

## TYPES OF RENTALS

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### Room Rentals

A "room rental" is a room in a house shared by others. In most cases, bathroom and kitchen facilities are shared with other residents. Room rentals usually cost between \$850.00 and \$1,350.00 per month. This does not include food and tenants are responsible for buying food and preparing it for themselves. Sometimes rooms are furnished, and rent can include utilities (electricity, water, etc.), but more often they will be unfurnished and utilities will be an extra charge in addition to rent.

### Apartment Rentals

Apartments can be rented on your own or with roommates. An apartment is a complete living unit. You generally do not share facilities with other residents, except for laundry machines in some cases. Tenants generally pay for electricity, gas, cable, water, and internet service in addition to rent. However, some apartments may include one or more of these utilities in the rental fee.

There are several types of apartments:

- **Studio apartments**
  - 2 rooms: bathroom and another large room that serves as kitchen, bedroom, and living room
  - Suitable for one or perhaps two people
  - Generally unfurnished
- **Unfurnished apartments**
  - One, two, three, and sometimes four bedrooms
  - The renter must acquire all furniture that is needed (couch, bed, desk, table, etc.)
  - Costs less than furnished apartments.
- **Furnished apartment**
  - Includes all furniture, but usually not linens (towels, sheets, etc.) or cooking and eating utensils.
  - Rare in Bellingham

### House Rentals

International students who are here with their families or friends may want to rent an entire house.

- Houses may be furnished or unfurnished.
- Renters generally must pay for utilities in addition to rent (electricity, gas, water, telephone, garbage, internet, etc.)
- The amount of rent required depends on size, location, furnishings, and the general condition of the house.
- Houses for rent are usually located through property management companies or through personal contacts with landlords or with renters who are vacating a house.

### Roommates

It can be fun to live with friends that you know from school or work, but also can be a challenge to work through problems that might come up. To maintain your friendship, make sure to talk about important

issues before you start living together. When issues do arise, try and deal with them immediately using open and honest communication. Some examples to consider are:

- Rent: How much is each person paying? How is the rent getting to the landlord each month?
- Living Spaces: Who will occupy which room?
- Chores: Consider making a chore schedule so that everyone does their fair share to keep the home clean.
- Food: Will you share food costs or buy and cook your own food?
- Noise: What is an acceptable noise level? Quiet hours? Share your schedules with one another.
- Guests: Under what conditions are guests allowed in the house? What about overnight guests?

### **IMPORTANT RENTAL INFORMATION**

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Important information you should know before you rent privately:

- A renter, or "tenant," usually has to pay for his or her own utilities (i.e., electricity, gas, internet, water, etc.), although the monthly rent may include some of these. The landlord or manager can explain what you must do to begin utility services. (Connect electricity, gas, water service, etc.)
- Be sure to ask about deposits and other special fees, and whether these additional costs are refundable or non-refundable.
- The costs for a room can range from \$500 to \$800 depending on the number of rooms in an apartment. A studio or 1 bedroom can range from \$950.00 to \$1200.00 per month approximately. The cost can be more when utilities are not included. These costs never include food.
- Unfurnished apartments cost much less than furnished apartments. Inexpensive second-hand (used) furniture is easy to buy and sell in Bellingham.
- There are far more unfurnished than furnished apartments in Bellingham.
- Many college students rent an apartment or house to share in Bellingham.
- The busiest and best time to find an apartment or house to rent in Bellingham is June, July, August, and sometimes in early September.
- You should call or visit the complex to obtain the most current information regarding facilities, rules, deposits, fees and rent.
- Private rental leases are legally binding and can be complicated and difficult to understand. Make sure you read and understand the entire document before signing or paying any deposit or rent. Never sign a lease or exchange money for a place you have not seen.

### **FINDING A RENTAL**

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If you are renting in Bellingham for the first time, looking for an apartment or house can seem daunting. To help out, we have listed some resources below. To avoid scams, check to see if the agency or property

management company is registered with the City of Bellingham's Rental Registration and Safety Inspection program database (see <http://www.cob.org/services/housing/rentals> - "List of Registered Properties"). Some of our students have had negative experiences with private rental landlords and property management companies. Be sure to check reviews online and ask your friends if they know anything about the person/ company!

**Always use caution when giving out personal information.**

*We have included this information to help students in their search for housing, but are not affiliated with or responsible for the content of any site.*

**Bellingham Housing Facebook Groups**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bhamstudenthousing/>  
Bellingham Student Housing

Bham Community Housing  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/bhamcommunity/>

Western Washington University (WWU) Housing, Sublets & Roommates  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/482694771904828/>

To find these, simply search for them in your Facebook browser, or follow the link. Note: you must have a Facebook account to access these pages, and some will require you to request to join the group before seeing postings.

**Rental search websites**

Trulia.com, Apartments.com, Zillow.com, etc.

**Bellingham Craigslist** <https://bellingham.craigslist.org/>

**Western Off-Campus living, "Finding a place"** <https://wp.wvu.edu/offcampusliving/find-a-place/>

**Property Management Companies**

[Chuckanut Property Management](#)

[Daylight Property Management](#)

[Hammer Properties NW](#)

[Landmark Properties](#)

[Son-Rise Property Management](#)

[Windermere Property Management](#)