is honored. These plans are flexible, easy to use and convenient. They allow you to purchase food on campus without the hassle of carrying cash. For more details on any of these meal plans, and to consult their Dine on Campus Map, please visit their website at www.mcgill.ca/foodservices.

COMPUTER AND ACCESSORIES

- McGill Computer Store (in bookstore)
- www.dell.ca
- Best Buy
- Future Shop

BOOKSTORE

- McGill Bookstore
- The Word (on Milton street)
- Paragraphe Bookstore
- Chapters and Indigo



DRUGSTORES

Some popular drugs stores:

- Pharmaprix
- Uniprix
- Jean Coutu
- Brunet

KITCHENWARE & FURNITURE

- The dollar store is a good place to start (for plates, cutlery, glasses, mugs).
- Canadian Tire, Zellers, The Bay, Walmart, Zellers IKEA, Stokes etc. for pots, pans, small appliances and more.
- You can also look into yard sales (for smaller items like end-tables, lamps, etc), the McGill classifieds and others website (visit our useful links section www.mcgill.ca/offcampus/links) and used furniture store such as Village des Valeurs.

CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES

- Ste. Catherine Street
The most convenient area to shop is around Ste. Catherine W. There are tons of stores and mall to visit
- Department stores
The Bay, Simon's Eaton Center, Les Ailes de la Mode etc



THE OFF CAMPUS HOUSING STAFF THANKS YOU FOR USING THE SERVICE.

We hope your search has gone well and that the survival guide has been helpful. If you were expecting other information that we did not provide you, please let us know. We are open to comments and suggestions to improve our service so sent us an e-mail: offcampus.housing@mcgill.ca

Even when you have found a place, the Off Campus Housing staff is here for you so if you have any questions or concerns during your lease, feel free to call us or stop by the office.

HABITER MONTREAL

The City Of Montreal has information on Maintenance and Salubrity under their "Habiter Montreal" which pertains to the bylaw concerning the maintenance and sanitation of dwellings.

You can call them at 514-872-4630 or visit their website www.habitermontreal.qc.ca under Maintenance and Salubrity

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- ▶ **McGill Off-Campus Housing:**
3473 University Street - Room 135
514-398-6010
www.mcgill.ca/offcampus
- ▶ **Comité du logement du Plateau Mont-Royal**
514-527-3495
www.clpmr.com
- ▶ **McGill Legal Clinic:**
514-398-6792
- ▶ **Tenant's Rights Hotline:**
514-488-0412 or 514-990-0190
(ask about their walk in clinic)
- ▶ **Westmount Housing legal clinic**
e-mail: westmountlegalclinic@hotmail.com
(ask about their walk in clinic)
- ▶ **Community Tenant's Rights & Advocacy Organizations**
(Comités de logement) by Region
Centre Sud: 514-521-5992
St. Henri: 514-935-4649
Plateau: 514-527-3495
Rosemont: 514-597-2581
N.D.G: 514-484-1471
Hochelaga Maisonneuve:
514-528-1634
Parc Extension: 514-278-6028
Cote Des Neiges:
514-738-2036 or
514-738-0101

DISCRIMINATION

Every person has a right to full and equal recognition and exercise of his/her human rights and freedoms, without distinctions, exclusion or preference based on race, colour, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, civil status, age, as provided by law, religion, political conviction, language, ethnic or national origin, social condition, a handicap or the use of any means to palliate a handicap.

(The Charter, Article 10)

If you believe that you are being denied a dwelling for any of the above listed reasons, you may register a complaint with the Human Rights Commission of Montreal at 514-873-5146.

HARASSMENT

Landlords cannot use harassment as a means of forcing you to leave the dwelling before the end of the lease. Often people who harass others threaten to report their victims to the Immigration Department or to retaliate in other ways if the victim complains. Unless you are living illegally in the country, you have nothing to fear from the Immigration Department.

You can report harassment to the Human Rights Commission of Montreal at 514-873-5146.



McGill



McGill University

Student Housing Office, University Hall
3473 University Street Room 135
Montréal QC Canada H3A 2A8

Tel.: 514-398-6010

Fax.: 514-398-2305

Hours: Mon - Fri, 9am - 4pm

www.mcgill.ca/offcampus
offcampus.housing@mcgill.ca