

RENTAL HOUSING IN THE U.S.

In the U.S. many people rent homes or share housing. When you look for housing, understanding your budget, your location's typical rent costs, and what you need in a home is important.

ABOUT RENTAL HOUSING IN THE U.S.

The main housing types are large and small apartment buildings, duplexes, houses divided into apartments, and shared housing where you can rent a room. Rentals apartments, duplexes, and houses have a kitchen, a living and dining area, bedrooms, and one or more bathrooms. Shared housing has shared kitchens, dining areas, and often shared bathrooms.



Types of housing available depend on location. In big cities, you will mostly find apartments for rent. Outside of cities, in suburbs or small towns, you will find a mix of apartments, townhouses, and houses.



When you rent, you pay an agreed amount to the owner or manager of the property each month. Most often, you will sign a rental contract called a lease.

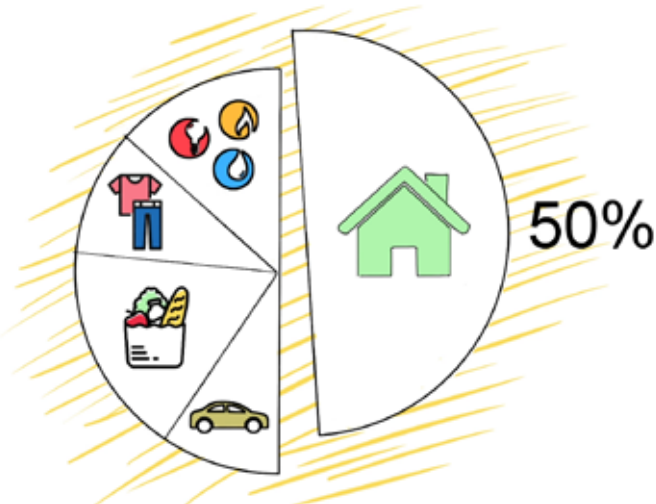


A lease guarantees that you can stay in your housing for an agreed amount of time and for an agreed monthly rent amount.

BEFORE YOUR HOUSING SEARCH

Before starting your housing search, you should know your budget and preferred location. Consider your housing needs, which are what you *must* have to be safe and secure, especially if you have a relative with a disability.

Also consider where your job, grocery stores, schools, community centers, libraries, and public transportation are. Finally, think about access to family or community support.



Your budget will help you understand how much you can afford to pay for monthly housing, which is usually your biggest expense. Generally, people in the U.S. try to spend no more than 30% of after-tax household income for rent. However, many newcomers may spend 40% or 50% to get the housing they need.



FINDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

U.S. housing is expensive, especially for those with a limited income. But there is help.



Your sponsor or sponsor group, your Resettlement Agency, or another community welcome group like AmeriCorps can help you find housing resources.

Cultural Orientation Resource Exchange

For more information, visit Settle In at settlein.us.org.



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